Subject: Re: Learning to Solder
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 07 Oct 2011 16:21:22 GMT
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Four tips:

1. Tin the soldering iron tip. What this means is to flow some solder onto the tip until it is completed coated with a shiny film of molten solder. Remove any excess with a damp towel. Keep the tip in this condition by periodically cleaning it with a damp towel.

2. Touch the hot iron tip to both surfaces to be soldered. Leave it in place long enough that the items to be soldered are hot enough to melt the solder. Flow the solder into the surfaces to be joined, not the solder tip. Hint: You can increase the surface area of the heated tip using a slight amount of molten solder, so sometimes you can flow a tiny bit into the iron tip near the surfaces to be joined - just to get started - then feed the rest into the joint, directly into the pool of solder flowing onto the surfaces to be joined.

3. Heat the surface(s) just long enough to flow solder as described, but not long enough to damage the devices being soldered. With large active components and most passive components, heat can be applied for several seconds without damage. But for smaller active devices, small transistors and chips, sometimes just a couple seconds is all they can take. Until you've soldered a while, use IC sockets instead of soldering ships directly. The sockets can usually handle the heat a little longer.

4. Practice, practice, practice.