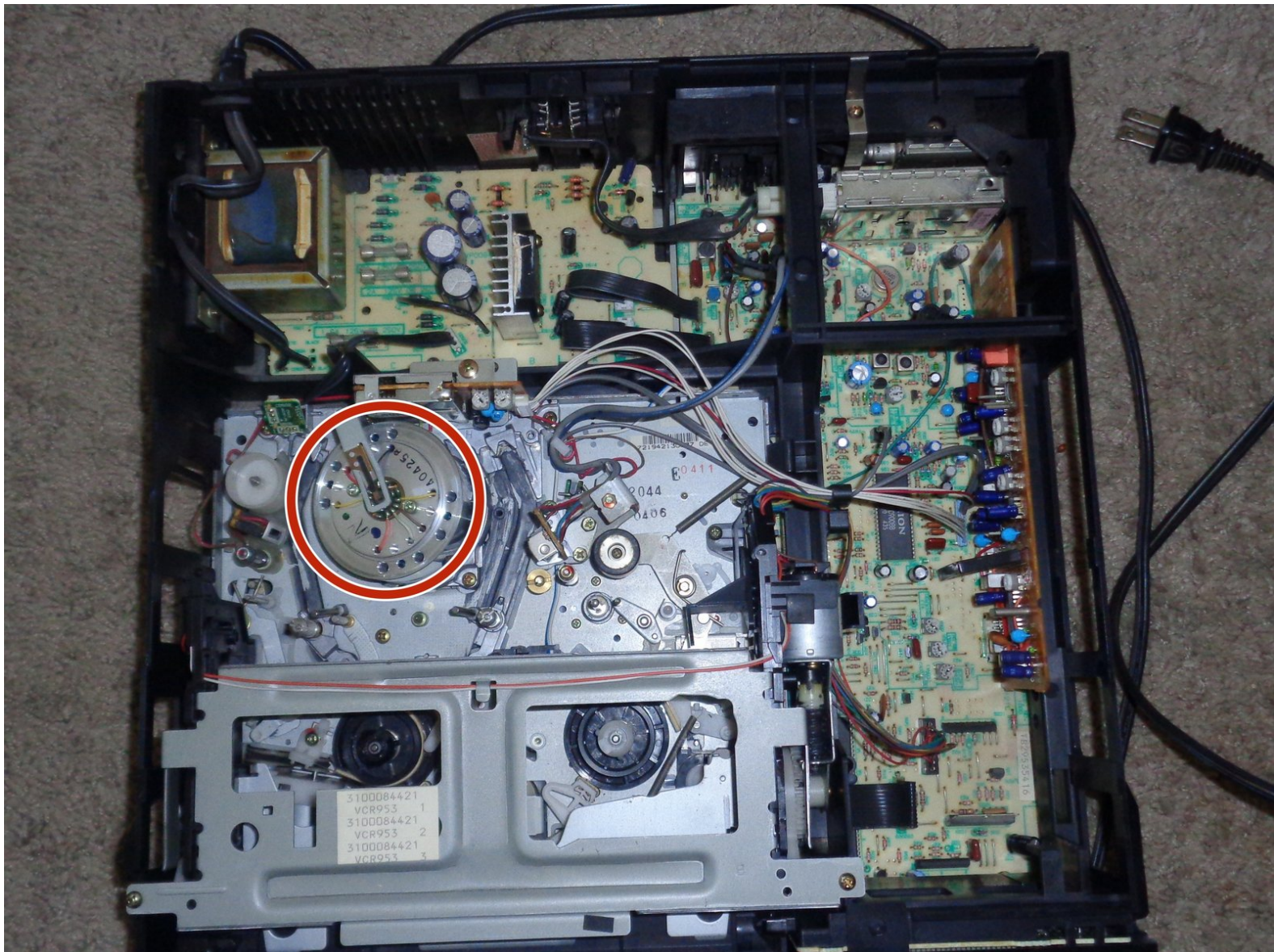




How to Clean a VCR Read Head Without a Read Head Cleaner Tape

How to clean the Read Head on a VCR if you do not have a VCR Read Head Cleaner Tape.

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INTRODUCTION

If you're watching a favorite old movie on your VCR and the picture is extra blurry or cuts out entirely it could be your VCR's read heads are dirty and need cleaning. If you don't have a head cleaning tape this process will yield the same results and may get your VCR back to playing your favorite classic tapes or awkward home videos from yesteryear.

For this guide I will be showing how to do it on my Emerson VCR953. The disassembly may be different on your model, but the cleaning procedure should be the same on all VCR models.



TOOLS:

- [Phillips #2 Screwdriver](#) (1)
 - [Isopropyl Alcohol \(preferably 90%\)](#) (1)
 - [Plain Paper](#) (1)
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Step 1 — Emerson VCR953 Top Shell Removal



- Remove the two 1/2" long #2 Philips screws from the rear of the case

Step 2



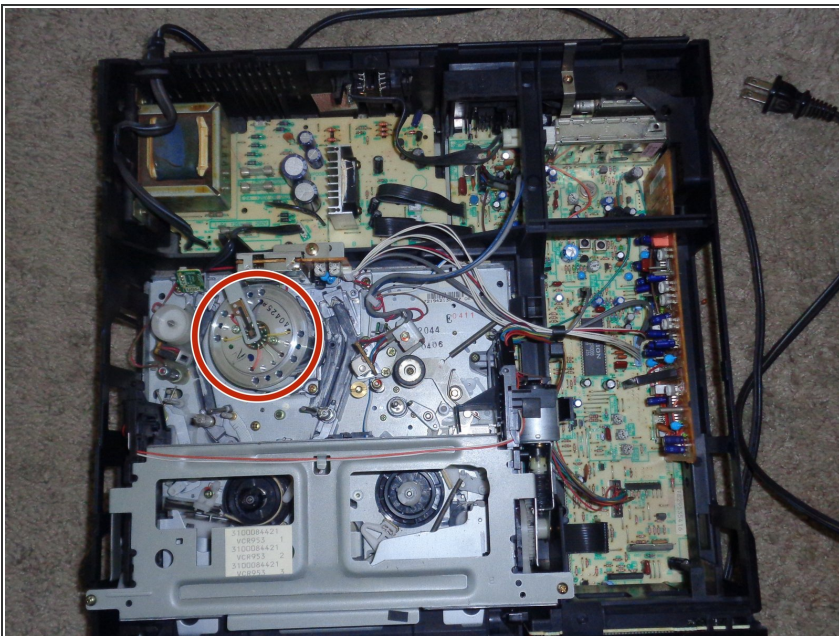
- Lift up on the back case and slide the top case back until it is free from the rest of the case

Step 3



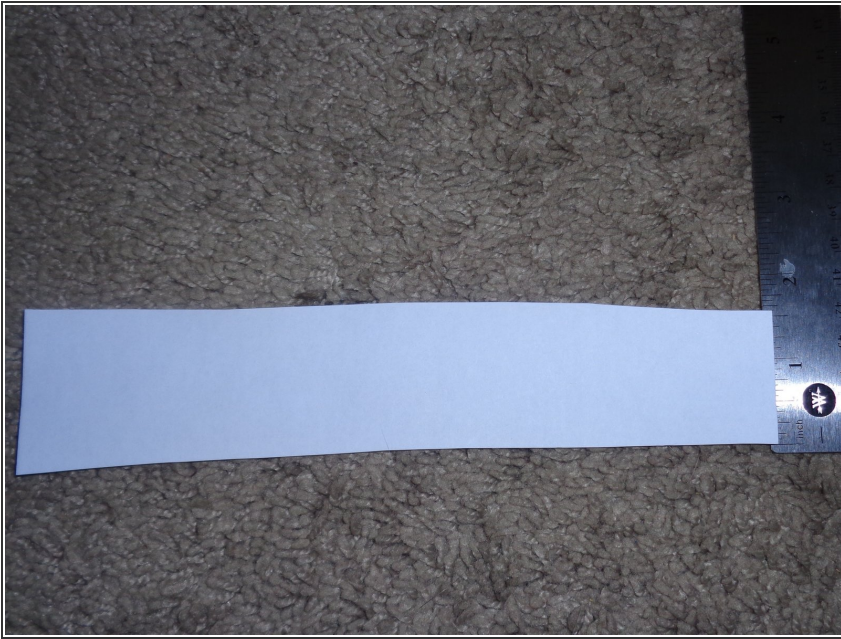
- You will now have access to all the circuit boards and the top of all mechanical parts.

Step 4 — How to Clean a VCR Read Head Without a Read Head Cleaner Tape




- Once the top shell is off you should have access to the read head drum.
- Read head drum

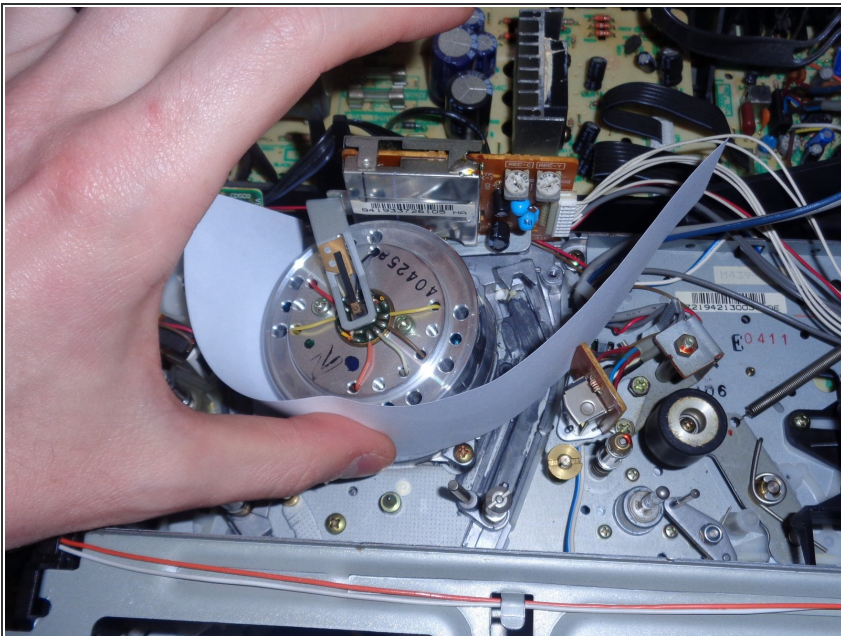
Step 5



- Cut a strip of plain white copy paper between 1"-2" tall.
- Soak the middle of the strip in isopropyl alcohol. 70% will work, but the higher the concentration the better. I used 91% because it is what I had.

 You want to use paper for this and not something like cotton swabs or pads because they can leave fibers behind on the drum that can damage it or your tapes.

Step 6



- Wrap the alcohol soaked paper around the read head drum and hold it in place against the drum with your thumb.
- With the paper pressed against the drum use your other hand to rotate the drum in either direction.
- Do this until no more dirt is coming off the drum onto the paper. You may need to flip the paper around to allow it to catch more dirt.

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