

AN-1472 LM2694 Evaluation Board

1 Introduction

The LM2694EVAL evaluation board provides the design engineer with a fully functional buck regulator, employing the constant on-time (COT) operating principle. This evaluation board provides a 5 V output over an input range of 8 V - 30 V. The circuit delivers load currents to 0.5A, with current limit set at $\approx 0.65A$. The board is populated with all external components except R4, C6, C9 and C12. These components provide options for managing the output ripple voltage as described later in this document.

The board's specification are:

- Input Voltage: 8V to 30V
- Output Voltage: 5V
- Maximum load current: 0.5A
- Minimum load current: 0A
- Current Limit: 0.65A
- Measured Efficiency: 93.4% ($V_{IN} = 8V, I_{OUT} = 200\text{ mA}$)
- Nominal Switching Frequency: 250 kHz
- Size: 2.25 in. x 0.88 in. x 0.55 in

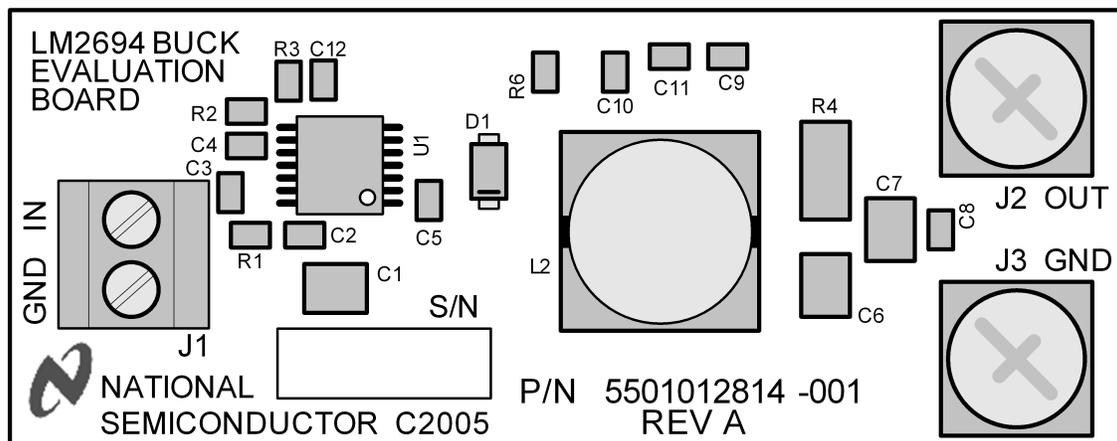


Figure 1. Evaluation Board - Top Side

2 Theory of Operation

Refer to the evaluation board schematic in [Figure 5](#). When the circuit is in regulation, the buck switch is on each cycle for a time determined by R1 and V_{IN} according to [Equation 1](#):

$$t_{ON} = \frac{1.14 \times 10^{-10} \times (R1 + 1.4k)}{(V_{IN} - 1.5V)} + 95\text{ ns} \quad (1)$$

The on-time of this evaluation board ranges from ≈ 2600 ns at $V_{IN} = 8$ V, to ≈ 660 ns at $V_{IN} = 30$ V. The on-time varies inversely with V_{IN} to maintain a nearly constant switching frequency. At the end of each on-time the Minimum Off-Timer ensures the buck switch is off for at least 265 ns. In normal operation, the off-time is much longer. During the off-time, the output capacitor (C7) is discharged by the load current. When the output voltage falls sufficiently that the voltage at FB is below 2.5V, the regulation comparator initiates a new on-time period. For stable, fixed frequency operation, ≈ 25 mV of ripple is required at FB to switch the regulation comparator. For a detailed block diagram and a complete description of the various functional blocks, see the *LM2694 30V, 600 mA Step Down Switching Regulator Data Sheet* ([SNVS444](#)).

3 Board Layout and Probing

The pictorial in [Figure 1](#) shows the placement of the circuit components. The following should be kept in mind when the board is powered:

- When operating at high input voltage and high load current, forced air flow is recommended.
- The LM2694, and diode D1 may be hot to the touch when operating at high input voltage and high load current.
- Use CAUTION when probing the circuit at high input voltages to prevent injury, as well as possible damage to the circuit.
- At maximum load current (0.5A), the wire size and length used to connect the load becomes important. Ensure there is not a significant drop in the wires between this evaluation board and the load.

4 Board Connection/Start-up

The input connections are made to the J1 connector. The load is connected to the OUT and GND terminals. Ensure the wires are adequately sized for the intended load current. Before start-up a voltmeter should be connected to the input terminals, and to the output terminals. The load current should be monitored with an ammeter or a current probe. It is recommended that the input voltage be increased gradually to 8 V, at which time the output voltage should be 5 V. If the output voltage is correct with 8 V at V_{IN} , then increase the input voltage as desired and proceed with evaluating the circuit.

5 Output Ripple Control

The LM2694 requires a minimum of 25 mVp-p ripple at the FB pin, in phase with the switching waveform at the SW pin, for proper operation. In the simplest configuration that ripple is derived from (see [Figure 4](#)), the ripple at the output, generated by the inductor's ripple current flowing through R4. That ripple voltage is attenuated by the feedback resistors, requiring that the ripple amplitude at OUT be higher than the minimum of 25 mVp-p by the gain factor. Options for reducing the output ripple are discussed below, and the results are shown in the graph of [Figure 8](#).

5.1 Minimum Output Ripple

This evaluation board is supplied configured for minimum ripple at OUT. The output ripple, that ranges from 2 mVp-p at $V_{IN} = 8$ V to 3 mVp-p at $V_{IN} = 30$ V, is determined primarily by the ESR of output capacitor (C7) and the inductor's ripple current that ranges from 60 mAp-p to 100 mAp-p over the input voltage range. The ripple voltage required by the FB pin is generated by R6, C10 and C11 since the SW pin switches from -1 V to V_{IN} , and the right end of C10 is a virtual ground. The values for R6 and C10 are chosen to generate a 30-40 mVp-p triangle waveform at their junction. That triangle wave is then coupled to the FB pin through C11. [Equation 2](#) The following procedure is used to calculate values for R6, C10 and C11:

- Calculate the voltage V_A using [Equation 2](#):

$$V_A = V_{OUT} - (V_{SW} \times (1 - (V_{OUT}/V_{IN}))) \quad (2)$$

where V_{SW} is the absolute value of the voltage at the SW pin during the off-time (typically 1V), and V_{IN} is the minimum input voltage. For this circuit V_A calculates to 4.63V. This is the DC voltage at the R6/C10 junction, and is used in [Equation 3](#).

- Calculate the R6 x C10 product:

$$R6 \times C10 = \frac{(V_{IN} - V_A) \times t_{ON}}{\Delta V} \quad (3)$$

where t_{ON} is the maximum on-time (≈ 2600 ns), V_{IN} is the minimum input voltage, and ΔV is the desired ripple amplitude at the R6/C10 junction, 30 mVp-p for this example.

$$R6 \times C10 = \frac{(8V - 4.63V) \times 2600 \text{ ns}}{0.03V} = 2.9 \times 10^{-4} \tag{4}$$

R6 and C10 are then chosen from standard value components to satisfy the above product. For example, C10 can be 2700 pF requiring R6 to be 110 kΩ. C11 is chosen to be 0.01 μF, large compared to C10. The circuit as supplied on this EVB is shown in Figure 2.

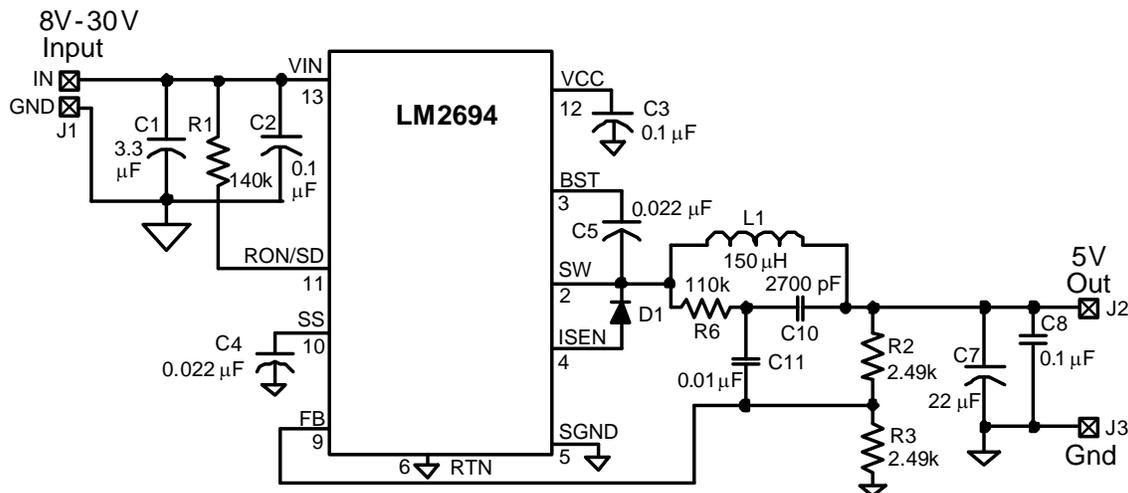


Figure 2. Minimum Output Ripple Configuration

5.2 Intermediate Ripple Level Configuration

This configuration generates more ripple at the output than the above configuration, but uses one less capacitor. If some ripple can be tolerated in the application, this configuration is slightly more economical, and simpler. R4 and C6 and C9 are used instead of R6, C7, C8, C10 and C11, as shown in Figure 3.

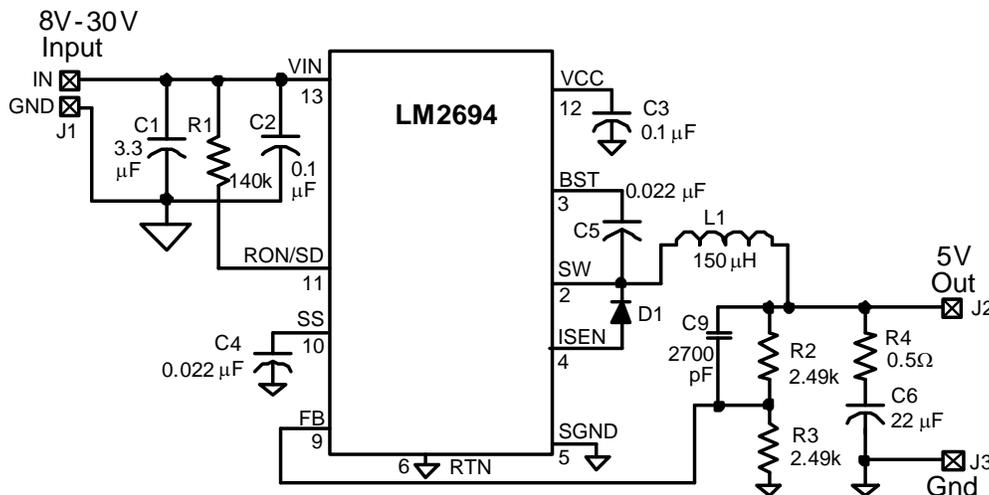


Figure 3. Intermediate Ripple Configuration

R4 is chosen to generate ≥ 25 mV - 30 mVp-p at the output, knowing that the minimum ripple current in this circuit is 60 mA_{p-p} at minimum V_{IN} . C9 couples that ripple to the FB pin without the attenuation of the feedback resistors. C9's minimum value is calculated from Equation 5:

$$C9 = \frac{t_{ON(max)}}{(R2//R3)} \tag{5}$$

where $t_{ON(max)}$ is the maximum on-time (at minimum V_{IN}), and $R2//R3$ is the equivalent parallel value of the feedback resistors. For this evaluation board, $t_{ON(max)}$ is approximately 2600 ns, and $R2//R3 = 1.25$ k Ω , and C9 calculates to a minimum of 2080 pF. The resulting ripple at the output ranges from 30 mVp-p to 80 mVp-p over the input voltage range.

5.3 Lowest Cost Configuration

This configuration is the same as option B above, but without C9. Since 25 mVp-p are required at the FB pin, R4 is chosen to generate 50 mV at OUT, knowing that the minimum ripple current in this circuit is 60 mA_{p-p} at minimum V_{IN} . To allow for tolerances, 1.0 Ω is used for R4. The resulting ripple at OUT ranges from ≈ 60 mVp-p to ≈ 100 mVp-p over the input voltage range. If the application can tolerate this ripple level, this is the most economical solution. The circuit is shown in Figure 4. An alternative to this circuit is to eliminate R4 if C6 has sufficient ESR.

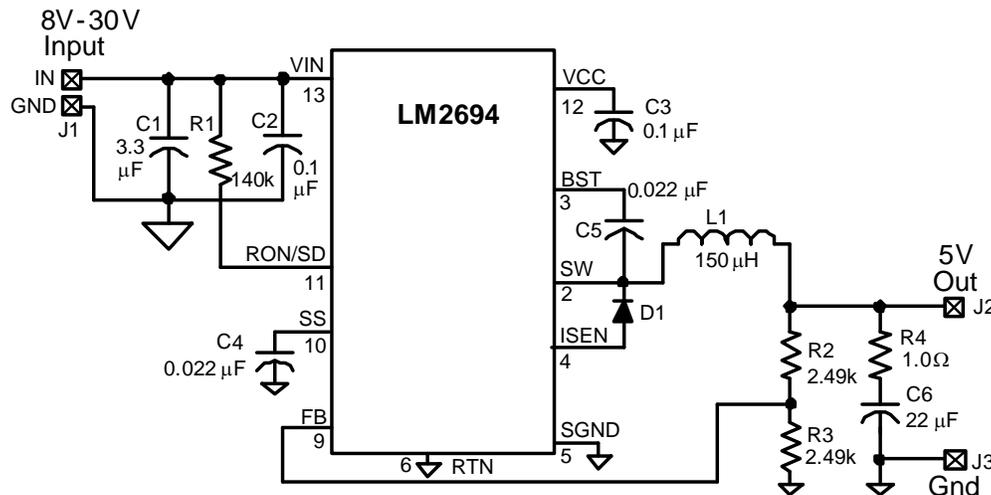


Figure 4. Lowest Cost Configuration

6 Minimum Load Current

The LM2694 requires a minimum load current of ≈ 500 μ A to ensure the boost capacitor (C5) is recharged sufficiently during each off-time. In this evaluation board, the minimum load current is provided by the feedback resistor (R2, R3), allowing the board's minimum load current to be specified at zero.

7 Circuit Performance

Figure 6 through Figure 9 indicate the performance of this evaluation board. Figure 10 indicates waveforms at various points within the circuit and Figure 11 indicates how the output responds to the load current changing between 200 mA and 400 mA. Figure 12 indicates the preferred method for using a scope probe to measure output ripple and transient waveforms. The probe's ground ring touches the output ground terminal (J3) and the probe's tip touches the 5V output terminal (J2). This method eliminates noise and switching spikes which the probe's ground lead would pick up if it were used.

8 Circuit Performance

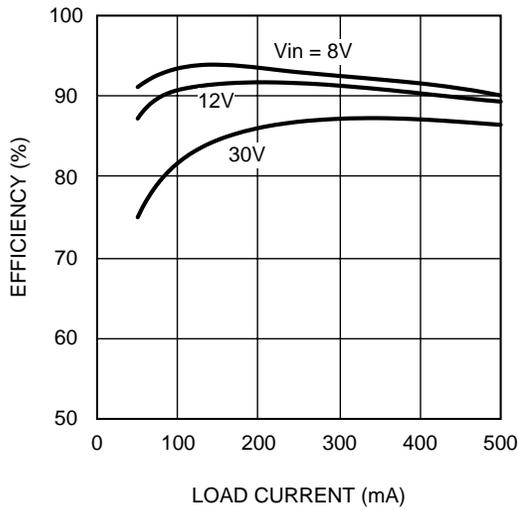


Figure 6. Efficiency vs Load Current

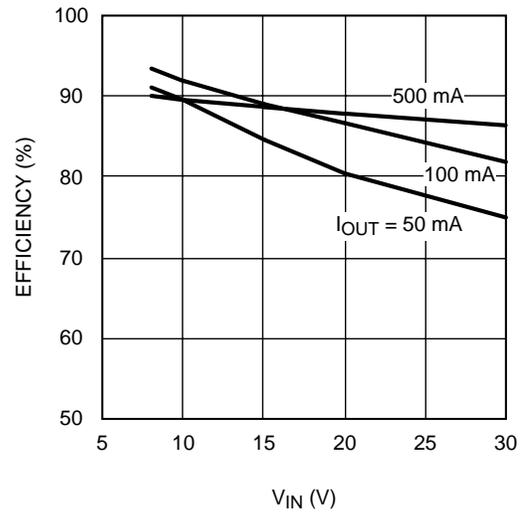


Figure 7. Efficiency vs Input Voltage

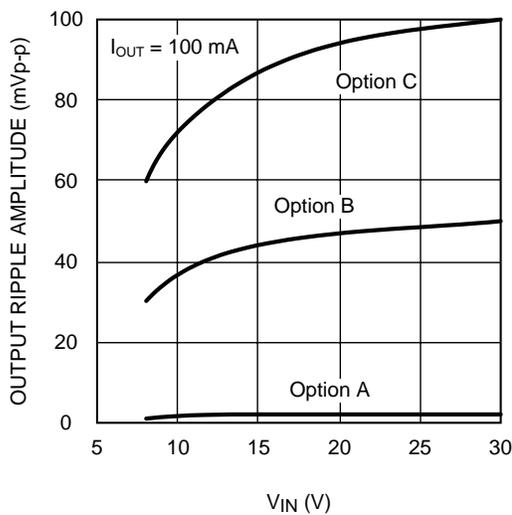


Figure 8. Output Voltage Ripple

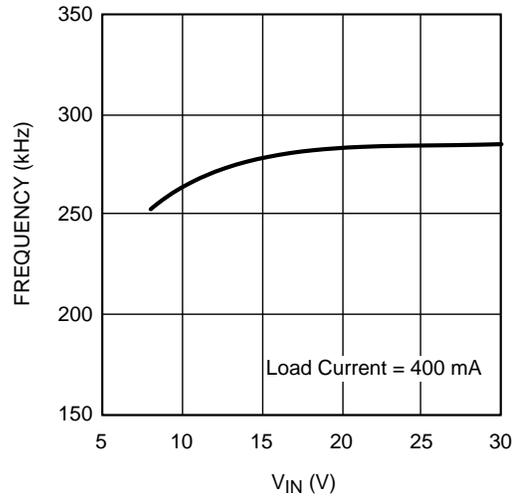


Figure 9. Switching Frequency vs. Input Voltage

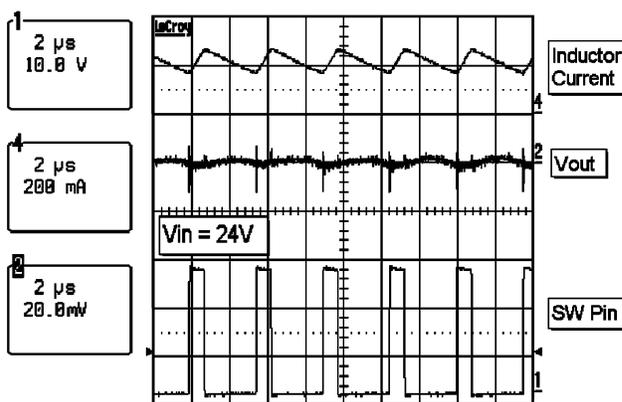


Figure 10. Circuit Waveforms

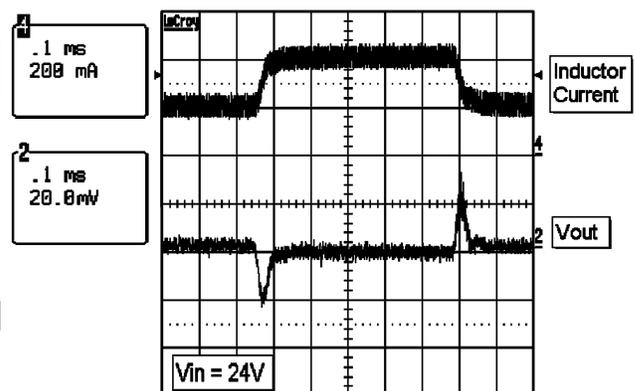


Figure 11. Transient Response

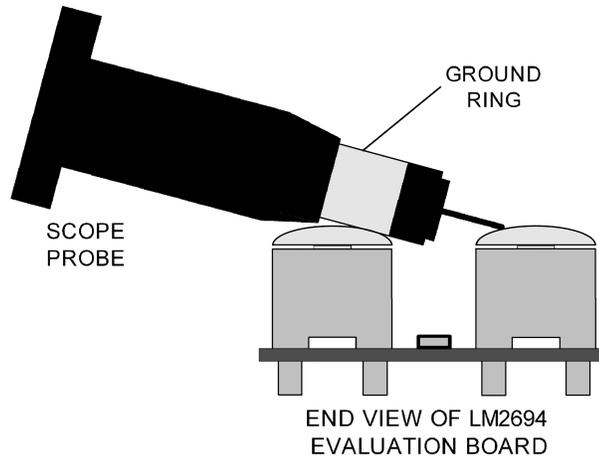


Figure 12. Preferred Method for Measuring Output Waveforms

9 PCB Layout

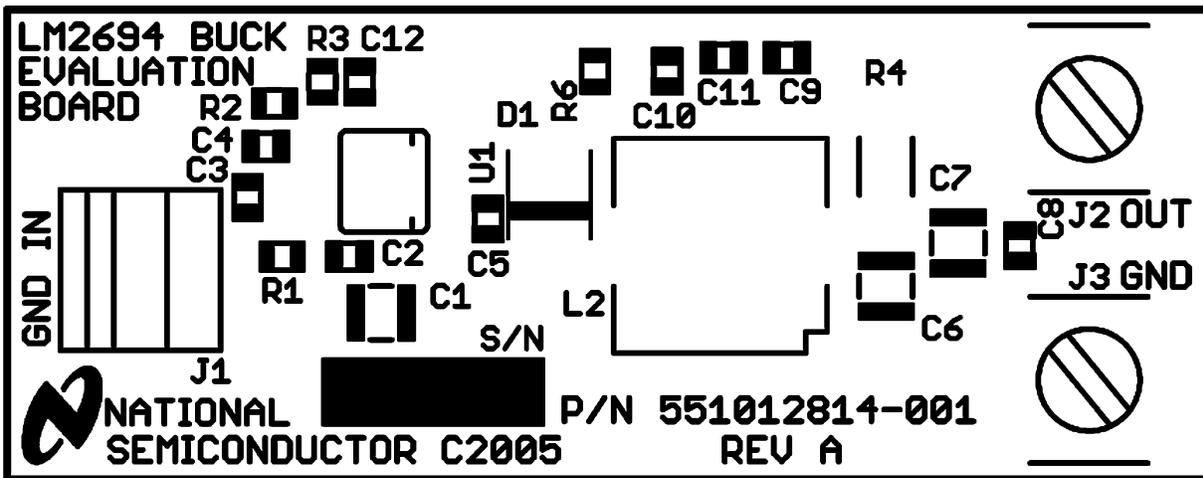


Figure 13. Board Silkscreen

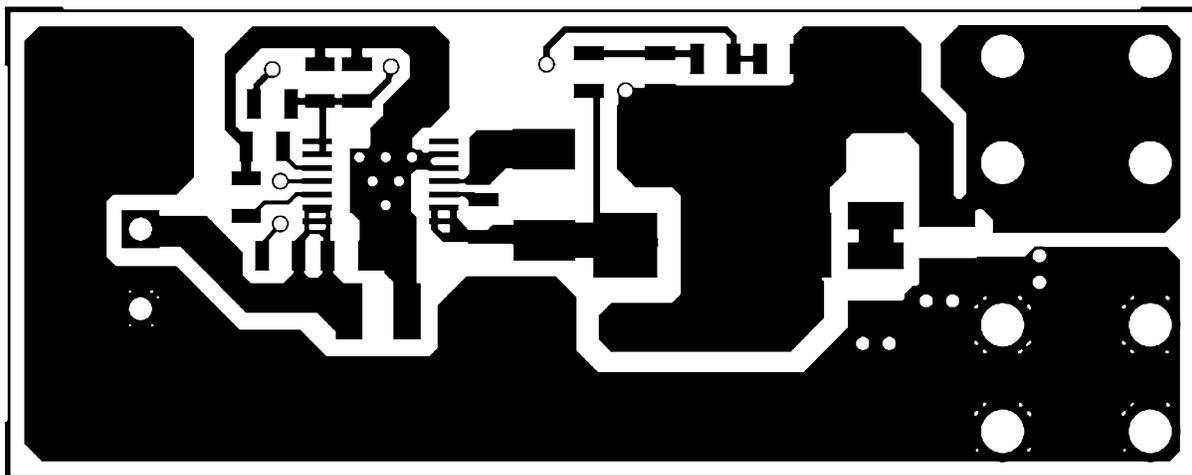


Figure 14. Board Top Layer

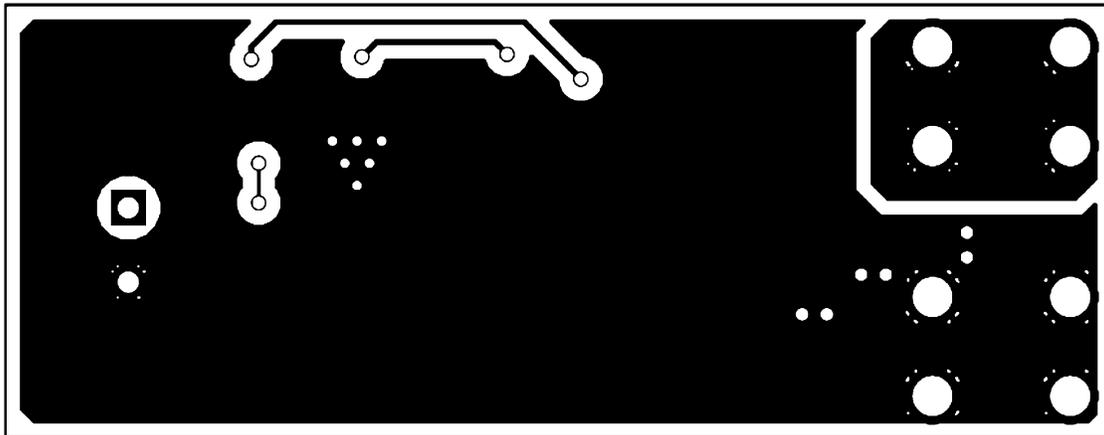


Figure 15. Board Bottom Layer (viewed from top)

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