

34

Deconstruct an Appliance

Unlock the hidden mysteries



CUTS AND
SCRAPES



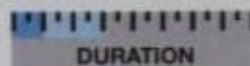
PROJECTILES



MAKE A MESS

REQUIRES

- Broken Appliance
- Screwdriver
- Pliers
- Crescent Wrench
- Wire Cutters
- Safety Goggles
- Cardboard or Drop Cloth



WARNING

There are a few appliances that should not be taken apart without expert guidance: old tube televisions, CRT monitors, and refrigerators, to name a few. Read and understand any labels and safety warnings you can find on the appliance before opening it. Wear safety goggles and watch out for mechanisms that may contain compressed springs such as self-closing doors and trays. If you're not sure it's safe to open, do some research.

HOW-TO

Taking things apart is more of a process than a sequence of steps. Remember, it's only deconstruction if you don't break anything, otherwise it's just destruction.

- 1.** Prepare to operate. Find a place to work where you won't lose parts that come loose. Cover the work surface with cardboard or a drop cloth so that you don't have to worry about accidentally making scratches.
- 2.** Analyze. Make a complete examination of the exterior of the appliance. Look under labels for hidden screws, disguised tabs, and connectors, and make a plan of attack.
- 3.** Deconstruct. Remove screws, connectors, and parts that are easy first. As you remove parts, try to figure out what they are for.
- 4.** Reconnoiter. If you get stuck, try to figure out how the part that is blocking your progress was put together; if you can figure out how it was assembled, you can usually figure out how to get it apart. If all else fails, try to figure out how to do the least damage necessary to keep making progress.
- 5.** Persist. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until there is nothing left to take apart.

Manufacturers sometimes use glue as a fastener. This makes deconstruction (and repair) difficult, if not impossible. A little gentle

Supplementary Data

Press-fit is a technique, used in the manufacture of many home electronics, where tabs and shafts are forced into slots and holes that are a little too small by very powerful hydraulic presses. These connections are notoriously difficult to loosen and often must be bent, snapped, or cut to remove.

prying can sometimes break the glue without breaking the parts, but care must be taken.

Over time, as you take more things apart, you will start to collect odd bits and pieces. A few jars with lids, or other food storage containers, are convenient for keeping small screws, gears, and springs.

Now, what will you make with all those parts?