

Re: Checking a BC548B NPN Transistor?

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 - *Date:* Mon, 18 Jun 2007 13:12:05 -0500
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On Mon, 18 Jun 2007 09:15:44 GMT, Ross Herbert
<rherber1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Sun, 17 Jun 2007 10:10:04 -0500, John Fields
<jfields@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Well, I don't know about you, but when I use an analog multimeter I usually have a pretty good idea of what I'm looking for if I'm using it to measure voltages, and even more so if I'm using it to measure current. I relegate 'pot luck' to those situations where I'm trying to determine the polarity of an unmarked diode or the type (PNP or NPN) and pinout of an unknown transistor.

I don't take pot luck either when measuring voltages but sometimes accidents do happen. I figure it out before I start probing – as most experienced techs do.

I agree that the polarity switch would appear to find most use when testing semiconductors.

You must have misunderstood me, since in an earlier post I said that I considered the polarity switch to be handy with one probe (ostensibly, the negative one) connected more-or-less permanently to ground and the other probe used to measure various positive and negative voltages around the circuit.

However, even without such a switch I don't find it a problem. For example, I test a loose transistor on the bench by simply having a lead in each hand and probing between pins in order

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to first determine the base lead. If I get conduction to two other pins when the black lead is on the third I know it is NPN and the black lead is on the base. And similarly for a PNP with the red lead on the base. I don't make permanent connections for this simple test since it is not necessary and a polarity switch would not be any advantage. Onl