QUASAR ELECTRONICS KIT No. 1123
MORSE CODE GENERATOR

General Description

This is a very simple circuit, suitable for beginners in electronics, which when it is connected to a suitable Morse key will produce a tone every time the key is depressed thus helping the user practice in the use of the Morse code. The circuit is basically an oscillator built around a single IC, the well known NE555 and it can also be used as a warning buzzer or a simple tone generator. The pitch of the produced tone is adjustable.

Technical Specifications - Characteristics

Working voltage: 9-12 V DC
Current: 100 mA

How it Works

The circuit is built around a single IC the NE555 which is used as a multivibrator. The frequency at which the oscillator will operate is determined by the setting of VR1 and the value of C3 and it is adjustable between 250 Hz and 16 KHz. The output is taken through the capacitor C1 to a small speaker having an internal resistance of 8 or 16 ohm and a power rating of 0.3 - 0.5 Watts. The circuit works off a miniature 9 V battery. The Morse key is connected in series with the power supply (as an ON - OFF) switch and whenever it is depressed a tone is heard from the speaker which lasts for as long as the key contacts are closed.

Construction

First of all let us consider a few basics in building electronic circuits on a printed circuit board. The board is made of a thin insulating material clad with a thin layer of conductive copper that is shaped in such a way as to form the necessary conductors between the various components of the circuit. The use of a properly designed printed circuit board is very desirable as it speeds construction up considerably and reduces the possibility of making errors. Quasar Electronics Kit boards also come pre-drilled and with the outline of the components and their identification printed on the component side to make construction easier. To protect the board during storage from oxidation and assure it gets to you in perfect condition the copper is tinned during manufacturing and covered with a special varnish that protects it from getting oxidised and also makes soldering easier. Soldering the components to the board is the only way to build your circuit and from the way you do it depends greatly your success or failure. This work is not very difficult and if you stick to a few rules you should have no problems. The soldering iron that you use

must be light and its power should not exceed the 25 Watts. The tip should be fine and must be kept clean at all times. For this purpose come very handy specially made sponges that are kept wet and from time to time you can wipe the hot tip on them to remove all the residues that tend to accumulate on it. DO NOT file or sandpaper a dirty or worn out tip. If the tip cannot be cleaned, replace it. There are many different types of solder in the market and you should choose a good quality one that contains the necessary flux in its core, to assure a perfect joint every time.
DO NOT use soldering flux apart from that which is already included in your solder. Too much flux can cause many problems and is one of the main causes of circuit malfunction. If nevertheless you have to use extra flux, as it is the case when you have to tin copper wires, clean it very thoroughly after you finish your work. In order to solder a component correctly you should do the following:
- Clean the component leads with a small piece of emery paper.
- Bend them at the correct distance from the component's body and insert the component in its place on the board.
You may find sometimes a component with heavier gauge leads than usual, that are too thick to enter in the holes of the p.c. board. In this case use a mini drill to enlarge the holes slightly. Do not make the holes too large as this is going to make soldering difficult afterwards.
- Take the hot iron and place its tip on the component lead while holding the end of the solder wire at the point where the lead emerges from the board. The iron tip must touch the lead slightly above the p.c. board.
- When the solder starts to melt and flow, wait till it covers evenly the area around the hole and the flux boils and gets out from underneath the solder. The whole operation should not take more than 5 seconds. Remove the iron and leave the solder to cool naturally without blowing on it or moving the component. If everything was done properly the surface of the joint must have a bright metallic finish and its edges should be smoothly ended on the component lead and the board track. If the solder looks dull, cracked, or has the shape of a blob then you have made a dry joint and you should remove the solder (with a pump, or a solder wick) and redo it.
- Take care not to overheat the tracks as it is very easy to lift them from the board and break them.
- When you are soldering a sensitive component it is good practice to hold the lead from the component side of the board with a pair of long-nose pliers to divert any heat that could possibly damage the component.
- Make sure that you do not use more solder than it is necessary as you are running the risk of short-circuiting adjacent tracks on the board, especially if they are very close together.
- When you finish your work, cut off the excess of the component leads and clean the board thoroughly with a suitable solvent to remove all flux residues that may still remain on it.

The circuit is a very simple one and the components used in it are very few. Solder first of all the socket for the IC and the pins. Identify the resistors and solder them in their places and then do the same with the capacitors taking care to insert the electrolytic the right way round. Insert the IC in the socket making sure it is aligned correctly and that you do not bend any pins between the component's body and the IC socket. If you connect the speaker across points 1 and 2 of the circuit and a 9 V battery across points 3 (+) and 4 (-) you should hear a tone from the speaker, the frequency which can be adjusted by turning the trimmer VR1. If you use the circuit for Morse code practice the key must be connected in series with the supply line as an ON OFF switch.

Adjustments

This kit does not need any adjustments, if you follow the building instructions.

Warning

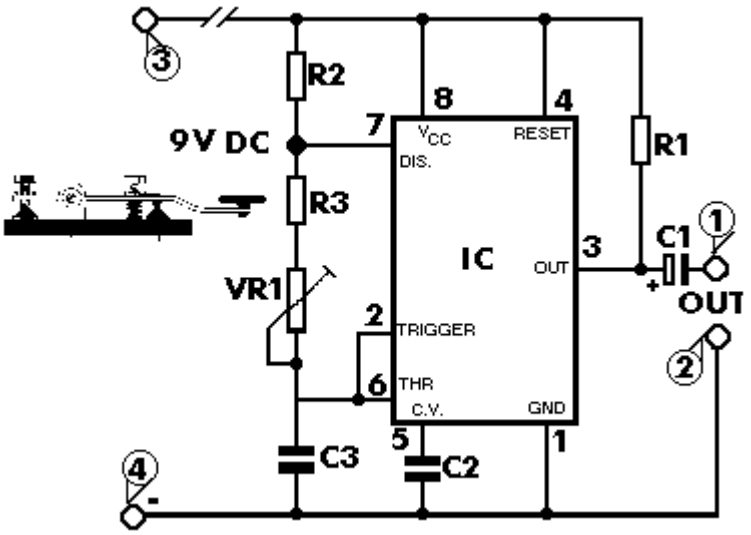
Quasar Electronics kits are sold as stand alone training kits.
If they are used as part of a larger assembly and any damage is caused, our company bears no responsibility.

While using electrical parts, handle power supply and equipment with great care, following safety standards as described by international specs and regulations.

If it does not work

Check your work for possible dry joints, bridges across adjacent tracks or soldering flux residues that usually cause problems.
Check again all the external connections to and from the circuit to see if there is a mistake there.
- See that there are no components missing or inserted in the wrong places.
- Make sure that all the polarised components have been soldered the right way round. - Make sure the supply has the correct voltage and is connected the right way round to your circuit.
- Check your project for faulty or damaged components.
If everything checks out and your project still fails to work, please contact us for information on our Get-You-Going service.

Electronic Diagram



Parts List

All components including printed circuit board, assembly instructions including schematics and detailed parts list are supplied when you purchase the kit.

Ordering

For pricing info and online ordering please visit:

http://www.quasarelectronics.com/1123.htm

For further info please contact us by e-mail:

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