

8-pin microphone connectors, round

“Let the buyer beware” has never been truer than in the purchase and use of some after-market products.

In particular I am referring now to those popular 8-pin (round) microphone connectors, that we amateurs find used on many Alinco, Icom, Kenwood, Yaesu etc amateur radio models.

Indeed, they offer 8 connections in a relatively small footprint, and in a secure and robust connector. Unfortunately in 2003 these connectors became no longer available from the **original** Japanese manufacturer.

I can testify to this, as in my previous work with a small medical device company, we used several hundred of these connectors, male and females, every year. So, when the original source dried up, we had to scramble to find a substitute.

(I suspect that the same problem was also found by the radio manufacturers and other users like Heil Sound.)

At the time there seemed to be only one readily available alternative. However, we found out the hard way that these “clones” were regrettably sub-standard, and definitely not OEM quality. In the end, we had to recall and rework hundreds of finished medical devices due to intermittent connections with these connectors causing malfunctions.

Eventually we did locate a quality substitute from another supplier, also in Japan.

I can only say that the supplier we had the trouble with, was unresponsive to our complaints and is today still selling into the radio aftermarket.

Look out for problems of fit, where the mating male pin and female terminal parts may be a loose fit.

In other words, the female connector terminals may not snugly fit the mating male chassis pins, resulting in intermittent connections that cannot be repaired.

A simple test is to break out one of the pins and use it as a go-no-go gage on each of the 8 socket terminals. If the pin has zero insertion force when tried in a terminal, that terminal is bad.

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