

A \$50 Beverage

by Randall Thompson, K5ZD

Originally printed in the YCCC Scuttlebutt #119, October, 1995

I built my first Beverage this past year. It was so easy I can't believe I lived without one. Here's how to do it:

1. Go to Home Depot (or other large hardware store) and buy a 500 ft roll #16 THHN or MTW wire. It's available in every color you can imagine for about \$15 per 500/ft roll.
2. Go to local feed store and get some electric fence insulators. This cost me about \$3.
3. Call your favorite radio dealer and order an ICE Beverage matching box. Cost: about \$40.
4. Go to Radio Shack and get a 400-600 ohm resistor. I actually used four (4) 2K-Ohm, 2-Watt resistors in parallel!
5. Roll out the wire in the desired direction. Mount the fence insulators to convenient trees (my Beverage is not perfectly straight) about 7-9 feet up. Connect one end of the wire to ground through the resistor. Connect the other end to the matching box. Connect coax. Enjoy!

I did follow the conventional wisdom of sloping the ends down. I used 4 foot ground rods at each end. I only have room for a 500 foot run. W3LPL has pointed out that 580' might be a better length. It's simple to solder some more wire on.

This antenna makes 80 and 160 enjoyable. Less than \$50 to hear Europeans all summer on the LF bands seems like a good deal if you have the space!

When the antenna broke this summer, I used a split bolt connector to join the two pieces back together. You can find these for about \$1 in the electrical aisle of the Home Depot (or hardware store). No solder required!

Note 1: Add about \$10 (for inflation since 1995), and call it: "A \$60 Beverage." ;-) -KB1GW

Note 2: You can also order an ICE matching-transformer from:

Industrial Communication Engineers, LTD.

Indianapolis, IN

Website: [Industrial Communication Engineers, LTD.](#)

About 1/2 the way down the above ICE webpage, you'll see that ICE offers their **Model 180A matching box** for \$39 (plus shipping).

The 180A has taps to select 50 or 75-Ohm coax feedlines, and taps to match 300/450/600 or 800-Ohm Beverage antenna loads.

The 180A also has dc blocking capacitors, and a gas-discharge lightning protection system.

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