

Replace an iPod Battery

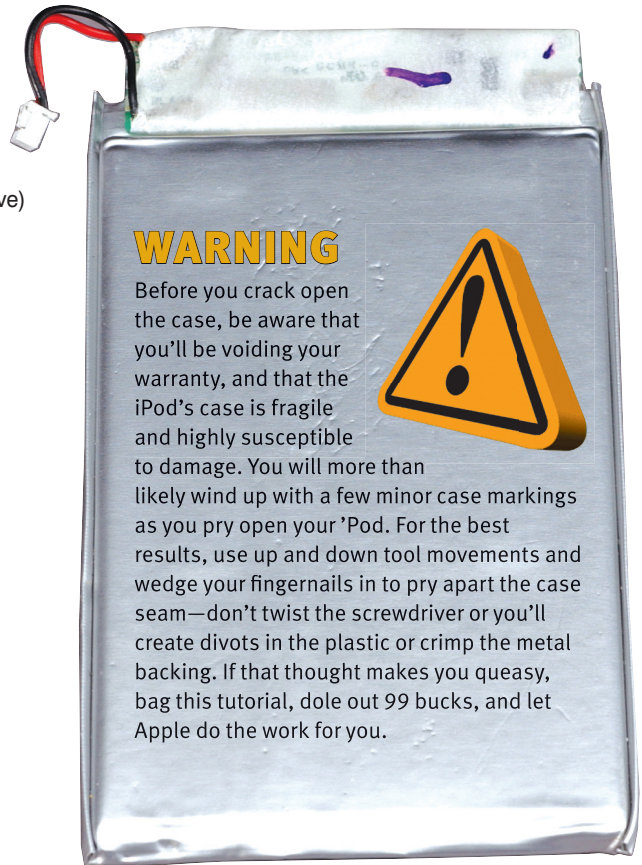
by Kris Fong



WHAT YOU NEED

- iPod (any full-size model) with a battery on the fritz (\$299, \$399, or \$499, www.apple.com)
- iPod battery (available at Laptops for Less, \$49, www.ipodbattery.com)
- Mini flathead screwdriver (comes with the battery above)
- Tweezers (if you've got fat fingers)
- Ruler (if you have a newer iPod)

As some of the fortunate few who got original iPods on the day they were announced, we were thrilled. But after a hundred some-odd charges over the course of a couple years, our little 'Pod pal started sputtering out a few songs before falling silent (you can recharge an iPod's lithium-polymer battery about 500 times). Originally, the only way you could replace a dead battery was to pony up the whopping \$249 Apple charged for all iPod repairs. Thankfully, the company brought the price down to a more reasonable \$99 for battery service, though you're obliged to part with your 'Pod for the fix. But there's an even less expensive way to do the job: With a little effort, you can replace the battery yourself for half the cost. Here's how.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK MADEO

Original iPods

1 Give It a Face Lift Place your patient face up on a sturdy table, with the top turned toward you. Gently wedge the screwdriver into the groove between the silver back and plastic front in the corner to the right of the FireWire port. Using an up-and-down motion, carefully work your way down the side, pushing inward to unfasten the five side clips until you get to the bottom (it's a bit tight down there, so be extra careful). Once there, the face should loosen—if it doesn't, continue around the corner, and unclip the two bottom clips. Then lift off the face and place it face down on your surface.

Once you unfasten the five side clips, you're ready to begin the face lift.



2 Free the Battery All of your iPod's components are attached to the face—the battery is that flat, silver rectangle staring back at you. However, it's stuck to the hard drive with two strips of adhesive rubber shock-protection pads. Use the screwdriver to gently unstick the battery from these rubber shock strips (don't remove them), taking care not to rip out the connection cord located in the top corner directly below the iPod's Hold switch. Once it's free, flip the battery out of the case and onto your surface.

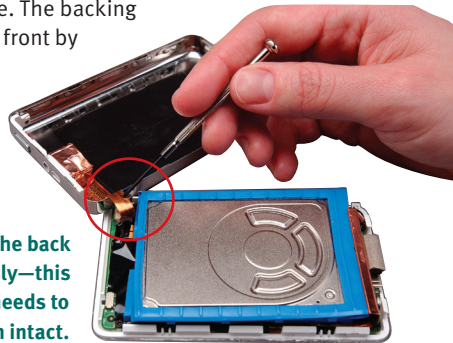
Though it's tactually kind of fun, avoid touching the sticky rubber strips with your fingers, or they'll lose their stickiness.



3 Do the Switcheroo Using a pair of tweezers (or your fingers, if they're small), *gently* pull up on the battery's white power connector to disconnect it. Then take your new battery and carefully plug its power connector into place. Flip it over so it aligns with the hard drive and rubber strips, and press down to affix it. Then snap the backing back onto the front, juice up your player (Laptops for Less recommends at least three hours of charging before the first use), and enjoy your 'Pod's new lease on life.

Dockable iPods

1 Pry Open Your 'Pod Place your iPod face down on a sturdy table, with either the right or left side toward you. Using a ruler, measure 6 centimeters from the top of the 'Pod, and then gently wedge the screwdriver into the seam between the sliver back and plastic front at that point. From there, begin prying the side loose, using an up-and-down motion as you work your way along the seam and pushing inward to unfasten the five side clips. Work your way around the bottom until the back casing pops loose. The backing is tethered to the front by a short cable, so carefully lift off the back and flip it over next to the face.



Don't yank off the back cover zealously—this fragile cable needs to remain intact.

3 Bust Out the Battery You should now see a 1-by-2-inch black rectangular block—that's the battery, which is tethered (via a short cable) to the motherboard at the bottom corner of the iPod. Gently slide the screwdriver head beneath a side, lift up the battery, and then use the screwdriver to snake out the extra cable from under the motherboard and swing out the battery. Next, use a pair of tweezers or tiny fingers (if you have 'em) to pull up the white power connector and fully disconnect the battery.



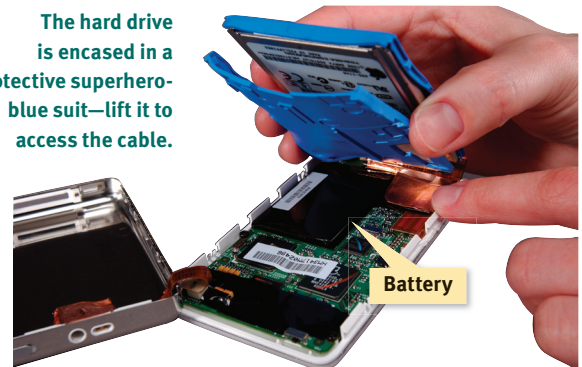
Use the screwdriver to pull out the bit of extra cable stashed beneath the motherboard to remove the battery fully.

Before cramming in the battery, make sure you've got the connector positioned properly—the red wire should be nearer the 'Pod's top than the black one.



2 Detach the Drive Unlike the original iPod battery's full-frontal appearance, the newer 'Pod's battery is sandwiched beneath the hard drive, so you have to remove the drive to access the battery. The drive is encased in a protective blue rubber sheath—from the top, gently lift up the drive and the blue rubber flap beneath it (the bottom is tethered via a ribbon cable) to expose the copper ribbon cable tab. Then carefully pull up on this tab to disconnect the cable from the motherboard, and remove the drive.


The hard drive is encased in a protective superhero-blue suit—lift it to access the cable.



4 Repack and Rejoice Take your new battery and plug its power connector into the empty socket—be sure to position it so that the red wire is closest to the dock slot. Tuck the excess cable back underneath the motherboard using the screwdriver, and then place the battery in its compartment. Plug the hard drive back into the motherboard, stack it back onto the 'Pod, and snap the back casing onto the front. Then charge up the battery for at least three hours, and rock on.

Snap the hard drive's cable connector down into the motherboard, and give it a gentle—gentle!—tug to make sure it's connected.



 Though *MacAddict* Senior Editor Kris Fong dissected frogs, cow eyeballs, and a pig in school, nothing made her as squeamish as she felt busting into Editor in Chief Rik Myslewski's new iPod.