tip of the month!

For some time now a printed circuit resist pen, A in the photograph, has been on sale. The price varies a bit, but 65 - 75p is typical.

They're good. We've used them; it dries fast, is certainly acid resistant, and is easy to clean off afterwards.

A paper label is wrapped around the barrel and being of a curious disposition, we decided to remove it — shown as B. Rather odd, we thought, that someone should go to all the trouble to sand off part of the barrel. Apart from this area, the rest of the barrel carries Japanese wording which happens to be identical to the Pentel Pen (C) sold in stationers, not for 65 - 75p but for 30 - 35p — and they're available in many colours. Wishing to take nothing for granted, we tried the Pentels as resists. They're good too!

So far we have been unable to discover the advantages of the paint-free area on the barrel — and 35 - 40p extra does seem rather a lot, doesn't it? We couldn't resist telling ETI readers about this!

DON'T BLAME YOUR NEWSAGENT!

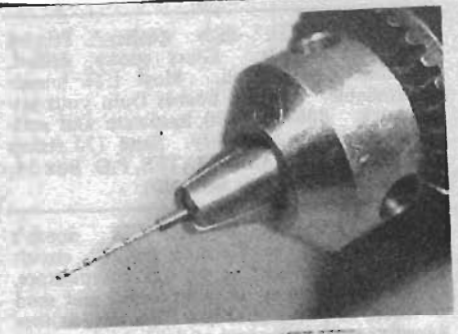
CUTTING PC BOARDS

Using a hacksaw to cut pc boards to proper sizes can be very difficult. Fortunately, there's a much easier way. Lay the board on a flat surface and draw a line where the cut is to be made. Then score the board on both sides with a common glass cutter and a straight edge. Place the scored line over a dowel and apply firm but even pressure on both sides of the score. The board will cleanly snap along the line. A glass cutter with a carbide tip is recommended over the less costly ones.—*W.J. Prudhomme*

Chucking Small Bits

Theo Boon

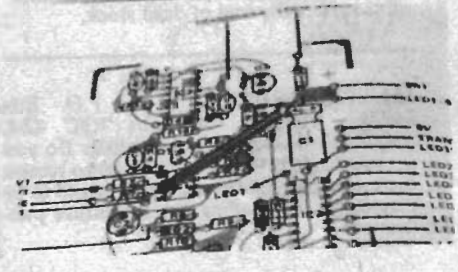
A major problem in drilling printed circuit boards is finding some method of holding 3/64" and 1/32" twist drills in a standard 3/8" drill chuck. The author (being a machinist) found that roll pins serve as excellent sleeves (check the yellow pages under Machine Shop Supplies).



Incinerated ICs — Stopped!

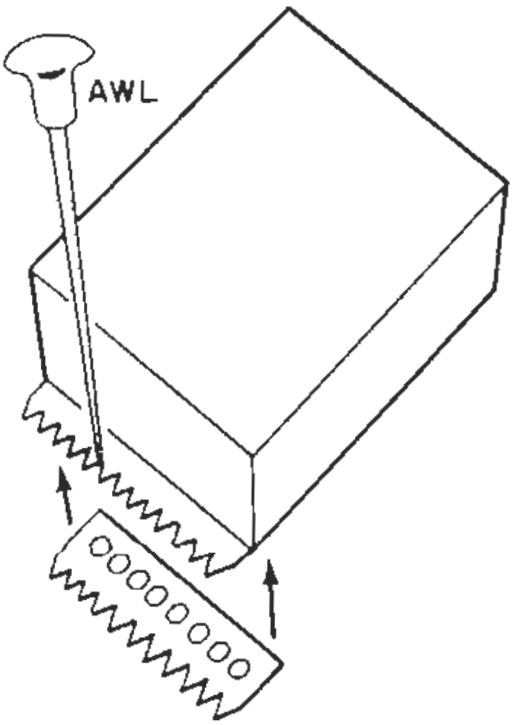
B. D. Dever

Now here's a good idea if your soldering iron is a bit too hot for soldering delicate components to a printed circuit board — why not use a standard light dimmer between the iron and the wall socket?



PC DRILLING GUIDE

Here's a handy guide for drilling IC pin holes on a pc board. Epoxy a length of discarded Molex Soldercon holder strip to a block of wood as shown. Attach a few strips of double-faced adhesive tape (Scotch No. 666 or equivalent) to the



bottom of the block to prevent slippage. Hold the block on the pc board with one hand and make indentations with an awl at each "valley" along the holder strip. Then remove the block. You will find a line of depressions that can easily be drilled through the board, exactly 0.1" (2.54 mm) apart.—*Robert J. Murrell, Verona, PA.*