altair 680b

I. ASSEMBLY HINTS

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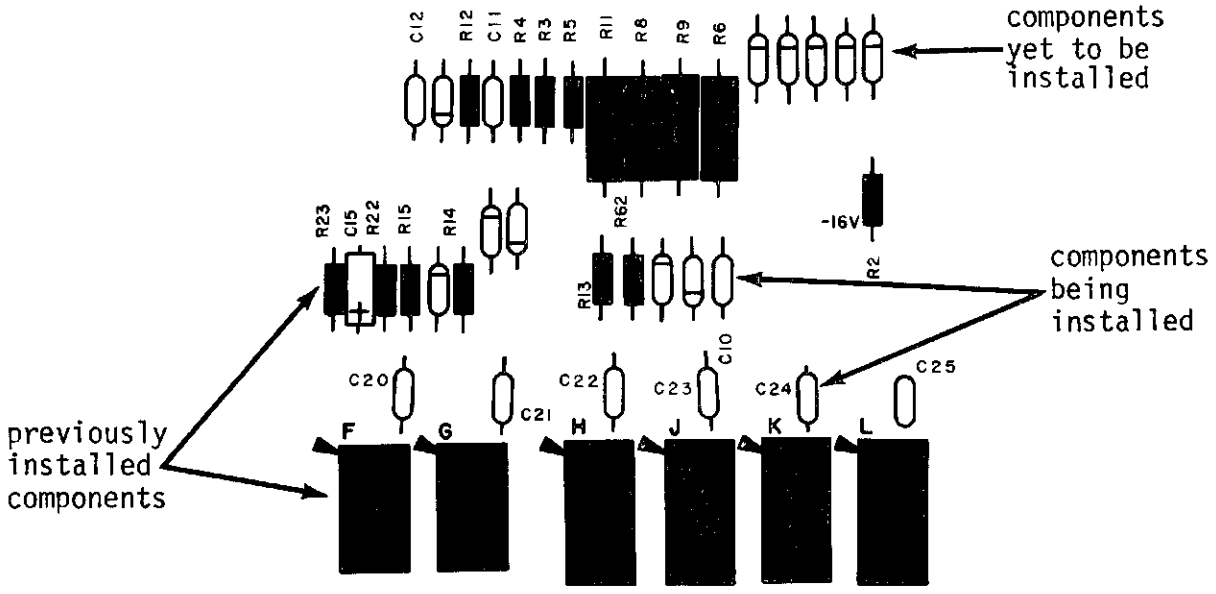
ASSEMBLY HINTS

Before beginning the construction of your unit, it is important that you read the "MITS Kits Assembly Hints" booklet included with your kit. Pay particular attention to the section on soldering, because most problems in the Altair occur as the result of poor soldering. It is essential that you use the correct type of soldering iron. A 25-30 watt iron with a chisel tip (such as an Ungar 776 with a 7155 tip) is recommended in the assembly hints booklet.

Some important warnings are also included in the hints booklet. Read them carefully before you begin work on your unit -- failure to heed these warnings could cause you to void your warranty.

Check the contents of your kit against the enclosed parts list to make sure you have all the required components, hardware and parts. The components are in plastic envelopes; do not open them until you need the components for an assembly step. You will need the tools called for in the "Kits Assembly Hints" booklet.

As you construct your kit, follow the instructions in the order that they are presented in the assembly manual. Always complete each section before going on to the next. Two organizational aids are provided throughout the manual to assist you: 1) Boxed-off parts identification lists, with spaces provided to check off the components as they are installed; 2) Reproductions of the silk screens showing a) previously installed components, b) components being installed and c) components yet to be installed. (see below)



COMPONENT INSTALLATION METHODS

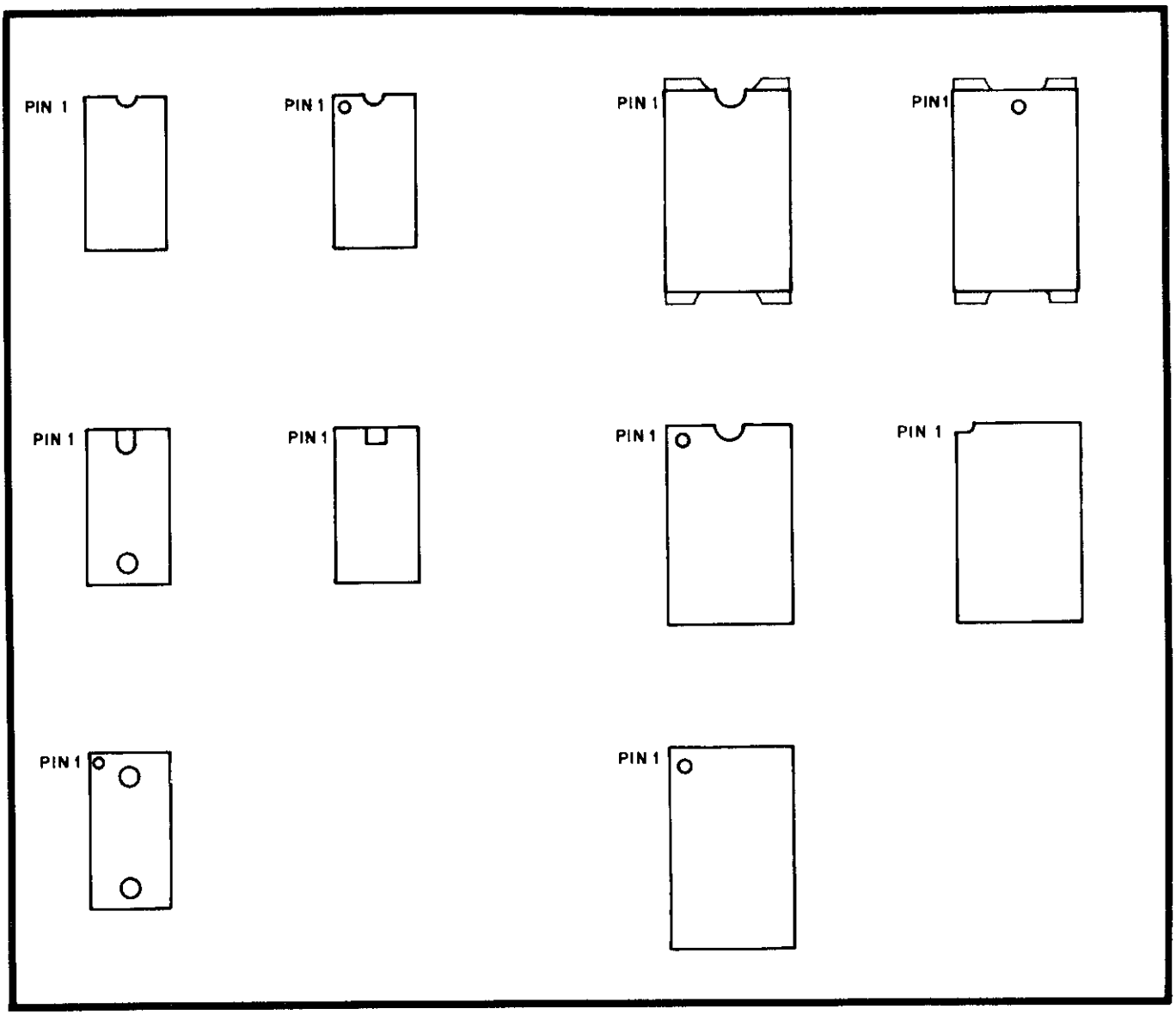
Pages 5 through 11 of the Assembly Manual describe the proper procedures for installing the various types of components in your kit.

Read these instructions over very carefully and refer back to them whenever necessary. Failure to properly install components may cause permanent damage to the component or the rest of the unit; it will definitely void your warranty.

More specific instructions, or procedures of a less general nature, will be included within the assembly text itself.

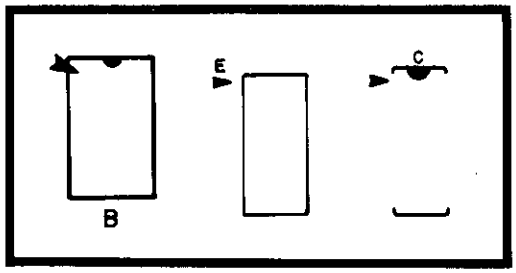
Under no circumstances should you proceed with an assembly step without fully understanding the procecures involved. A little patience at this stage will save a great deal of time and potential "headaches" later.

IC IDENTIFICATION CHART



INTEGRATED CIRCUITS (IC's) CAN COME WITH ANY ONE OF, OR A COMBINATION OF, SEVERAL DIFFERENT MARKINGS. THESE MARKINGS ARE VERY IMPORTANT IN DETERMINING THE CORRECT ORIENTATION FOR THE IC's WHEN THEY ARE PLACED ON THE PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS. REFER TO THE ABOVE DRAWING TO LOCATE PIN 1 OF THE IC's, THEN USE THIS INFORMATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INFORMATION BELOW TO PROPERLY ORIENT EACH IC FOR INSTALLATION.

WARNING: INCORRECTLY ORIENTED IC's MAY CAUSE PERMANENT DAMAGE!



THE DRAWING ON THE LEFT INDICATES VARIOUS METHODS USED TO SHOW THE POSITION OF IC's ON THE PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS. THESE ARE SILK-SCREENED DIRECTLY ON THE BOARD. THE ARROWHEAD INDICATES THE POSITION FOR PIN 1 WHEN THE IC IS INSTALLED.

MOS IC SPECIAL HANDLING PRECAUTIONS

There are several MOS integrated circuits contained in this kit. These IC's are very sensitive to static electricity and transient voltages. In order to prevent damaging these components, read over the following precautions and adhere to them as closely as possible. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THE IC.

1) All equipment (soldering iron, tools, solder, etc.) should be at the same potential as the PC board, the assembler, the work surface and the IC itself along with its container. This can be accomplished by continuous physical contact with the work surface, the components, and everything else involved in the operation.

2) When handling the IC, develop the habit of first touching the conductive container in which it is stored before touching the IC itself.

3) If the IC has to be moved from one container to another, touch both containers before doing so.

4) Do not wear clothing which will build up static charges. Preferably wear clothing made of cotton rather than wool or synthetic fibers.

5) Always touch the PC board before touching the IC to the board. Try to maintain this contact as much as possible while installing the IC.

6) Handle the IC by the edges. Avoid touching the pins themselves as much as possible.

7) Dry air moving over plastic can resul in the development of a significant static charge. Avoid placing the IC near any such area or object.

8) In general, never touch anything to the IC that you have not touched first while touching both it and the IC itself.

IC Installation

All ICs must be oriented so that the notched end is toward the end with the arrowhead printed on the PC board. Pin 1 of the IC should correspond with the pad marked with the arrowhead. If the IC does not have a notch on one end, refer to the IC Identification Chart to identify Pin 1.

To prepare ICs for installation:
All ICs are damaged easily and should be handled carefully -- especially static-sensitive MOS ICs. Always try to hold the IC by the ends, touching the pins as little as possible. When you remove the IC from its holder, CAREFULLY straighten any bent pins using needle-nose pliers. All pins should be evenly spaced and should be aligned in a straight line, perpendicular to the body of the IC itself.

A. Installing ICs without sockets:

1. Orient the IC so that Pin 1 coincides with the arrowhead on the PC board.

2. Align the pins on one side of the IC so that just the tips are inserted into the proper holes on the board.

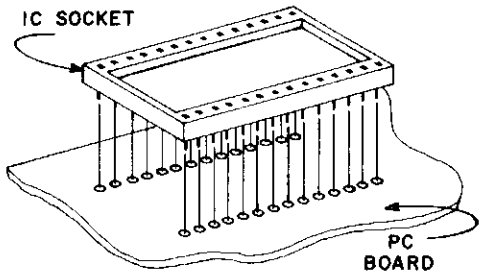
3. Lower the other side of the IC into place. If the pins don't go into their holes right away, rock the IC back, exerting a little inward pressure, and try again. Be patient. The tip of a small screwdriver may be used to help guide the pins into place. When the tips of all the pins have been started into their holes, push the IC into the board the rest of the way. Tape the IC to the board with a piece of masking tape.

4. Turn the board over and solder each pin to the foil pattern on the back side of the board. Be sure to solder each pin and be careful not to leave any solder bridges. Remove the masking tape.

WARNING:
Make sure none of the pins have been pushed underneath the IC during insertion.

B. Installing ICs with sockets:

1. Referring to the drawing below, set the IC socket into the designated holes on the board and secure it with a piece of masking tape.



2. Turn the board over and solder each pin to the foil pattern on the back side of the board. Be sure to solder each pin and be careful not to leave any solder bridges. Remove the masking tape.

3. Orient the IC over the socket so that Pin 1 coincides with the arrowhead on the PC board.

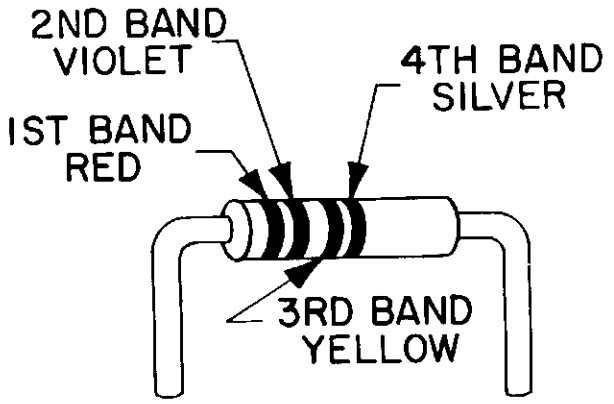
4. Align the pins on one side of the socket so that just the tips are inserted into the holes.

5. Lower the other side of the IC into place. If the pins don't go into their holes right away, rock the IC back, exerting a little inward pressure, and try again. Be patient. When the tips of all the pins have been started into their holes, push the IC into the socket the rest of the way.

Resistor Installation

Resistors have four (or possibly five) color-coded bands as represented in the chart below. The fourth band is gold or silver and indicates the tolerance. NOTE: In assembling a MITS kit, you need only be concerned with the three bands of color to the one side of the gold or silver (tolerance) band. These three bands denote the resistor's value in ohms. The first two bands correspond to the first two digits of the resistor's value and the third band represents a multiplier.

For example: a resistor with red, violet, yellow and silver bands has a value of 270,000 ohms and a tolerance of 10%. By looking at the chart below, you see that red is 2 and violet 7. By multiplying 27 by the yellow multiplier band (10,000), you find you have a 270,000 ohm (270K) resistor. The silver band denotes the 10% tolerance. Use this process to choose the correct resistor called for in the manual.



RESISTOR COLOR CODES

COLOR	BANDS 1&2	3rd BAND (Multiplier)
Black	0	1
Brown	1	10^2
Red	2	10^3
Orange	3	10^4
Yellow	4	10^5
Green	5	10^6
Blue	6	10^7
Violet	7	10^8
Gray	8	10^9
White	9	

Use the following procedure to install the resistors onto the boards. Make sure the colored bands on each resistor match the colors called for in the list of Resistor Values and Color Codes given in the assembly instructions.

1. Using needle-nose pliers, bend the leads of the resistor at right angles to match their respective holes on the PC board.

2. Install the resistor into the correct holes on the silk-screened side of the PC board.

3. Holding the resistor in place with one hand, turn the board over and bend the two leads slightly outward.

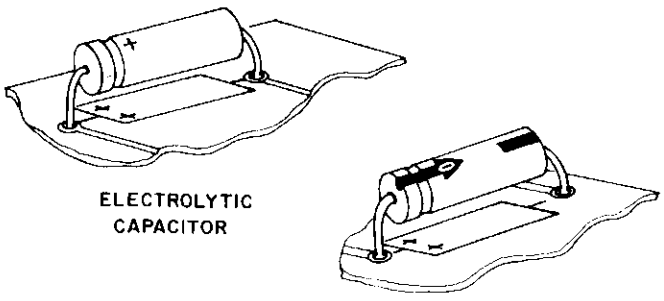
4. Solder the leads to the foil patterr on the back side of the board; then clip off any excess lead lengths.

Capacitor Installation

A. Electrolytic and Tantalum Capacitors

Polarity must be noted on electrolytic capacitors and tantalum capacitors before they are installed.

The electrolytic capacitors contained in your kit may have one or possibly two of three types of polarity markings. To determine the correct orientation, look for the following.



ELECTROLYTIC CAPACITOR

One type will have plus (+) signs on the positive end; another will have a band or a groove around the positive side in addition to the plus signs. The third type will have an arrow on it; in the tip of the arrow there is a negative (-) sign and the capacitor must be oriented so the arrow points to the negative polarity side.

The tantalum capacitor is metallic in appearance and smaller than the electrolytic capacitors. Its positive end has a plus sign on it or a red dot.

Install the electrolytic capacitors and tantalum capacitors using the following procedure. Make sure you have the correct capacitor value each time.

1. Bend the two leads of the capacitor at right angles to match their respective holes on the board. Insert the capacitor into the holes on the silk-screened side of the board. Be sure to align the positive polarity side with the "+" signs printed on the board.
2. Holding the capacitor in place, turn the board over and bend the two leads slightly outward. Solder the leads to the foil pattern and clip off any excess lead lengths.

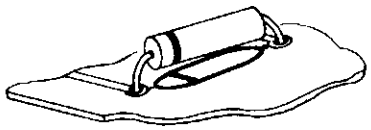
B. Ceramic Disk Capacitors

Install the ceramic disk capacitors using the following procedure. Make sure you have the correct capacitor value each time.

1. Straighten the two capacitor leads as necessary to fit their respective holes on the PC board.
2. Insert the capacitor into the correct holes from the silk-screened side of the board. Push the capacitor down until the ceramic insulation almost touches the foil pattern.
3. Holding the capacitor in place, turn the board over and bend the two leads slightly outward.
4. Solder the two leads to the foil pattern on the back side of the board; then clip off any excess lead lengths.

Diode Installation

NOTE: Diodes are marked with a band on one end indicating the cathode end. Each diode must be installed so that the end with the band is oriented towards the band printed on the PC board. Failure to orient the diodes correctly may result in permanent damage to your unit.



DIODE

Use the following procedure to install diodes onto the board. Refer to the list of Diode Part Numbers included for each board to make sure you install the correct diode each time.

1. Bend the leads of the diode at right angles to match their respective holes on the board.

2. Insert the diode into the correct holes on the silk screen, making sure the cathode end is properly oriented. Turn the board over and bend the leads slightly outward.

3. Solder the two leads to the foil pattern on the back side of the board; then clip off any excess lead lengths.

Transistor Installation

To install transistors, use the following instructions.

NOTE: Always check the part number of each transistor before you install it. (See listing of Transistor Part Numbers for each board.) Some transistors look identical but differ in electrical characteristics, according to part number. If you have received substitute part numbers for the transistors in your kit, check the Transistor Identification Chart which follows these instructions to be sure you make the correct substitutions.

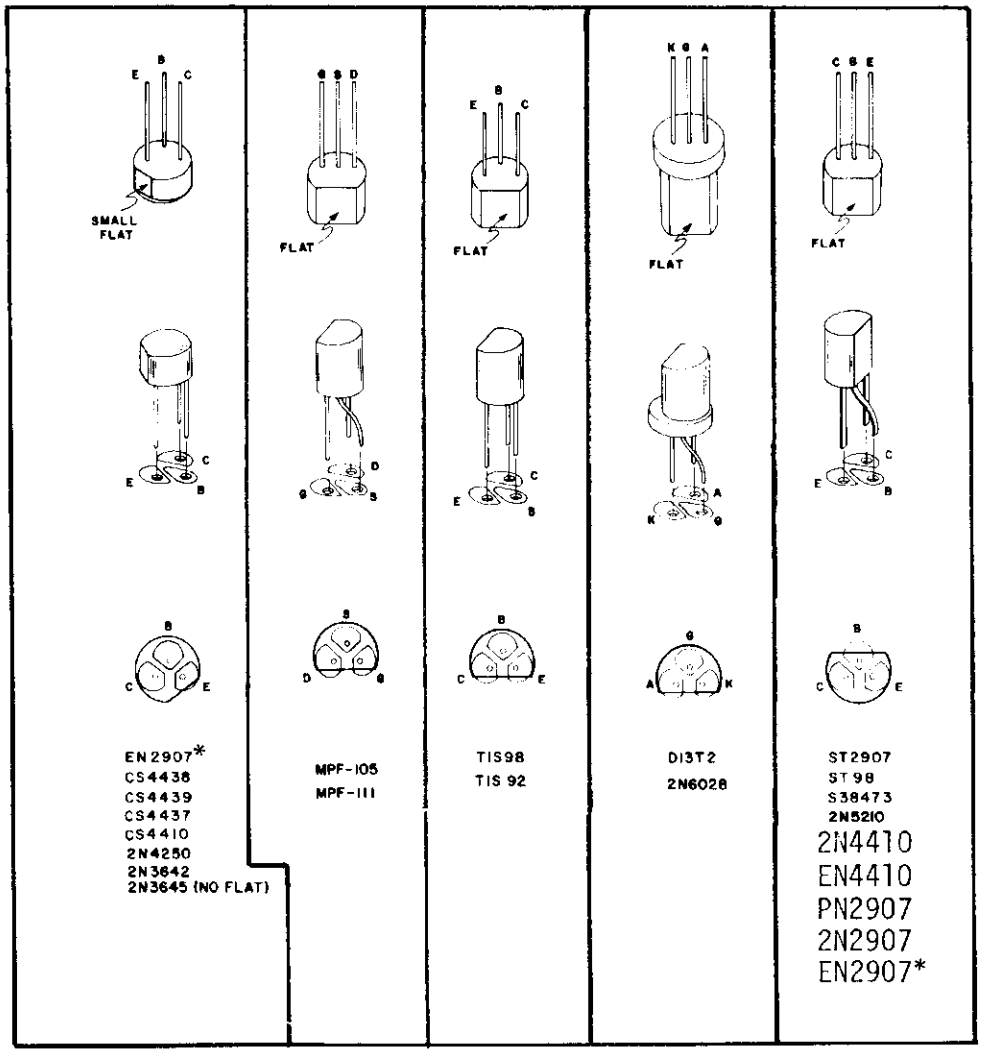
NOTE: Always make sure the transistor is oriented so that the emitter lead is installed in the hole on the PC board labeled with an "E". To determine which lead is the emitter lead, refer to the Transistor Identification Chart.

1. After the correct transistor has been selected and the leads have been properly oriented, insert the transistor into the holes on the silk-screened side of the board.

2. Holding the transistor in place, turn the board over and bend the three leads slightly outward.

3. Solder the leads to the foil pattern on the back side of the board; then clip off any excess lead lenghts.

TRANSISTOR IDENTIFICATION CHART



IN THE ILLUSTRATION ABOVE THE OUTLINE OF EACH TYPE OF TRANSISTOR IS SHOWN ABOVE THE PADS ON THE CIRCUIT BOARD WITH THE CORRECT DESIGNATION FOR EACH OF THE THREE LEADS. USE THIS INFORMATION TOGETHER WITH THE INFORMATION IN THE ASSEMBLY MANUAL FOR THE CORRECT ORIENTATION OF THE TRANSISTORS AS YOU INSTALL THEM.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTIONS: IF ANY OTHERS ARE USED YOU WILL RISK DAMAGING YOUR UNIT:

2N4410 = EN4410 = CS4410 = CS4437, CS4438, TIS98, ST98, S38473 (NPN)

EN2907 = 2N2907 = PN2907 = ST2907, CS4439 (PNP)

WHEN MAKING SUBSTITUTIONS, REFER TO THE ILLUSTRATION TO DETERMINE THE CORRECT ORIENTATION FOR THE THREE LEADS.

*Configuration of the leads on EN2907 may vary.