



A versatile board for experimenters.

ETI UTILIBOARD

THE CONSTRUCTION of any project is always simplified by the use of a proper printed-circuit board. The neat and tidy appearance of a well made printed-circuit board, full of components, gives a professional look and is most satisfying. There are however some drawbacks. Each design requires a different board and you need a reasonable degree of knowhow and time to make your own boards.

Quite often it may be felt that the cost of a ready made printed circuit board, for a simple project, is unwarranted or it is just too much of a hassle to send away for one.

There are several alternatives, such as Veroboard and Matrix board, and many people are now using specially designed general purpose boards which are specifically made for versatility in the construction of general circuitry.

This latter approach has several advantages. The finished board looks

neat and professional, fairly-complex circuits can be quickly assembled, and the large pads available allow experimental circuits to be debugged with ease. Such boards allow the builder to change the circuit of a particular project to suit his personal needs or, to use physically-larger components (eg junk-box parts) than those specified.

There are many of these boards available but many of them are quite expensive and some are lacking in versatility. Hence we decided to design our own board for use in simple projects.

USING THE UTILIBOARD

On conventional printed-circuit boards the components are always mounted on the non-copper side of the board and all our previous overlays have shown components in this way.

However in experimental circuits it is more convenient to mount the components on the copper side. This allows components to be added, or shifted, without having to continually turn the board over.

Note that the board consists of four individual 16-pin dual-in-line IC pad-groups, each pin of which has associated with it a large pad to which several component leads can be soldered without the need for holes.

The broad lines through the centre of the pads, and on either side, are suitable for supply or earth connections. They are continuous so that the group of pads can be used together or the board may be sawn up into single or 2-way sections as required.

The broad line up the centre has indicator marks which point to pin 1 of an IC when it is mounted on the non-copper side of the board and the dot marker on the IC points to indicator-mark end of the board. Note that this central line is broad enough so that individual pads may be connected to it by solder bridging.

Of course any of eight, 14 or 16 pin DIL IC's can be mounted as required, or, discrete transistors may be inserted into appropriate holes. You will find this board extremely versatile and easy to use.