



# Robie the Banker Teardown

Take a peek at what's inside Robie the Banker, a popular electronic piggy bank from the 1980s, in this light-hearted teardown.

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## INTRODUCTION

Robie the Banker is an electronic coin bank that was sold by Radio Shack during the 1980s. It was first created by Japanese toy company Tomy (and named Mr. Money). Radio Shack bought distribution rights in the US and renamed it Robie.

It made for a popular Christmas gift for kids, and gave them a bit of an incentive to start saving their spare change, as Robie dances and licks his lips after eating a coin.

### TOOLS:

- [Spudger \(1\)](#)
- [Tweezers \(1\)](#)
- [Phillips #2 Screwdriver \(1\)](#)
- [Soldering Station Hakko FX-888D \(1\)](#)

## Step 1 — Robie the Banker Teardown



- It may look slightly creepy, but Robie taught me about money at a very young age, and incentivized me to save my spare change.
- Sold in the US by Radio Shack in the 80s and 90s, this gift from my Grandma was a huge hit at our family's Christmas gathering.
- But enough reminiscing! Let's tear this thing down to see what makes Robie tick.

## Step 2



- Using our handy-dandy [Spudger](#), we perform a craniotomy on Robie by carefully prying off the top plastic cover in order to get at the screws underneath.

## Step 3



- Lucky for us, Robie is held together with standard Phillips #2 screws throughout, and there are three of them holding his head cover in place.

## Step 4



- Well, this is terrifying. Quick! Let's move on to the next step before we get nightmares!

## Step 5



- Robie's eyes are loosely held in place, so let's remove them before they fall out accidentally and roll under the desk.

## Step 6



- Just two screws hold Robie's head to its body. After removing those, we can carefully lift the head up and set it off to the side.

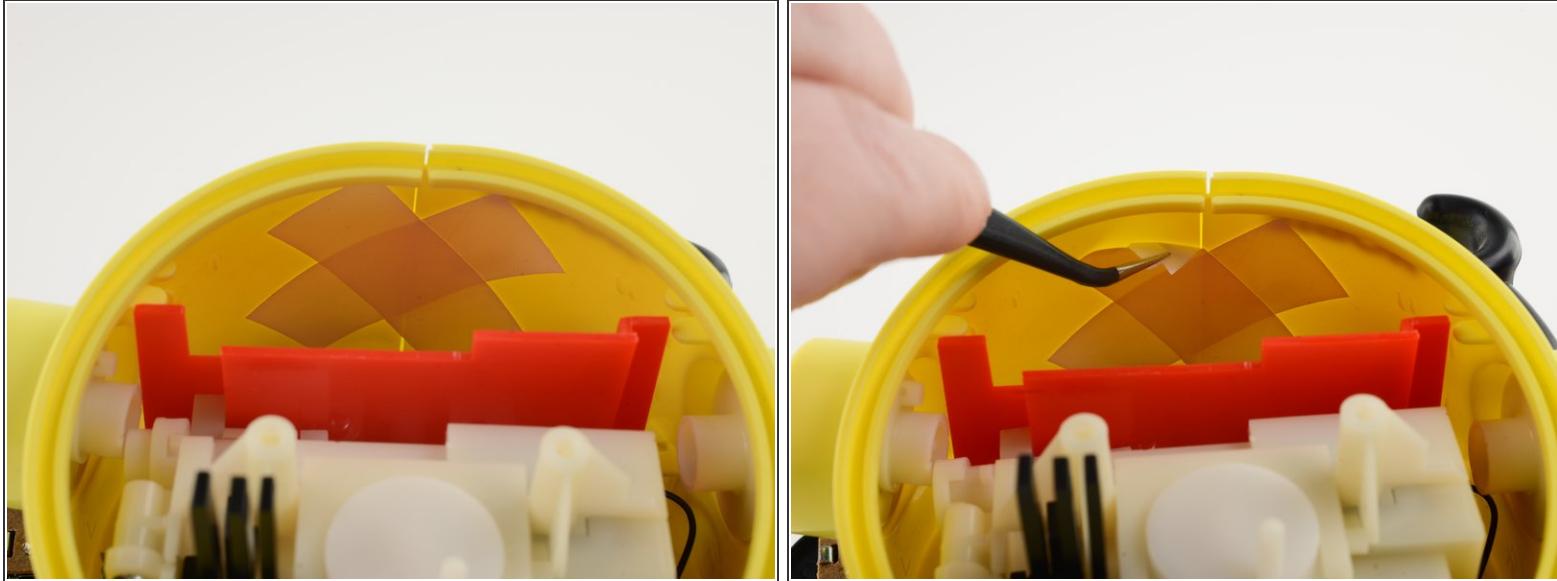
*(i)* These two screws are still accessible without removing Robie's head cover and eyes. So you can detach the entire head assembly in one piece if you need to get inside more quickly.

## Step 7



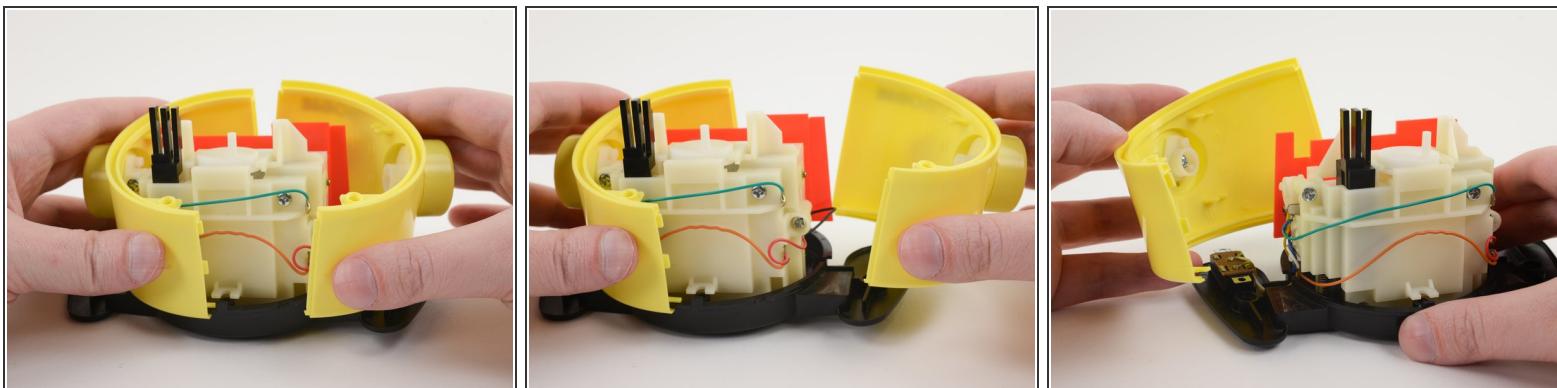
- Before we can go any further, we need to remove Robie's feet covers so we have more room when removing his body.
- The power switch is located in his left foot—nothing in his right.

## Step 8



- Robie's body is split into two halves, which are held in place by clips and tape.
- Using some [tweezers](#), removing the tape is a piece of cake.

## Step 9



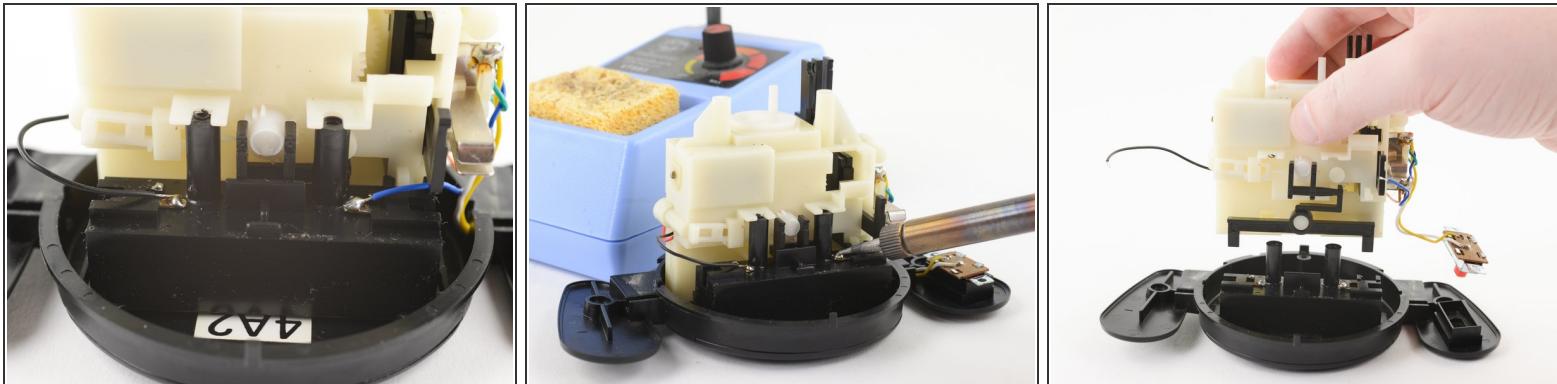
- The clips are fairly weak (hence the tape, most likely), so separating the body enclosure is also a piece of cake.

## Step 10



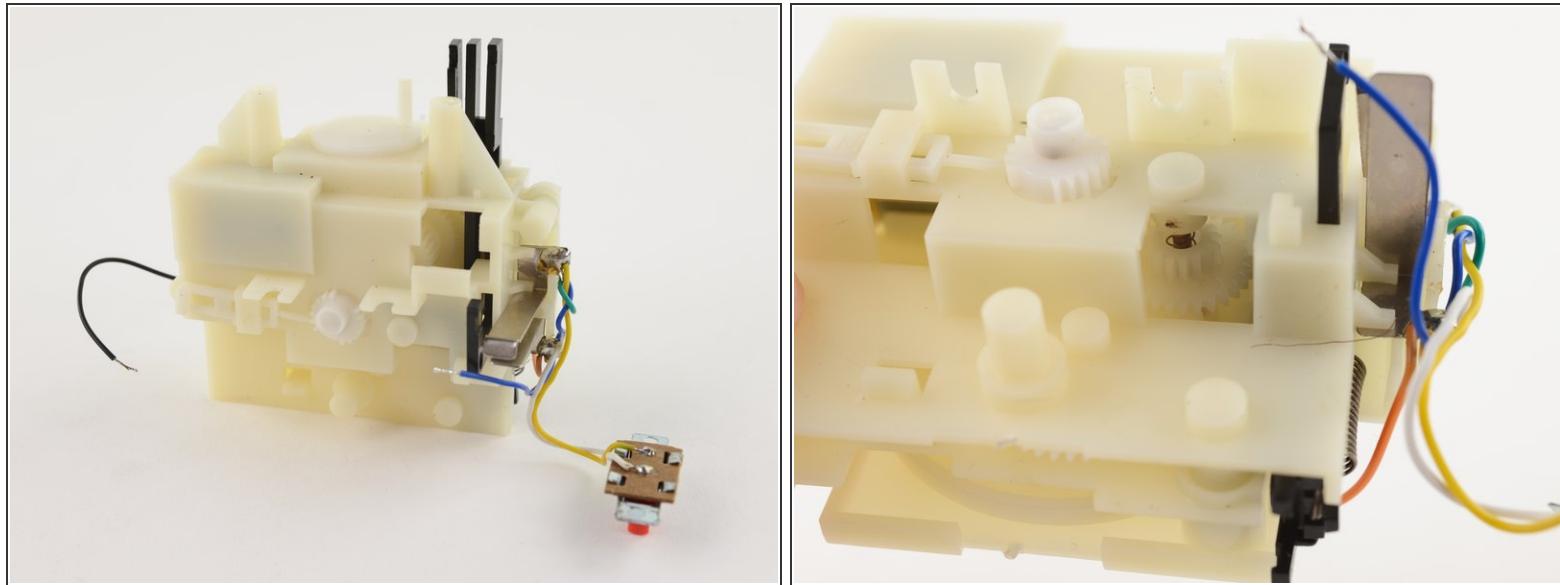
- The motor assembly is attached to the base with three screws—two in the front and one in the back.

## Step 11



- Unfortunately, the battery contacts are soldered to the motor assembly, so any repairs or replacement of the motor will require a [soldering iron](#) and some basic soldering skills to remove it entirely.
- But once those two wires are removed, separating the motor assembly from the base is a cinch.

## Step 12



- The motor assembly is filled with all sorts of gears and servo motors that make Robie move.
- If needed, you can open up the enclosure to gain access to these components by removing four screws, but we feel like this is a good stopping point for this teardown.

## Step 13



- Robie handled his teardown with aplomb! He'll be put back together so he can continue to eat coins in peace.

