

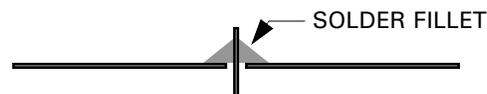
PROPER USE OF DESOLDERING BRAID

Desoldering Braid is a flat, woven copper mesh that has some soldering flux on the inside. It is used to remove solder from a previously soldered joint so that a component or wire may be mechanically removed. The braid provides an efficient method of removing solder from a joint and at the same time, it provides a measure of protection for the components and circuit board traces by acting as an effective heat sink to keep from overheating the joint. Desoldering Braid is available from most electronic supply houses including sources like Radio Shack, Digi-Key, Mouser or Jameco.

- 1) To use Desoldering Braid, make certain that the end of the length of braid is solder free and flexible. If it is not, snip off the end back to the point where no solder is visible and the braid flexes easily.
- 2) Place the end of the (fresh) braid on top of the solder joint you wish to desolder. Then place your hot pencil style soldering iron tip on top of the braid.

HINT: Use the side of the tip near the end (on top of the braid) rather than just the point.

- 3) Heat the joint through the braid until you see the solder flow and wick into the braid. Then remove *both* the braid and the iron at the same time.
- 4) Examine the joint carefully. If it is a circuit board pad with a component lead sticking through it, it should appear shiny tin colored but without any remaining fillet (an angled solder mass extending from the lead to the pad) of solder between the lead and the pad. The component lead may, in fact, appear to be disconnected in the middle of the circuit board hole. If you still see excess solder remaining between the lead and the pad, go back to 1) and repeat the process.
- 5) Go back to 1) and repeat the process for all other joints that need to be desoldered in order to remove a component. Once all the joints are properly desoldered, the component should pull easily out of the board. If you meet any resistance, check again for remaining solder and use the braid to desolder. Remember to clip off the "spent" end of the braid before each new desoldering attempt.



Desoldering Braid may also be used to remove much of the solder from twisted wire connections, although it will not be able to completely free up the wires. After removing as much solder as possible, it should be possible to untwist the wires using needle nose pliers.