

MFJ-817C Deluxe VHF/UHF True Peak Reading SWR/Wattmeter

Introduction

The MFJ-817C is a true peak reading SWR/Wattmeter designed to operate on 144/220/440 MHz. This meter uses our *TrueActive*™ peak reading circuit to read true peak/average forward and reflected power and SWR simultaneously. It has 300/30 Watts forward and 60/6 Watts reflected power scales. The MFJ-817C utilizes a large illuminated three-inch Cross-Needle meter to read the SWR from 1:1 to ∞.

IMPORTANT:

Please read entire manual before attempting to operate this equipment. This unit does not provide a dc or low frequency earth ground. A separate wire should be connected from the station ground bus to an electric ground. Do not place any non-coaxial feed wires near metallic or RF sensitive devices.

Installation

1. Connect your transmitter to the connector on the back of the unit labeled TRANSMITTER and your antenna to the connector labeled ANTENNA. It is important that you use good quality coax and properly installed connectors.
2. The MFJ-817C has a *TrueActive*™ peak reading circuit that requires a DC power supply such as the MFJ-1312B in order to function. A 9 VDC may also be installed inside the meter with a battery clip that is included. The rear panel accepts a 2.1 mm coaxial plug with the center conductor positive (+) and the sleeve negative (-). The negative lead is grounded inside the meter. There is no need to disconnect the battery when using external power.
3. An internal lamp backlights the meter scale. The lamp circuit requires 12 VDC and will not illuminate with the 9 VDC battery alone.
4. To measure the power output capability of a transmitter/amplifier you should connect a quality 50-ohm dummy load to the ANTENNA connector of the MFJ-817C.

NOTE:

The wattmeter must have a power source in order to function. A nine-volt battery may be installed in the compartment on the rear panel, or an external 12 VDC source, such as the optional MFJ-1312D power supply, may be used.

Operation

1. With the DC power supply or 9 VDC battery installed, push the **ON/OFF** button **in** to turn the unit ON. If 12 VDC is used, the lamp will also be turned ON.
2. The meter's full-scale forward and reflected power range is controlled by the **300/30 Watt** button. When the button is pushed **in**, the forward power scale is on 300 Watts and the reflected power scale is on 60 Watts. When the button is pushed **out**, the forward power scale is on 30 Watts and the reflected power scale is on 6 Watts. If your transmitter/amplifier runs more than 30 Watts of output power, push the button **in** for 300 Watts. If your transmitter runs less than 30 Watts of output power, push the button **out** for 30 Watts.
3. Average power is measured when the **PEAK/AVG** button is pushed **out**. Peak envelope power (PEP) is measured when the **PEAK/AVG** button is pushed **in**. Peak and average power values are equal with steady unmodulated carriers, FSK, or FM. The meter reading on these modes will be the same whether the **PEAK/AVG** button is pushed **in** or **out**. On SSB, the PEP meter reading should be twice the average power with two-tone test modulation. On SSB, the ratio of PEP to average power varies with different voice characteristics. With most voices, the PEP reading is three to five times higher than the average voice power reading. The most accurate PEP readings are obtained only with sustained carrier, voice or two-tone test modulation. During normal voice modulation, the wattmeter will typically indicate only 70% of the true Peak Envelope Power.
4. Forward power is displayed on the left-hand FORWARD meter scale. This scale is calibrated from 0 to 300 Watts and is read directly in the **300W (in)** position. Each picket (scale mark) represents 5 Watts below 10 Watts, 10 Watts between 10 and 100 Watts, and 25 Watts between 100 and 300 Watts. In the **30W (out)** position, the forward power scale must be divided by 10. Each picket represents 0.5 Watts below 1 watt, 1 watt from 1 to 10 Watts, and 2.5 Watts from 10 to 30 Watts.
5. The reflected power is read on the right-hand REFLECTED meter scale. Reflected power is 60 Watts full scale when the **300W (in)** power scale is selected, and 6 Watts full scale when the **30W (out)** power scale is selected.
6. The most accurate power readings occur in the upper half of the meter scales. When trying to measure power with a less than perfect match, the reflected power should be subtracted from the forward power reading in order to find the true power.
7. The SWR is read directly from nine red SWR curves that range from 1:1 to ∞ . SWR is measured by observing the point where the forward and reflected power needles cross. The SWR is indicated by the red curve closest to the needle crossing point.

Calibration

The MFJ-817C has been calibrated at the factory. If it should ever need to be recalibrated, then follow this procedure:

Equipment Needed

1. Transmitter capable of supplying enough power to obtain ½ to full-scale reading at 144/220/440 MHz.
2. 50-ohm dummy load that is capable of handling full transmitter output power and has better than a 1.15:1 SWR at 144/220/440 MHz.
3. Power meter of known accuracy. The calibration will only be as good as the standard reference meter.
4. 50-ohm cables capable of handling the power. RG-58/u is recommended. DO NOT USE RG-59 or RG-11.

Meter Calibration

1. Refer to *Figure 1* for the Test Setup and refer to the PCB layout in *Figure 2* for trim pot location.
2. Remove the top of the MFJ-817C.
3. Connect the Test Setup equipment as shown in *Figure 1*. Use a 50-ohm dummy load for the antenna. Set the Transmitter to the 144/220/440 MHz in the VHF/UHF band.
4. With the **300/30 Watts** button pushed **in** for the 300 Watt scale, Transmit 100 Watts as indicated on the reference meter. Adjust the HI FWD trim pot to set the forward power scale to 100 Watts.
5. With the **300/30 Watts** button pushed **out** for the 30 Watt scale, Transmit 10 Watts as indicated on the reference meter. Adjust the LO FWD trim pot to set the forward power scale to 10 Watts.
6. To set the reflected power, interchange the TRANSMITTER and ANTENNA coax cables so that the transmitter is connected to the ANTENNA connector and the dummy load is connected to the TRANSMITTER connector.
7. With the **300/30 Watts** button pushed **in** for the 60 Watt reflected scale, Transmit 10 Watts as indicated on the reference meter. Adjust the HI REF trim pot to set the reflected power scale to 10 Watts.

Meter Calibration (cont.)

8. With the **300/30 Watts** button pushed **out** for the 6 Watt reflected scale, Transmit 1 Watt as indicated on the reference meter. Adjust the LO REF trim pot to set the reflected power scale to 1 Watt.
9. SWR requires no calibration.
10. Repeat each calibration for each frequency if needed until the meter has the correct readings on each frequency.

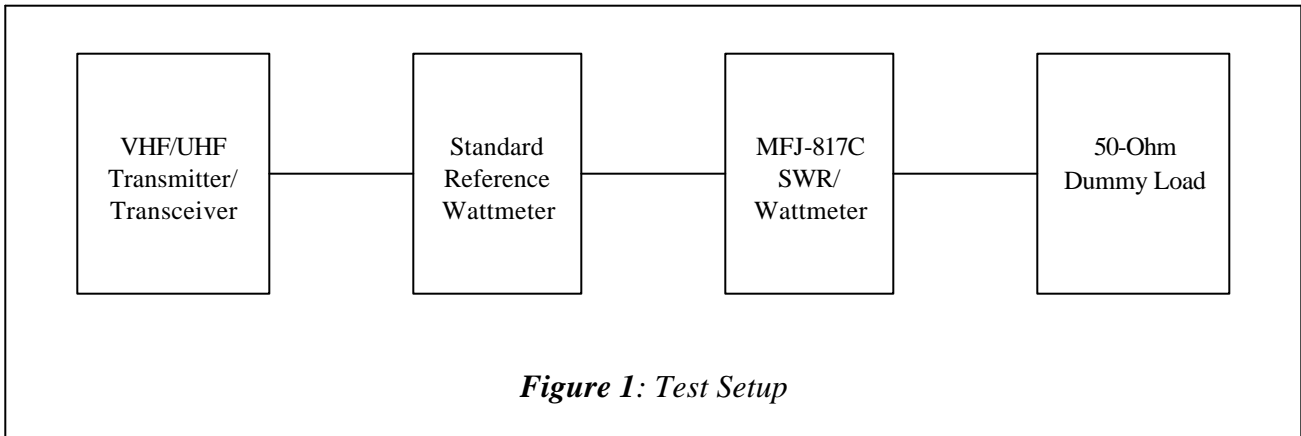


Figure 1: Test Setup

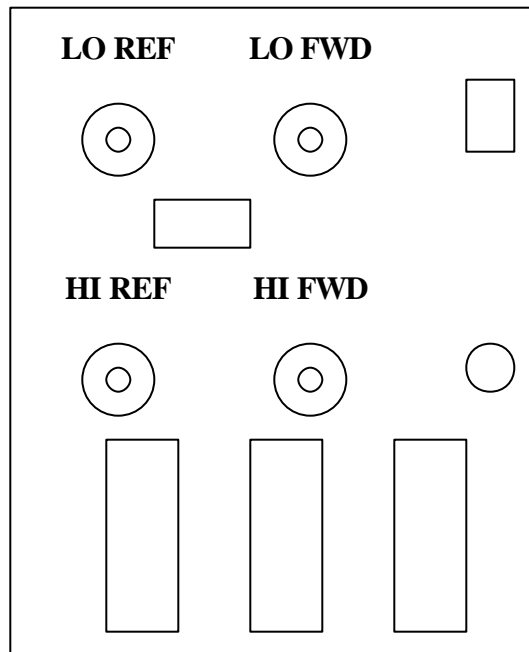


Figure 2: PCB Layout and Trim Pot Location

Technical Assistance

If you have any problem with this unit first check the appropriate section of this manual. If the manual does not reference your problem or reading the manual does not solve your problem, you may call *MFJ Technical Service* at **662-323-0549** or the *MFJ Factory* at **662-323-5869**. You will be best helped if you have your unit, manual and all information on your station handy so you can answer any questions the technicians may ask.

You can also send questions by mail to MFJ Enterprises, Inc., 300 Industrial Park Road, Starkville, MS 39759; by Facsimile (FAX) to 662-323-6551; or by email to techinfo@mfjenterprises.com. Send a complete description of your problem, an explanation of exactly how you are using your unit, and a complete description of your station.