

Emile's practical rules for a proper solder

- 1. Use a third hand with looking glass whenever possible*
When you don't have the right tools or refuse to use them, you will feel like you're clumsy. The difference between being clumsy and not being clumsy is knowing how to and making use of the right tools.
- 2. Use a solder iron with adjustable temperature*
Different kinds of soldering require different kinds of temperatures. If your solder iron has a fixed wattage, it isn't going to work for 80% of the possible jobs you might envision doing.
- 3. Get an adjustable light*
When you only have a ceiling light that restricts itself to relative mood lighting and on top of that you wear your baseball cap, flatcap hat, or any other hat, you aren't going to see well what you're doing. For precise soldering, you need to be able to see, so light your scene properly with a light that is bright enough and can be moved around.
- 4. All soldering is precision soldering*
Otherwise it gets loose. The goal of the solder is to fix things in place. Always take your job seriously and people will take you seriously.
- 5. Larger surfaces require hotter solder*
When you for instance solder the braided wiring of your guitar electronics to the back of the potentiometer, the solder needs to be really hot in order to stick. Regular hot, which already is burning hot, won't stick.
- 6. Smaller connections require colder solder*
When you solder the electric wire to a connection of your headphone jack and the solder is too hot, as soon as you retract the solder iron, in most cases the solder will retreat from the hole, leaving the electric wire unattached. You need to be able to mold the solder to some degree, in that it stays in the hole and freezes around the wire as you want it to.
- 7. Make sure you have variable thickness solder tin wire available*
Thick wire offers thick drops of tin. If you only want a small drop of tin, your tin solder wire should be thin so you can more easily apply it in small amounts. For bigger jobs you can use thicker tin wire. Using the right thickness tin wire for the right job benefits economics also.
- 8. These rules benefit safety but aren't safety instructions*
So you know.

Practicality rights or practically right? Emile Michel Hobo.