

TESTING POTENTIOMETERS

In his article "The Ins and Outs of Buying Mailorder Components" (**Radio-Electronics**, November, 1982), Karl T. Thurber describes the use of a multimeter to evaluate surplus or suspect potentiometers. But that testing method can damage or destroy the pot under test by exceeding the power rating of a portion of the pot element, or by exceeding the maximum allowable wiper current. Only a DVM is suitable for performing such measurements, due to its low-voltage resistance-measurement capability. Further, if a potentiometer is to be operated or tested as a variable resistor, the wiper should be "tied" to the unused side of the pot element.

Speaking from experience, I've had them "smoking" on the bench by ignoring the above considerations. If you must measure potentiometer resistance parameters, use a DVM and *be careful*.

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That one is new to us, but if any of our other readers have had similar experiences would like to hear about them—Editor

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