

## Kit Building—A Dying Breed? A K2 Comes to Life Part I

Amateur radio transceivers have become so sophisticated nowadays, it's difficult even for an experienced ham to repair today's rigs. Remember when we built most of our gear from scratch or from kits? **David Duke, KM5YQ**, is building a **K2** that is sure to trigger those fond memories.

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A while back, I built an Elecraft KX3. As with a K3, it was mostly a screw-together job with pre-soldered boards. My goal with the K2 was to have a full-featured HF rig that I totally built myself before kits like this are no longer available.

I ordered the kit back on September 4, 2020, and it finally arrived February 4—five months later to the day. Elecraft has been having delays sourcing parts from their suppliers, for the obvious reasons. Still, it is amazing that they are able to offer their first product that began shipping in 1999!

It'll be a dedicated CW rig, and I ordered the noise blanker and internal ATU options. I also ordered a third party T-R relay kit because I plan to use it with a future external amplifier, perhaps the KXPA-100.

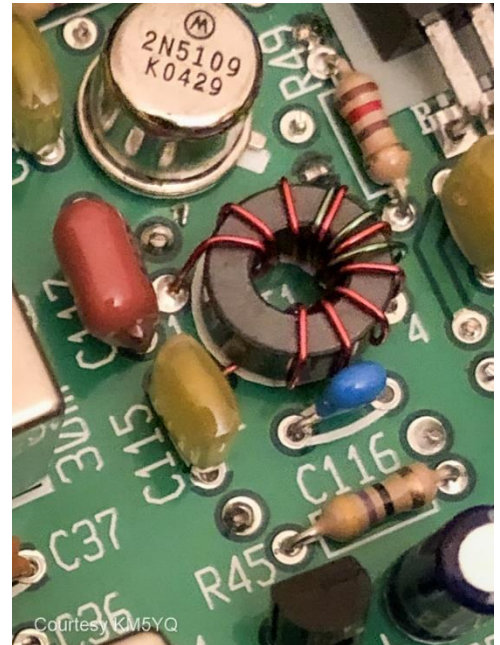
The instructions are very detailed and really gets you paying attention to what you are doing. First steps

of the build were on the microprocessor board that controls the entire radio. Next, was the front display board, with the LCD and all the knobs and buttons. Those were pretty straight forward.

By February 8, I had progressed to the RF board to install all the relays, the I/O controller, and a few other components. I connected all three boards and panels of the chassis and powered it on for the first time. None of the magic smoke escaped! The subsequent resistance and other checks also passed. After this came the frequency counter and RF Probes—test equipment is built in.

I have just finished initial resistor and capacitor stuffing on the RF board. The resistors were pretty easy but identifying the caps has been somewhat challenging. I say challenging now, but I have yet to get to winding the toroids!

The K2 is way more complicated to build than the K3 or the KX3, but it was worth the wait and I am having a lot of fun building it so far. That's it for now.



73, David, KM5YQ

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