Subject: $90 solder
Posted by gofar99 on Wed, 01 Nov 2023 02:34:14 GMT
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A $90 piece of solder. Pretty much everyone knows that solder the size of a large grain of rice doesn't cost much let alone $90. However, that is what a piece that size just cost me. It illustrated a point that I warn everyone about all the time. If you build a project the first thing you should do when it is finishes is to turn it upside down and shake it. Then most of the time all the small pieces of clipped wire and tiny bits of solder will fall out. I do that all the time but this time a small piece apparently didn't fall out. It hid for well over a year inside a phono preamp. It reared its angry head when I was doing some testing of the response. Then zap! Instant oops. Unfortunately, this is a disaster to PC based USB connected scopes. If the interface device survives then the PC won't. Over the past 15 years or so I have wiped out two PCs and two interface devices. The last time I was able to get the PC repaired under warrantee. At that time, I decided that using a costly PC (like the HP OMEN I have) to do potentially harmful testing did not make a lot of sense. So, I got a $90 mini-PC to handle the chores. Yes, they tend to be minimalist and have rather low specs, but they work fine in this application. Clearly it was a good thing as my rice grain size piece of solder shifted inside the phono preamp and zapped the B+. This in turn puts a serious spike on the ground and is way over the front-end rating of the USB ports. Fortunately, this time it was not too high for the interface device. So, a new mini-pc is on the way and my main PC is safe. I really like the PC scopes as they will do all sorts of things that I need when designing and building DIY gear. The "real" scopes I have are much harder to use and the displays don't compare with the 27 inch one on the PC scope. So, be sure to shake your projects and hopefully this will not happen to you.