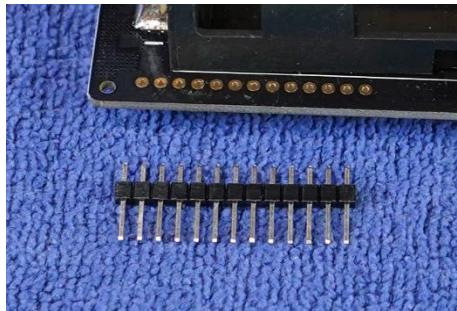


Soldering Straight-Pin Headers

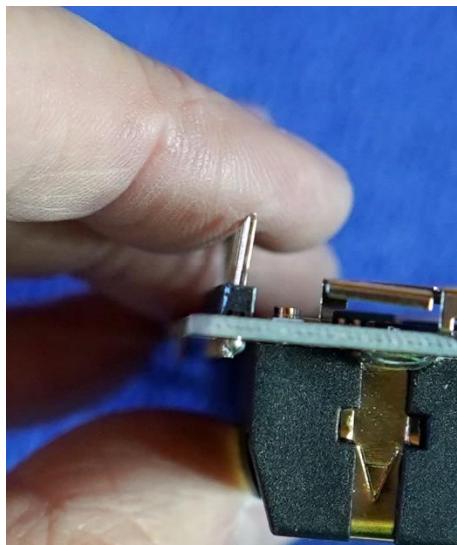
By Joe Eisenberg, KØNEB (Reference ARRL Handbook, 100th ed., section 23.5.4 Component Mounting)

Straight-pin “header” connectors are commonly used in projects and kits. Unless you have a specialized jig for this purpose, soldering this type of connector can appear difficult. An easy technique is to simply solder one pin to hold the part on the board, without regard to how exactly straight the connector is. Using a finger, apply pressure on an unsoldered pin or pins, and reheat the solo pin that was previously soldered. You can feel when the connector is moved into place, straight and vertical. Be sure to only touch a pin that is not being heated as it can become very hot!

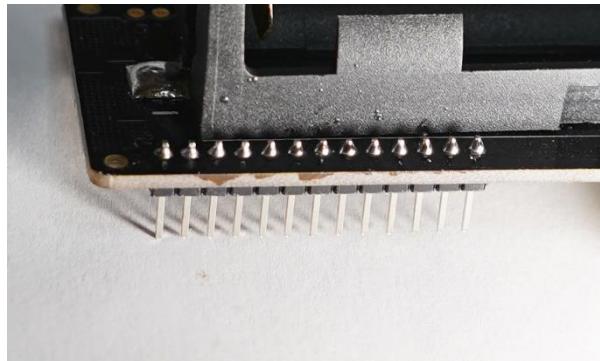
Once the connector is in the correct position with only one pin soldered, the other pins can be soldered, completing the connector. This same process can also be used for soldering things like plugs and jacks to a PC board. Temporarily or “tack” solder one pin, then reheat it while adjusting its position, followed by completing the other pins on the connector.



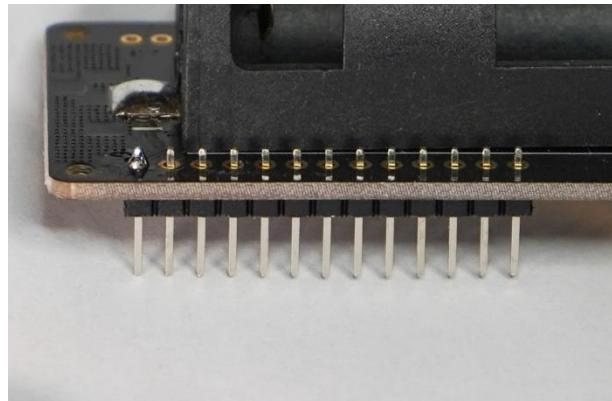
Here is the pin connector ready to be soldered to the board.



After soldering only one end pin, hold the remaining pins with your finger not touching that one pin already soldered and use your soldering iron to reheat that one pin while applying light pressure with your finger to seat the pins flat and straight. You can feel it when the pins are settled in flat against the board. Let it cool before removing your finger. Be careful to not touch the first pin while reheating it as it will get very hot!



The straightened row of pins is now ready to solder. Solder them from the opposite end until you reach the one next to the one already soldered to prevent reheating the first pin.



The finished row of pins are now straight and ready to make a connection.