

Frequently Asked Questions about Fixed Coaxial Attenuators....

What are the advantages of Weinschel's fixed attenuators?

Aeroflex / Weinschel low power fixed attenuators feature a combination of advantages over other designs:*

1. Most Aeroflex / Weinschel attenuators feature injection molded dielectric for better center pin captivation and alignment. Injection molded dielectric also eliminates the need for the epoxy hole "stake" as seen in other designs. This epoxy hole in other designs is subject to RF leakage and movement when exposed to environmental extremes and prolonged use.
2. Aeroflex / Weinschel fixed attenuators have a proprietary resistor element, fired at 950°C for superior long term stability over temperature, power and time. The attenuator element is trimmed for precise custom attenuation values.
3. Aeroflex / Weinschel fixed attenuators have no solder contacts. They feature spring loaded plunger contacts to the resistor cards that provide expansion tolerance over wide temperature and power ranges.
4. Aeroflex / Weinschel fixed attenuators are made with high quality materials and machined to very close tolerances. The result is a design that stands up to severe environmental and multiple matings.
5. High power designs feature special high temperature dielectric support beads.

Does Aeroflex / Weinschel offer high reliability fixed attenuators?



Yes. Aeroflex / Weinschel is a major QPL supplier of **MIL-DTL-3933, CLASS III/IV, N/S** Fixed Attenuators. Most Weinschel Fixed Coaxial Attenuators can be supplied according to customer specified testing, environmental or military or government specification requirements.

Hi-Rel units can be laser-marked and are manufactured from materials which have a TML of less than 1% and CVCM less than 0.1%. Refer to page 25 for more details.

What is a bidirectional and unidirectional attenuator?

All Aeroflex / Weinschel attenuators are bidirectional unless they are specified as unidirectional in the power rating specification. Bidirectional means the maximum specified power can be applied to either the input or output of the attenuator. Unidirectional means the maximum specified power can only be applied to the input port of the attenuator. Unidirectional designs allow for smaller overall package sizes and reduced costs. All our attenuators have maximum average and peak pulse input power limits. The average power limit decreases linearly as the ambient temperature increases. If these limits are exceeded, burnout of the attenuator element results or its calibration may be permanently changed. When used within its specifications, an attenuator is an indispensable component in measurement and system applications.

*Most designs, some features may not apply to certain low cost attenuator designs.

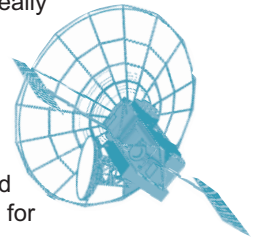
What dB values are available besides those in the catalog?

Most any dB value is available; however you should consult your local sales representative or the factory for design availability for a particular dB value for the selected model. There is generally an additional charge for non-catalog values.

Can Aeroflex / Weinschel provide attenuators for space applications?

Yes. Aeroflex / Weinschel fixed attenuators are being used on a wide variety of military and commercial communication satellites. "S" level fixed attenuators can be provided for any dB value up to 40 dB from dc to 40 GHz. Aeroflex / Weinschel has recently introduced Models 32 (page 24) and 32J (page 23) standard fixed attenuators that operates from dc to 18 or 32 GHz. These attenuators offer superior electrical and mechanical design that is ideally suited for space applications.

Aeroflex / Weinschel's use of precision connectors, injection molded captivation of connector contacts (no solder or contact fingers) and very precise and stable resistors result in a superior electrical and mechanical design that is ideally suited for space applications.



Aeroflex / Weinschel program experience includes:

Aussat (Optus)	SSTI	JCSAT
KOREASAT	GlobalStar	GEM
TDRSS	ICO	SMTS
TELSTAR	INTELSAT	AGILA
GOES	ACeS	MSAT
MILSTAR	EOS	TOMS

...and many others.

Aeroflex / Weinschel offers extensive testing programs for space qualified attenuators and other components that can include:

Random Vibration: Random and/or Sine Vibration up to 100 g rms.

Monitored Thermal Cycle: Units monitored for open condition over -55 to +85°C temperature range.

Thermal Shock: Performed per MIL-STD-202, Method 107.

Burn-In Testing: Performed at rated power and operating temperature from 96 to 360 hours typical.

Mechanical Shock: Performed per MIL-STD-202, Method 213 Test Condition F up to 1000 G peak.

Moisture Resistance Testing: Performed per MIL-STD-202, Method 106. (except sub-cycle 7b is not applicable) with connectors capped.

Salt Spray: Performed per MIL-STD-202, Method 101 with connectors capped.



Fixed Coaxial Attenuators



Can Weinschel provide special fixed attenuators?

Yes. Aeroflex / Weinschel has produced over 2000 custom fixed attenuator designs. Specials continue to be a significant part of Weinschel's product offering. Special features may include:

1. Custom Connector Configurations
2. Matched Pairs or Sets
3. Lower VSWR & Higher Accuracy
4. Special Mounting & Environmental Conditions
5. Unique Test Requirements & Data

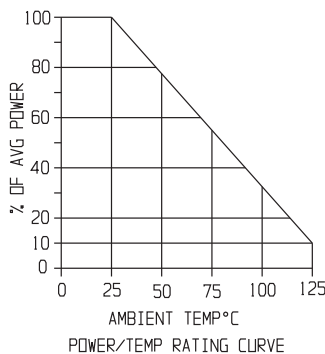
Does Weinschel offer any attenuators with IM3 specified?

Yes Aeroflex / Weinschel has recently introduced new as well as updated models specifically for applications requiring low intermodulation distortion. Models are available with the low IM options are...24, 33, 40, 45, 46, 47, 48, 48, 53, 57, & 58. Refer to the page 17 for a product line overview or the specific data sheet for IM3 details.

How is the temperature or power coefficient specification applied?

These specifications tell how much the attenuation will change when the ambient temperature or input power changes. First multiply the catalog temperature coefficient or power coefficient by the ambient temperature range or input power range to which the attenuator will be exposed. Then multiply that number by the dB value of the attenuator. The result is the maximum change in attenuation than can be expected over the ambient temperature range or power range that was specified.

How is the attenuator power rating calculated?



An attenuator will handle specified power at ambient temperatures as specified in the catalog. No special fan cooling is required. At higher temperatures the power rating is calculated by using catalog specifications and a straight line graph (Example shown above). For instance the power rating of the Model 48 attenuator is 100 watts at 25°C and 10 watts at

125°C. Using linear graph paper, plot a straight line between these two points. This plot shows that the power rating at 75°C is approximately 56 Watts.

Does Aeroflex / Weinschel offer attenuators sets or attenuation test kits?

Aeroflex / Weinschel offers a variety of attenuation standard sets consisting of precision designed fixed attenuators. These sets are ideally suited for standards and research laboratories as well as production, quality control, and inspection departments. Aeroflex / Weinschel attenuation sets are available in either 3, 6, 10, 20 dB or 1, 3, 6, 10, 20,

30 dB attenuation values. Each attenuator is tested in 1 GHz intervals to minimize interpolation error. The attenuator sets are available in stainless steel type N (Model 1 & 44), and 3.5mm (Model 56) connectors. Custom sets with other connector type and higher power sets are also available upon request. Refer to page 60 for more details.



What is Third-Order Intermodulation Distortion?

(IM3) Intermodulation distortion (IM) consists of the spurious signals which result from the mixing of nth order frequencies in the non-linear elements of a component. Third order intermodulation distortion is of particular interest because third order products typically represent the highest level distortion appearing close to the desired signal, and as such the highest level non-filterable distortion. Third order IM level (IM3) is tested by injecting two pure tones of equal magnitude (f1 and f2) into the component to be tested. The third order IM products will appear in the output spectrum at the frequencies 2f1-f2 and 2f2-f1. These products are characterized by defining their level (in dBc) relative to the fundamental output tones at either f1 or f2.

Applications....

Aeroflex / Weinschel Attenuators are used in a wide variety of applications in the electronic field for the control or measurement of radio frequency energy. Attenuators are used as accurate standards in the measurement of loss or gain by the RF substitution method. They are used as a means of extending the dynamic range of measuring equipment such as power meters, field intensity meters, spectrum analyzers, and amplifiers, or to prevent overloading of receivers and amplifiers. They also reduce, by masking, the effects of variable or mismatched impedances on such circuit elements as oscillator, T-junctions, mixers, etc.

Fixed Attenuators can satisfy almost any requirement involving a reduction in power. Attenuators designed and manufactured by Weinschel Corporation are very stable and remain precision calibrated over wide ranges of humidity, temperature, and other ambient conditions for long periods of time.