



Repairing Nintendo Game Boy Advance SP 32-pin cartridge connector

If your gameboy advance sp is having trouble reading game cartridges you can open it up and push the cart reader's pins closer to the cart contacts. This is more of a hack or a workaround than a repair, but it did repair my problem without question.

Written By: denova



INTRODUCTION

DISCLAIMER: In this guide you're actually going to be popping the cart reader's pins out of their intended positions. It's a messy fix and it makes inserting and removing cartridges very difficult. I have also only tried this on one gameboy. So far it has been reading cartridges flawlessly, but I have only been testing it for one day. Only perform this fix on a gameboy if you're willing to risk destroying it.

UPDATE: After more than a year my gameboy is still reading cartridges, and removing the cartridges has become much easier over time. I still recommend the fix.

TOOLS:

- [Phillips #00 Screwdriver](#) (1)
- [Tri-wing Screwdriver](#) (1)

Step 1 — Removing the Battery



- Use a standard Phillips #00 screwdriver to loosen the 4mm screw that keeps the battery cover attached to the device.

Step 2



- Lift the battery cover up and remove it from the device.
- *(i)* The screw will remain attached to the battery cover because of Nintendo's design.

Step 3



- Use your fingers or a plastic opening tool to remove the battery from the device.

Step 4 — Removing the Back Cover



- Using the tri-wing screwdriver, unscrew the screws holding the back cover to the device. The six screws that need to be removed include:
 - Four #00 6.45mm tri-wing screws that are located at the corners of the device.
 - Two #00 4.6mm tri-wing screws that are located at the top-center and bottom-center of the device.

Step 5



- Lift the back cover off of the device.

Step 6 — Repairing Nintendo Game Boy Advance SP 32-pin cartridge connector



- Remove the back cover of your gameboy advance sp. When you have the internals exposed and the battery removed you'll need to grab some kind of narrow pointy tool like a bent safety pin or (thin) paper clip. Also make sure you have good light.

Step 7



- Look inside the cartridge connector at the metal pins. See how they're all contained within a plastic housing? Each pin has its own little square. You're going to take that safety pin and pop each pin *out of its hole* and towards where the game cartridge's metal contacts would sit if it were inserted.

Step 8



- Understand that doing this to the cartridge connector will make inserting and removing game cartridges quite difficult. It is doable, but it will hurt your thumbs. Alternatively, you could try bending the pins up or out without displacing them from their plastic housing. I was not able to make this work.

Step 9



- When you've completed breaking--I mean--repairing the cartridge connector, examine the pins and make sure they are all up against the outside edge of their respective plastic squares. If they're bent too far towards where the cartridge's contacts insert, the pins will get mashed when you jam the first game cart in.

Step 10



- Now put your gameboy back together and push a game cartridge in-- *hard*. When it goes in, flip the switch on and hope for the best. Be prepared for sore thumbs when it comes time to switch cartridges. Removing them is harder than inserting.

To reassemble your device, follow these instructions in reverse order.