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PROCESS FOR PRODUCING MULTILAYER PRINTED CIRCUIT BOARDS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a process for producing a multilayer printed circuit board.

Multilayer printed circuit boards are produced by laminating a plurality of inner layer plates obtained by forming circuits on copper-clad laminates and a plurality of single-sided copper-clad laminates or copper foils via prepregs obtained by impregnating glass cloth as a base material with a resin, followed by pressing with heating to cure with heating, and forming circuits on outer surfaces of the integrated copper-clad laminates containing inner layer circuits therein.

With recent tendency of miniaturization, higher performance, and more function of electronic devices, multilayer printed circuit boards have become higher in density, thinner in individual layers, finer in wiring, smaller in diameter for connecting individual layers, and to use interstitial via holes (hereinafter referred to as "IVHs") for connecting only neighboring wiring layers. Now, in order to make wiring density higher, a smaller diameter of IVH is required.

A prior art multilayer printed circuit board having IVHs is produced by laminating an inner layer

circuit substrate 1 obtained by forming circuit on a copper-clad laminate and a pair of single-sided copper-clad laminates or copper foils 3 via a plurality of prepregs 9 as shown in Fig. 2A, adhering under pressure
5 with heating to give an integrated copper-clad laminate having interlayer circuits therein as shown in Fig. 2B, drilling holes on predetermined positions so as to reach the interlayer circuits to form holes 5 for IVH as shown in Fig. 2C, if necessary, drilling a through
10 hole 6 according to a prior art process as shown in Fig. 2D, connecting the interlayer circuits and outer layer copper foils by electroless copper plating and electric copper plating 7 as shown in Fig. 2E, forming etching resists 8 on the outer layer copper foils as
15 shown in Fig. 2F, conducting selective etchings as shown in Figs. 2G and 2H, and removing the etching resists as shown in Fig. 2I.

According to prior art processes, polyimide films are used as a material capable of chemical
20 etching using hydrazine, etc. as disclosed, for example, in JP-A 50-4577, JP-A 51-27464, JP-A 53-49068, etc. Further, processes for etching epoxy resin cured articles used for printed circuit boards with concentrated sulfuric acid, chromic acid, permanganic acid,
25 etc. (surface roughness, smear treatment) are disclosed, for example, in JP-A 54-144968 and JP-A 62-104197.

According to the prior art processes for

forming holes for IVH, since holes are drilled until interlayer circuits are reached, it is impossible to conduct the drilling by laminating a plurality of printed circuit boards in contrast to drilling of through holes. Thus, the drilling is conducted one after another, resulting in requiring a long period of time and giving poor productivity. Further, in order to control the depth of the point of drill, the depth of copper wiring patterns is coincided with. But since there is a variation in thickness of multilayer printed circuit boards, there take place cases of reaching the interlayer circuits or not, and in the case of thin intralayer thickness, holes contact with a wiring circuit of the layer thereunder, resulting in causing defective electrical connection. In addition, when holes of 0.3 mm or less in diameter are drilled, the life of drill is remarkably shortened due to loss of core center and working of resin layers containing a glass cloth substrate.

On the other hand, according to prior art chemical etching methods, the use of hydrazine is not preferable due to its toxicity, and the use of concentrated sulfuric acid, chromic acid or permanganic acid is not preferable due to designation of special chemical substances. These chemical substances should be avoided from the viewpoint of safety.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provides a process for producing a multilayer printed circuit board containing interstitial via holes (VHs) that are excellent in mass productivity, connection reliability and electrical properties, are able to be thin and show excellent safety during production.

The present invention provides a process for producing a multilayer printed circuit board, which comprises the step of:

laminating on an interlayer plate having conductor circuits thereon a thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet having a copper foil on one side, so as to make the resin side of the sheet contact with the interlayer plate, followed by pressing with heating to cure the resin and to give an integrated laminate, said thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet having been prepared by integrating a copper foil with a thermosetting epoxy resin composition comprising (a) an epoxy polymer having a film-forming ability and a weight-average molecular weight of 100,000 or more, obtained by polymerizing a bifunctional epoxy resin and a bifunctional halogenated phenol in an equivalent weight ratio of epoxy group:phenolic hydroxyl group of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1, (b) a crosslinking agent, and (c) a polyfunctional epoxy resin, and curing the resin composition to become a B-stage condition, forming an etching resist on the copper foil

of the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet,
followed by formation of fine holes in the copper foil
surface by selective etching,

removing the etching resist,

5 removing the cured resin layer under the fine
holes by etching using an etching solution comprising
(A) an amide as a solvent, (B) an alkali metal
compound, and (C) an alcohol as a solvent to form via
holes and expose parts of the conductor circuits,

10 plating a metal layer or coating an electro-
conductive paste so as to electrically connecting the
conductor circuits of the interlayer plate and an outer
layer copper foil,

forming an etching resist on the outer layer
15 copper foil, followed by formation of wiring circuits
on the copper foil by selective etching, and
removing the etching resist.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figs. 1A to 1M are schematic cross-sectional
20 views explaining the steps of producing the multilayer
printed circuit board according to one example of the
present invention.

Figs. 2A to 2I are schematic cross-sectional
views explaining the steps of producing a multilayer
25 printed circuit board according to prior art.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In accordance with the present invention, there has been made studies of various resin compositions containing no glass cloth as a base material and able to be thinned and suitable for forming holes for IVHs by chemical etching in one simple processing. As a result, in accordance with the invention, a thermosetting epoxy resin composition has been found to be subjected to chemical etching after thermal curing, and an etching solution therefor.

According to the present invention, a multilayer printed circuit board can be produced by laminating on an interlayer plate having conductor circuits thereon a thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheets, each sheet having a copper foil on one side, so as to make the resin side of the sheet contact with the interlayer plate, followed by pressing with heating to cure the resin and to give an integrated laminate, said thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet having been prepared by integrating a copper foil with a thermosetting epoxy resin composition comprising (a) an epoxy polymer having a film-forming ability and a weight-average molecular weight of 100,000 or more, obtained by polymerizing a bifunctional epoxy resin and a bifunctional halogenated phenol in an equivalent weight ratio of epoxy group:phenolic hydroxyl group of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1, (b) a crosslinking agent, and (c) a polyfunctional epoxy

resin, and curing the resin composition to become a B-stage condition,

forming an etching resist on the copper foil of the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet,
5 followed by formation of fine holes in the copper foil surface by selective etching,

removing the etching resist,

removing the cured resin layer under the fine holes by etching using an etching solution comprising
10 (A) an amide as a solvent, (B) an alkali metal compound, and (C) an alcohol as a solvent to form via holes and expose parts of the conductor circuits,

plating a metal layer or coating an electro-conductive paste so as to electrically connecting the
15 conductor circuits of the interlayer plate and an outer layer copper foil,

forming an etching resist on the outer layer copper foil, followed by formation of wiring circuits on the copper foil by selective etching, and

20 removing the etching resist.

The thermosetting epoxy resin composition used in the present invention comprises (a) an epoxy polymer having a film-forming ability, (b) a cross-linking agent, and (c) a polyfunctional epoxy resin.

25 The epoxy polymer (a) having a film-forming ability and a weight-average molecular weight of 100,000 or more, preferably 100,000 to 1,000,000, can be obtained by polymerizing a bifunctional epoxy resin

and a bifunctional halogenated phenol in an equivalent weight ratio of epoxy group:phenolic hydroxyl group in the range of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1 in the presence of a catalyst with heating preferably in a solvent of an amide or ketone having a boiling point of 130°C or higher in a reacted solid content of 50% by weight or less. The weight-average molecular weight is measured by gel permeation chromatography using polystyrene as a standard.

As the bifunctional epoxy resin, there can be used any compound having two epoxy groups in the molecule. Examples of the bifunctional epoxy resin are bisphenol A type epoxy resins, bisphenol F type epoxy resins, bisphenol S type resins, and aliphatic hair-like epoxy resins. The preferred is bisphenol A epoxy resin. These compounds may have any molecular weight. These compounds can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. Components other than the bifunctional epoxy resin may be contained as impurities so far as they do not affect the operation and accomplishment of the present invention.

As the bifunctional halogenated phenol, there can be used any compound having one or more halogen atoms as substituent and two phenolic hydroxyl groups. Examples of the bifunctional halogenated phenol are monocyclic bifunctional phenols such as hydroquinone, resorcinol, catechol, etc.; polycyclic bifunctional phenols such as bisphenol A, bisphenol F, naphthalene

diols, bisphenols, and alkyl-substituted halides of these compounds. These compounds may have any molecular weight. These compounds can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. Components other than the
5 bifunctional halogenated phenol may be contained as impurities so far as they do not affect the operation and accomplishment of the present invention.

As the catalyst, there can be used any compounds which have catalytic activity to accelerate
10 etherification reaction of epoxy group or groups with phenolic hydroxy group or groups. Examples of the catalyst are alkali metal compounds, alkaline earth metal compounds, imidazoles, organic phosphorus compounds, secondary amines, tertiary amines, quaternary
15 ammonium salts, etc. Among them, the use of alkali metal compounds is most preferable. Examples of the alkali metal compounds are hydroxides, halides, organic salts, alcoholates, phenolates, hydrides, borohydrides, and amides of sodium, lithium and potassium. These
20 catalysts can be used singly or as a mixture thereof.

As the solvent used for the reaction, there can preferably be used amides or ketones, and amides having a boiling point of 130°C or higher. Any solvents which can dissolve both the epoxy resins and
25 phenols used as starting materials can be used. Examples of the solvents are formamide, N-methylformamide, N,N-dimethylformamide, acetamide, N-methylacetamide, N,N-dimethylacetamide, N,N,N',N'-

tetramethylurea, 2-pyrrolidone, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, carbamic acid esters, etc. These solvents can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. As the ketons, there can be used cyclohexanone, acetyl acetone, diisobutyl
5 ketone, phorone, isophorone, methyl cyclohexanone, acetophenone, etc.

As the polymerization conditions, the mixing ratio of the bifunctional epoxy resin and the bifunctional halogenated phenol is in terms of the equivalent
10 weight ratio of epoxy group:phenolic hydroxy group in the range of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1.

Although the quantity of the catalyst is not particularly limited, the catalyst, generally, is used in a quantity of 0.0001 to 0.2 mole per mole of the
15 bifunctional epoxy resin.

The polymerization reaction temperature is preferably 60° to 150°C. When the temperature is lower than 60°C, there is a tendency to make the polymerization rate too slow. On the other hand, when the
20 temperature is higher than 150°C, there is a tendency to bring about side reaction to fail to obtain a long chain polymer.

The solid content in the reaction solution during polymerization is preferably 50% by weight or
25 less, more preferably 30% by weight or less.

As a result of the polymerization, the epoxy polymer (a) having a molecular weight of 100,000 or more is obtained.

As the crosslinking agent (b) for the epoxy polymer (a), there can be used masked isocyanates which are isocyanates masked (or blocked) with a compound having another active hydrogen.

5 The isocyanates can be any isocyanates having two or more isocyanate groups in the molecule.

Examples of the masked isocyanates are isocyanate such as hexamethylene diisocyanate, diphenylmethane diisocyanate, isophorone diisocyanate, tolylene diisocyanate, etc. masked with a phenol, an oxime, an alcohol, etc. From the viewpoint of improvement in heat resistance of cured article, the use of isophorone diisocyanate or tolylene diisocyanate masked with a phenol is preferable.

10 The using amount of the crosslinking agent is preferably 0.1 to 1.0 equivalent weight of the isocyanate group per equivalent weight of alcoholic hydroxyl group of the epoxy polymer (a).

As the polyfunctional epoxy resin (c), there
20 can be used any compounds having two or more epoxy groups in the molecule. Examples of the polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) are glycidyl ethers of phenols such as phenol novolac epoxy resins, cresol novolac epoxy resins, resole epoxy resins, bisphenol epoxy resins
25 etc.; alicyclic epoxy resins, epoxidized polybutadienes, glycidyl ester type epoxy resins, glycidylamine type epoxy resins, isocyanurate type epoxy resins, plexible epoxy resins, etc. Among them, a

phenol type epoxy resin or a mixture of a phenol type epoxy resin and a polyfunctional epoxy resin is preferable in order to improve heat resistance.

5 The polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) can be used in an amount of 20 to 100% by weight based on the weight of the epoxy polymer (a).

Further, since the polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) functions as an adhesive component and a flowing component of the time of molding, the using amount can
10 be controlled properly considering the thickness of copper foil on the interlayer or the density of its circuits.

The polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. Further, a curing
15 agent and a curing accelerator for the polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) can also be used. As the curing agent and the curing accelerator, there can be used a novolac type phenol resin, dicyandiamide, an acid anhydride, an amine, an imidazole, a phosphine, etc., singly or as a
20 mixture thereof. Further, the addition of a silane coupling agent is preferable for improving adhesive strength of epoxy adhesive film, particularly for improving the adhesive strength to the copper foil.

Examples of the silane coupling agent are
25 epoxysilane, aminosilane, ureasilane, etc.

A varnish comprising (a) the epoxy polymer, (b) the crosslinking agent, and (c) the polyfunctional epoxy resin, mentioned above is coated on the copper

foil and dried with heating to give a copper-clad adhesive resin sheet of the B-stage. The preferable curing condition to get the B-stage condition is heating at 130-150°C for 5-10 minutes. The thickness of the resin layer is preferably 25 to 70 μm , depending on the thickness of copper foil on the interlayer circuit. The thickness of copper foil is preferably 5 to 70 μm .

The thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet of B-stage is laminated on one or both sides of a previously prepared interlayer circuit plate so as to face the resin side of the adhesive resin sheet, followed by pressing with heating to cure with heating. Thus, a copper-clad laminate containing interlayer circuits is obtained. Since a B-stage thermosetting resin can be cured completely at a molding temperature of 170°C or more for 30 minutes or more, there can be employed conventional molding conditions for epoxy resin laminates so long as satisfying the above-mentioned conditions. Particularly, since the heating temperature and time influence the degree of curing and causes a variation in the etching speed in a later stage, it is necessary to cure completely. Further, since the pressure influences the flow of resins, it is necessary to employ a suitable pressure. Preferable pressure is 2 MPa or more.

Then, on one or both outer layer copper foils of the resulting copper-clad laminate containing

interlayer circuits therein bonded with the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet, an etching resist is formed, followed by development-selective etching by a conventional photography method to form fine holes on the copper foil sides. The conventional photography method is described in Chapter 6 of "Printed Circuits Handbook" (issued by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Editor-in-Chief: Cryde F. Coombs, Jr.). The fine holes become opening portions for IVH. Then, the etching resist is removed.

For Example, a dry film including a photosensitive resin layer (i.e. HK-425, HK-450, trade names, mfd. by Hitachi Chemical Co., Ltd.) is preferably used as the etching resist. In this case, the dry film is laminated on the copper foil by using a hot-roll laminator. The conditions for exposing to light, developing and removing the film depend on the type of the film.

The cured resin layer under the fine holes is removed by etching using an etching solution comprising (A) an amide series as a solvent, (B) an alkali metal compound, and (C) an alcohol series as a solvent so as to expose the interlayer circuit. The epoxy polymer (a) which is a component of the thermosetting resin composition constituting the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet can be dissolved by the alkali. The etching action of the cured resin layer is conducted by cutting and decomposition of the skeleton

of the epoxy resin (a) having a high molecular weight by the alkali impregnated into the cured resin layer accompanying the amide series solvent and the alcohol series solvent so as to give the fragments having a lower molecular weight, which is then dissolved in the amide series solvent to effect etching.

As the amide series solvent (A), there can be used formamide, N-methylformamide, N,N-dimethylformamide, acetamide, N-methylacetamide, N,N-dimethylacetamide, N,N,N',N'-tetramethylurea, 2-pyrrolidone, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, carbamic acid esters, etc. The use of N,N-dimethylacetamide, N,N-dimethylformamide, and N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone is preferable, since these solvents can remarkably dissolve decomposed portions having of the cured product lower molecular weight. These solvents can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. Further, these solvents can be used together with one or more ketone series solvents, ether series solvents and other solvents.

Examples of the ketone series solvent used together are acetone, methyl ethyl ketone, 2-pentanone, 3-pentanone, 2-hexanone, methyl isobutyl ketone, 2-heptanone, 4-heptanone, diisobutyl ketone, cyclohexanone, etc.

Examples of the other series solvent used together are dipropyl ether, diisopropyl ether, dibutyl ether, anisole, phenetole, dioxane, tetrahydrofuran, ethylene glycol dimethyl ether, ethylene glycol diethyl

ether, diethylene glycol dimethyl ether, diethylene glycol diethyl ether, etc.

The contents of the solvents may not be particularly limited. It is preferable to contain the amide series solvent (A) in an amount of 50 to 90% by weight based on the total weight of the etching solution, in order to accelerate the decomposition rate and dissolving rate of the cured resin.

As the alkali metal compound (B), there can be used compounds of alkali metals such as lithium, sodium, potassium, rubidium, cesium, etc., said compounds being able to be dissolved in the alcohol solvent. Examples of the alkali metal compounds are metals such as lithium, sodium, potassium, rubidium, cesium, etc.; hydrides, hydroxides, borohydrides, amides, fluorides, chlorides, bromides, iodides, borates, phosphates, carbonates, sulfates, nitrates, organic acid salts and phenol salts of the alkali metals. These alkali metal compounds can be used singly or as a mixture thereof. Among these alkali metal compounds, the use of lithium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide and potassium hydroxide is particularly preferable from the viewpoint of decomposition rate of cured resin.

The alkali metal compound is preferably used in an amount of 0.5 to 15% by weight based on the total weight of the etching solution, in order to accelerate the decomposition rate of the cured resin.

As the alcohol series solvents (C), there can be used methanol, ethanol, 1-propanol, 2-propanol, 1-butanol, 2-butanol, iso-butanol, tert-butanol, 1-pentanol, 2-pentanol, 3-pentanol, 2-methyl-1-butanol, 5 iso-pentyl alcohol, tert-pentyl alcohol, 3-methyl-2-butanol, neopentyl alcohol, 1-hexanol, 2-methyl-1-pentanol, 4-methyl-2-pentanol, 2-ethyl-1-butanol, 1-heptanol, 2-heptanol, 3-heptanol, cyclohexanol, 1-methylcyclohexanol, 2-methylcyclohexanol, 3-10 methylcyclohexanol, 4-methylcyclohexanol, ethylene glycol, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether, ethylene glycol monoethyl ether, ethylene glycol monopropyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, diethylene glycol, diethylene glycol monomethyl ether, diethylene15 glycol monoethyl ether, diethylene glycol monopropyl ether, diethylene glycol monobutyl ether, triethylene glycol, triethylene glycol monomethyl ether, triethylene glycol monoethyl ether, tetraethylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, 1,2-propanediol, 1,3-propanediol,20 1,2-butanediol, 1,3-butanediol, 1,4-butanediol, 2,3-butanediol, 1,5-pentanediol, glycerin, diproylene glycol, etc., singly or as a mixture thereof.

Among these alcohols, the use of methanol, ethanol, diethylene glycol monomethyl ether, diethylene25 glycol monobutyl ether, diethylene glycol monoethyl ether, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, and ethylene glycol monoethyl ether singly or as a mixture thereof is particularly

preferable due to high solubility of the alkali metal compound.

It is preferable to use the alcohol (c) in an amount of 4.5 to 35% by weight based on the total weight of the etching solution in order to accelerate the decomposition rate of the cured resin.

Since the contact time of the cured resin and the etching solution, and the temperature of the etching solution depend on the desirable etching speed and degree of etching mutually, it is necessary to employ conditions suitable for the IVH diameter and IVH thickness. Generally, the diameter is 50 μm to 1mm. In this case, the preferable contact time is 10 to 60 minutes and the preferable temperature of the etching solution is 50 to 80°C. Any etching method such as a spray method, or a dip method, can be employed so long as the etching solution as mentioned above is used. In other words, it is possible to form a fine IVH if the combination of the thermosetting epoxy resin composition as a cured resin layer and the etching solution is used and the suitable conditions are employed.

For the removal of decomposed material sufficiently, it is preferable to wash holes with water by using an ultrasonic washing device. The preferable time for the washing is 3 to 5 minutes.

After the etching, the exposed interlayer circuits and the outer layer copper foils are electrically connected by a conventional plating method

such as an electric plating. When the size of IVH is small, electroless plating can be used.

Further, the electrical connection can be carried out using an electroconductive paste, which is
5 coated, dried and cured.

Then, an etching resist is formed on the outer layer copper foil and development/selective etching is conducted by a conventional photography method to form wiring circuits on the outer layer
10 copper foil side. After removing the etching resist, there can be obtained a multilayer printed circuit board wherein the interlayer circuits and outer layer circuits are connected by IVHs.

Using the thus produced multilayer printed circuit board as an inner layer, laminating one or a
15 pair of thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheets on the inner layer, and repeating this a number of times, it is possible to obtain a multilayer printed circuit board having 6 or more layers connected by
20 IVHs.

The present invention is illustrated by way of the following Examples, in which all parts and percents are by weight unless otherwise specified.

Example 1

25 Production of a multilayer printed circuit board is explained referring to Figs. 1A to 1M.

A bisphenol A type epoxy resin (epoxy

equivalent weight: 171.5) as a bifunctional epoxy resin in an amount of 171.5 g, 271.9 g of a tetrabromobisphenol A (hydroxyl equivalent weight: 271.9) as a bifunctional halogenated phenol and 0.78 g of lithium hydroxide as a catalyst were dissolved in N,N'-dimethylacetamide as an amide series solvent. The solid content in the solution was 30% by weight. The solution was stirred by a mechanical stirrer and maintained at 120°C for 10 hours. Finally, the solution was saturated at 5,000 mPa sec viscosity and an epoxy polymer having a high molecular weight was obtained. The weight-average molecular weight of the epoxy polymer was 182,000 (gel permeation chromatography).

A resin composition comprising the epoxy polymer having a high molecular weight (a), an isophorone diisocyanate masked with a phenol resin (b), and a cresol novolac polyfunctional epoxy resin (c) (the weight ratio of (a):(b):(c) = 100:16:84) was coated on a roughened copper foil (18 μ m thick) to give a thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet 2 having a resin layer (B-stage condition cured by heating at 130°C for 10 minutes) of 50 μ m thick (MCF-3000E, a trade name, mfd. by Hitachi Chemical Co., Ltd.), which was laminated on a previously prepared interlayer circuit plate 1 (substrate: MCL-E-67, a trade name, mfd. by Hitachi Chemical Co., Ltd., shown in Fig. 1A). Then, pressing in vacuum was conducted at

170°C under a pressure of 2 MPa for 30 minutes to give a copper-clad laminate containing interlayer circuits (Fig. 1B).

5 An etching resist 4 (a photosensitive dry film, H-K 450, a trade name, mfd. by Hitachi Chemical Co., Ltd.) was formed on each surface of outer layer copper foil of the copper-clad laminate containing interlayer circuits by using a hot-roll laminator (Fig. 1C). A part of the resist with diameters of 50 to 300
10 μm were removed from selected positions by a photography method to form holes for IVH (Fig. 1D). The condition was exposing to 50 mJ/cm^2 strength light and developing by Na_2CO_3 aqueous solution. Further, from the portions in which IVHs are to be formed, a part of
15 the outer layer copper foil was removed (Fig. 1E).

Then, the etching resists were removed by NaOH aqueous solution to expose cured epoxy adhesive film on the portions in which IVHs are to be formed (Fig. 1F).

20 Subsequently, an etching solution comprising 90% of N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 3% of potassium hydroxide and 7% of methanol heated at 50°C was contacted to etch the cured epoxy adhesive film for 15 minutes so as to expose the interlayer circuits (a dip
25 method). Thus, holes for IVHs were formed. Since the removal of decomposed materials was insufficient, the holes were subjected to continuous ultrasonic treatment by dipping the board into an ultrasonic washing device

for 3 minutes and washing with water (Fig. 1G).

Then, a through hole 6 was drilled (Fig. 1H).

Subsequently, copper plating of 15 to 20 μm was conducted in the holes for IVH and the through hole so as to electrically connect the interlayer circuits and the outer layer copper foils (Fig. 1I).

Next, an etching resist 8 (a photosensitive dry film, H-K 425, a trade name, mfd. by Hitachi Chemical Co., Ltd.) was formed on each outer layer surface by using a hot-roll laminator (Fig. 1J) and subjected to selective etching to form wiring circuits (Figs. 1K and 1L). After removing the etching resists (Fig. 1M), there was obtained a four-layered multilayer printed circuit board.

The resulting multilayer printed circuit board was subjected to an anti-corrosion test, a soldering heat resistance test and measurement of peel strength of the surface copper foil.

The anti-corrosion test was conducted by subjecting the interlayer circuit previously having a comb-like pattern with a conductor interval of 0.1 mm to the conditions of 120°C, 85% of moisture and 100V to measure changes of an insulation resistance. The initial value was $10^{13}\Omega$ and changed to $10^{12}\Omega$ after 1000 hours. As to the soldering heat resistance test, no change was admitted after the solder float test at 260°C for 3 minutes. The peel strength of surface copper foil was 1.7 kg/cm.

Example 2

The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution comprising 50% of N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, 15% of potassium hydroxide and
5 35% of methanol heated at 70°C, and conducting etching by contacting with the cured epoxy adhesive film for 30 minutes. As a result, a 4-layered multilayer printed circuit board having the same properties as in Example 1 was obtained.

10 Example 3

The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution comprising 90% of N,N-dimethylacetamide, 1% of potassium hydroxide and 9% of diethylene glycol monomethyl ether heated at 70°C, and
15 conducting etching by contacting with the cured epoxy adhesive film for 15 minutes. As a result, a 4-layered multilayer printed circuit board having the same properties as in Example 1 was obtained.

Example 4

20 The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution comprising 80% of N,N-dimethylformamide, 4% of sodium hydroxide and 16% of methanol heated at 50°C, and conducting etching by
25 contacting with the cured epoxy adhesive film for 15 minutes. As a result, a 4-layered multilayer printed circuit board having the same properties as in Example

1 was obtained.

Example 5

The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution comprising 80% of N,N-
5 dimethylformamide, 0.5% of lithium hydroxide and 19.5% of methanol heated at 60°C, and conducting etching by contacting with the cured epoxy adhesive film for 25 minutes. As a result, a 4-layered multilayer printed circuit board having the same properties as in Example
10 1 was obtained.

Comparative Example 1

The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution containing N,N-
dimethylacetamide heated at 50°C. As a result, the
15 cured epoxy adhesive film was not etched to fail to obtain the holes for IVH.

Comparative Example 2

The process of Example 1 was repeated except for using an etching solution containing methanol
20 heated at 50°C. As a result, the cured epoxy adhesive film was not etched to fail to obtain the holes for IVH.

Comparative Example 3

The process of Example 1 was repeated except

for using as an etching solution an aqueous solution containing 5% of sodium hydroxide and 5% of potassium permanganate heated at 70°C. As a result, the cured epoxy adhesive film was roughened on the surface to fail to expose the interlayer circuits and also to fail to form holes for IVH.

As mentioned above, according to the present invention, since the formation of IVH can be attained simultaneously by chemical etching and small holes of 100 μ m in diameter or less can be processed, productivity is greatly improved compared with the drill processing of prior art technique and processing of very fine diameters becomes possible in contrast to drilling which is difficult to conduct. Further, since the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet is used, the pressing step can be simplified to improve productivity compared with the prior art technique using prepregs. The resin composition used for the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet has the same general properties as FR-4 which is used in multilayer printed circuit boards. Therefore, the present invention is remarkably useful in the production of multilayer printed circuit boards mounting various electronic devices in high density.

Furthermore, the present invention is excellent in safety during the process.



WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A process for producing a multilayer printed circuit board, which comprises the steps of:

laminating on an interlayer plate having conductor circuits thereon a thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet having a copper foil on one side, so as to make the resin side of the sheet contact with the interlayer plate, followed by pressing with heating to cure the resin and to give an integrated laminate, said thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet having been prepared by integrating a copper foil with a thermosetting epoxy resin composition comprising (a) an epoxy polymer having a weight-average molecular weight of 100,000 or more, obtained by polymerizing a bifunctional epoxy resin and a bifunctional halogenated phenol in an equivalent weight ratio of epoxy group:phenolic hydroxyl group of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1, (b) a crosslinking agent, and (c) a polyfunctional epoxy resin, and curing the resin to become a B-stage condition,

forming an etching resist on the copper foil of the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheet, followed by formation of fine holes in the copper foil surface by selective etching,

removing the etching resist,

removing the cured resin layer under the fine holes by etching using an etching solution comprising (A) an amide as a solvent, (B) an alkali metal



compound, and (C) an alcohol as a solvent to form via holes and expose parts of the conductor circuits,

plating a metal layer or coating an electroconductive paste so as to electrically connecting the conductor circuits of the interlayer plate and an outer layer copper foil,

forming an etching resist on the outer layer copper foil, followed by formation of wiring circuits on the copper foil by selective etching, and

removing the etching resist.

2. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the amide as a solvent in the etching solution is at least one member selected from the group consisting of N,N-dimethylacetamide, N,N-dimethylformamide, and N-methyl-2-pyrrolidone, and used in an amount of 50 to 95% by weight based on the weight of the etching solution.

3. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the alkali metal compound in the etching solution is at least one member selected from the group consisting of lithium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide and potassium hydroxide, and used in an amount of 0.5 to 15% by weight based on the weight of the etching solution.

4. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the alcohol as a solvent in the etching solution is at least one member selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, diethylene glycol monomethyl ether, diethylene glycol monobutyl ether, diethylene glycol monoethyl ether, ethylene glycol monomethyl ether,



ethylene glycol monobutyl ether and ethylene glycol monoethyl ether, and used in an amount of 4.5 to 35% by weight based on the weight of the etching solution.

5. The process according to Claim 1, wherein the interlayer plate has conductor circuits on both sides and a pair of the thermosetting copper-clad adhesive resin sheets are laminated on the both sides.

6. An etching solution for etching cured epoxy resin, said etching solution comprising

- (A) an amide as a solvent,
- (B) an alkali metal compound, and
- (C) an alcohol as a solvent.

7. The etching solution according to Claim 6, wherein the cured epoxy resin is obtained from a composition comprising

(a) an epoxy polymer having a film-forming ability and a molecular weight of 100,000 or more, obtained by polymerizing a bifunctional epoxy resin and a bifunctional halogenated phenol in an equivalent weight ratio of epoxy group/phenolic hydroxyl group of 1:0.9 to 1:1.1 in the presence of a catalyst with heating,

- (b) a crosslinking agent, and
- (c) a polyfunctional epoxy resin.

8. The etching solution according to Claim 6, wherein the amide (A) is used in an amount of 50 to 95% by weight, the alkali metal compound (B) is used in an amount of 0.5 to 15% by weight and the alcohol (C) is





used in an amount of 4.5 to 35% by weight based on the weight of the etching solution.

This Sheet Has Been Replaced

