

1. RCA DATE OF MANUFACTURE

FOR GLASS RECEIVING TUBES

The "etched" octagon giving the tube type carried breaks indicating the year and month of manufacture, as shown in the Dowd* brochure. A break in the corner gave year; in the straight part, the month.

* "Dating the RCA (Cunningham) Composition-Base Radio Receiving Tubes — From Mid-1924 thru 1941," available from Antique Electronic Supply, (602) 820-5411, as their No. 8-343.

FOR METAL RECEIVING TUBES

The following system apparently went into use in November, 1950. The code, stamped into the base ring of the tube, comprised a letter for the year and a number (1 through 6) for each two-month interval (Jan.-Feb., etc.) within the year.

Year letters were:

1944	H	1949	J	1953	T	1957	S	1961	N	1966	Z	1970	P
1945	A	1950	C	1954	X	1958	K	1963	F	1967	U	1971	Y
1947	N	1951	Z	1955	R	1959	H	1964	J	1968	T	1972	S
1948	F	1952	U	1956	Y	1960	A	1965	C	1969	X	1973	K

Note the ambiguous 15-year repeat of the letters, except for "P" and "R."

The month-number and year-letter sequence was reversed each month. For example, "C6" designates Nov. 1950, whereas "6C" designates Dec. 1950.

[Editor's note: The subsection on "Special-Purpose Tubes" is omitted here.]

2. RCA DATE OF SHIPMENT

From 1-1-36 to 7-1-45: The shipping date code for *RCA-brand* tubes used a letter for the year, plus a number (1 to 6) for each two-month period within the year, plus "E" for OEM sales. Lack of "E" indicates a tube for distributor sale. The year letters followed the Z-U-T-X sequence seen before:

1936	Z	1938	T	1940	R	1942	S	1944	H
1937	U	1939	X	1941	Y	1943	K	1945	V

On Government tubes, the "E" was printed separately, typically below the date code.

Private-brand tubes generally used a shipping date code of two or three characters. An initial letter (A through L, including I) gives month, followed by the last digit of the year. Bulk-packed (OEM) tubes also carried an "E"; individual-packed (distributor) ones did not. Thus "J5" indicates distributor shipment in Oct. 1945; "L5E" indicates OEM shipment in Dec. 1945. (Note the opportunity for confusion with the non-private-brand tubes under the system immediately above: "H5E," say, could mean either of two dates.)

From 1-46 to 8-56: For all tubes, the code was the last digit of the year plus a month indicator comprising the RMA/EIA week code, quantized to 04 (Jan.), 08 (Feb.), 52 (Dec.), etc. Included is a "sales basis" code: a dash between year and month indicated tubes sold on an adjustment basis; no dash indicates sale on an allowance-in-lieu-of-adjustment basis (i. e., renewal vs. OEM business). This scheme covers private- brand tubes, except where a buyer's special code applies, but not Government tubes.

From 9-56: For **RCA-brand** renewal entertainment receiving types and (effective Feb. 1970) nuvistors, the code was:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1956*									KC	KD	KE	KF
1957*	KG	KH	KI	KJ	KK	KL	KM	KN	KO	KP	KQ	KR
1958	KS	KT	KU	KV	KW	KX	KY	KZ	LA	LB	LC	LD
1959	LE	LF	LG	LH	LI	LJ	LK	LL	LM	LN	LO	LP
1960	LQ	LR	LS	LT	LU	LV	LW	LX	LY	LZ	MA	MB
1961	MC	MD	ME	MF	MG	MH	MI	MJ	MK	ML	MM	MN
1962	MO	MP	MQ	MR	MS	MT	MU	MV	MW	MX	MY	MZ
1963	NA	NB	NC	ND	NE	NF	NG	NH	NI	NJ	NK	NL
1964	NM	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK
1965	AL	AM	AN	AO	AP	AQ	AR	AS	AT	AU	AV	AW
1966	AX	AY	AZ	BA	BB	BC	BD	BE	BF	BG	BH	BI
1967	BJ	BK	BL	BM	BN	BO	BP	BQ	BR	BS	BT	BU
1968	BV	BW	BX	BY	BZ	CA	CB	CC	CD	CE	CF	CG
1969	CH	CI	CJ	CK	CL	CM	CN	CO	CP	CQ	CR	CS
1970	CT	CU	CV	CW	CX	CY	CZ	DA	DB	DC	DD	DE
1971	DF	DG	DH	DI	DJ	DK	DL	DM	DN	DO	DP	DQ
1972	DR	DS	DT	DU	DV	DW	DX	DY	DZ	EA	EB	EC
1973	ED	EE	EF	EG	EH	EI	EJ	EK	EL	EM	EN	EO
1974	EP	EQ	ER	ES	ET	EU	EV	EW	EX	EY	EZ	FA
1975	FB	FC	FD	FE	FF	FG	FH	FI	FJ	FK	FL	FM
1976	FN	FO	FP	FQ	FR	FS	FT	FU	FV	FW	FX	FY

* 1956 and 1957 are unconfirmed; the notice sheet is missing.