



Nintendo Switch Left Joy Con Sensor Rail Replacement

Follow this guide to replace a broken or faulty...

Written By: Craig Lloyd



INTRODUCTION

Follow this guide to replace a broken or faulty left Joy Con sensor rail on the Nintendo Switch game console.

The Switch uses JIS screws, but you can use a Phillips screwdriver in a pinch. Be very careful not to strip the screws. iFixit's Phillips bits are designed to be cross-compatible with JIS-style screws.

Note: When you remove the shield plate, you'll need to replace the thermal compound between the plate and the heatsink. Since normal thermal paste isn't designed to bridge large gaps, the closest replacement is K5 Pro viscous thermal paste.

Note: This guide, and the part we sell, are compatible with the original Nintendo Switch model released in 2017, as well as the newer refreshed model released in 2019 (model numbers HAC-001 and HAC-001(-01), respectively).

TOOLS:

- [Tri-point Y00 Screwdriver](#) (1)
- [JIS #000 Screwdriver](#) (1)
- [Tweezers](#) (1)
- [Spudger](#) (1)
- [Microfiber Cleaning Cloths](#) (1)
- [Isopropyl Alcohol](#) (1)
- [iFixit Opening Tool](#) (1)
- [K5-PRO Viscous Thermal Paste](#) (1)

PARTS:

- [Nintendo Switch Left Joy-Con Sensor Rail](#) (1)

Step 1 — Release the Joy Con controller locking tabs



- ⓘ Before you begin this repair, make sure the device is completely powered off.
- Press and hold down the small round button on the back of the Joy Con controller.
- While you hold down the button, slide the controller upward.

Step 2 — Remove the Joy Con controllers



- Continue sliding the Joy Con upward until it's completely removed from the console.
- ⓘ Repeat this same process for the other Joy Con.

Step 3 — Remove the back-side screws



- Use a Y00 screwdriver to remove the four 6.3 mm-long screws securing the rear panel.
- ⓘ Throughout this repair, [keep track of each screw](#) and make sure it goes back exactly where it came from.

Step 4 — Remove the top and bottom screws



- Use a JIS 000 driver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the following screws securing the rear panel:
 - One 2.5 mm-long screw on the top edge of the device
 - Two 2.5 mm-long screws on the bottom edge of the device
- ⓘ To prevent these tight screws from [stripping](#), apply firm downward force, work slowly and try another JIS 000 or PH 000 driver if the screws won't come out.

Step 5



- Use a JIS 000 screwdriver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the two 3.8 mm center screws on the sides of the device (one on each side).

Step 6



- Use your finger to flip up the kickstand on the back of the device.
 - ⓘ If there's a microSD card in the microSD card slot, remove it now before you continue to the next step.

Step 7



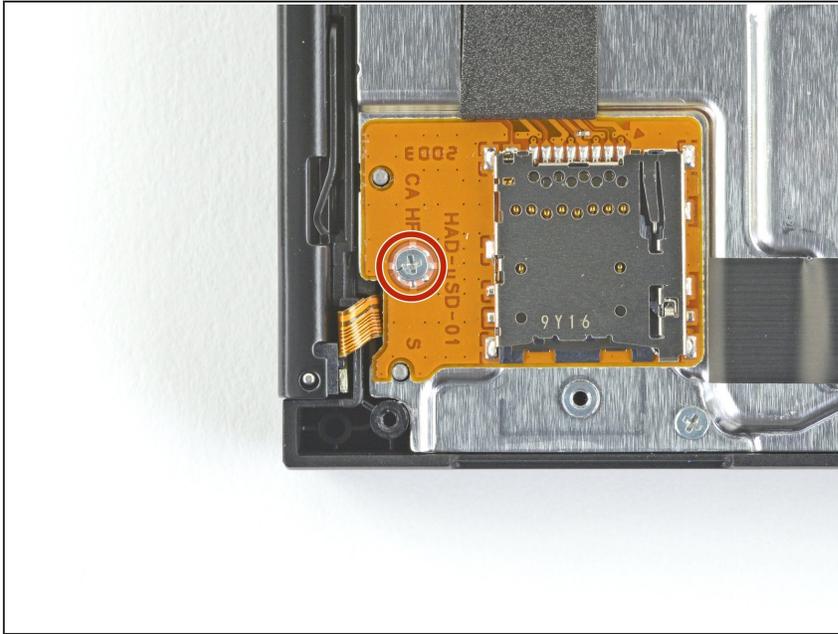
- Use a JIS 000 screwdriver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the 1.6 mm screw in the kickstand well.
- Close the kickstand.

Step 8



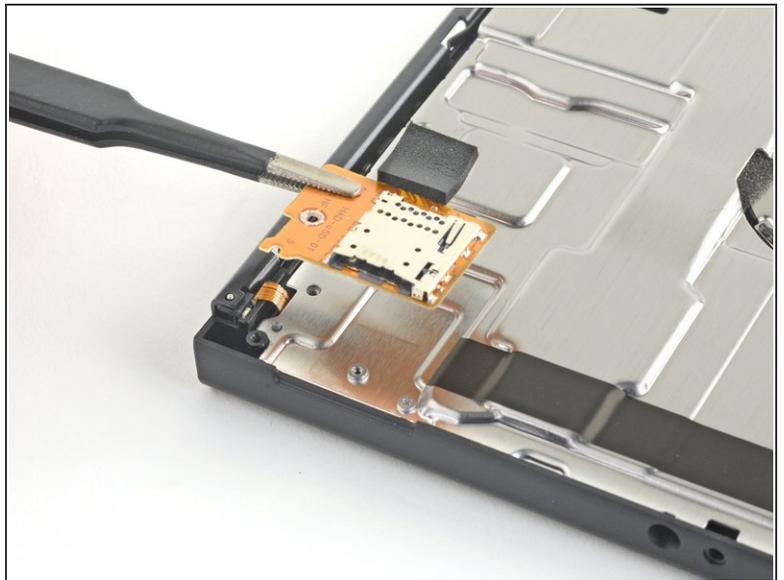
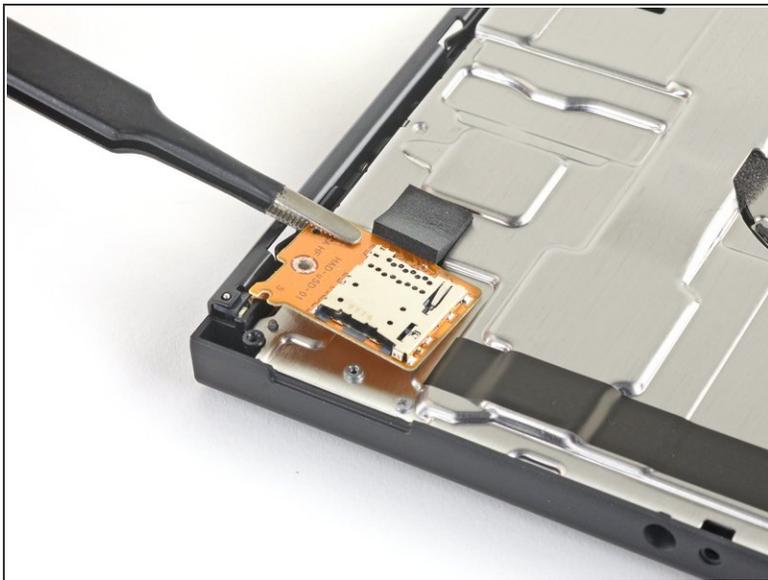
- Open the game card cartridge flap.
 - ⓘ The game card cartridge flap attaches to the other half of the plastic shell, preventing you from completely lifting up the rear panel if it's closed.
- Lift the rear panel up from the bottom of the device and remove it.

Step 9 — Remove the microSD card reader



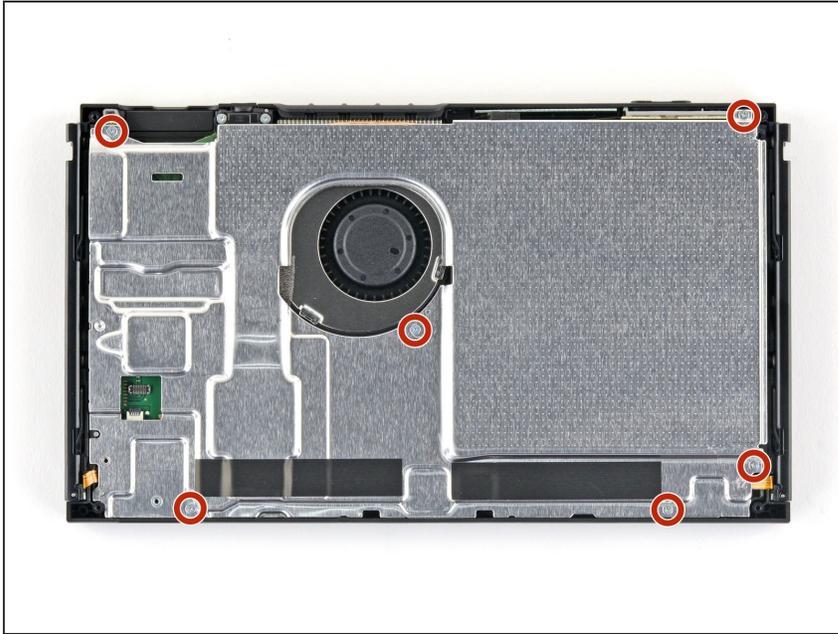
- Use a JIS 000 screwdriver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the 3.1 mm screw securing the microSD card reader to the device.

Step 10



- Use your fingers or a pair of tweezers to lift the microSD card reader straight up from the device to disconnect and remove it.
- ☑ During reassembly, make sure the press connector underneath the foam pad is firmly connected to the motherboard. It may help to remove the foam pad before reinstalling the card reader.

Step 11 — Remove the shield plate



- Use a JIS 000 screwdriver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the six 3 mm screws securing the shield plate to the device.

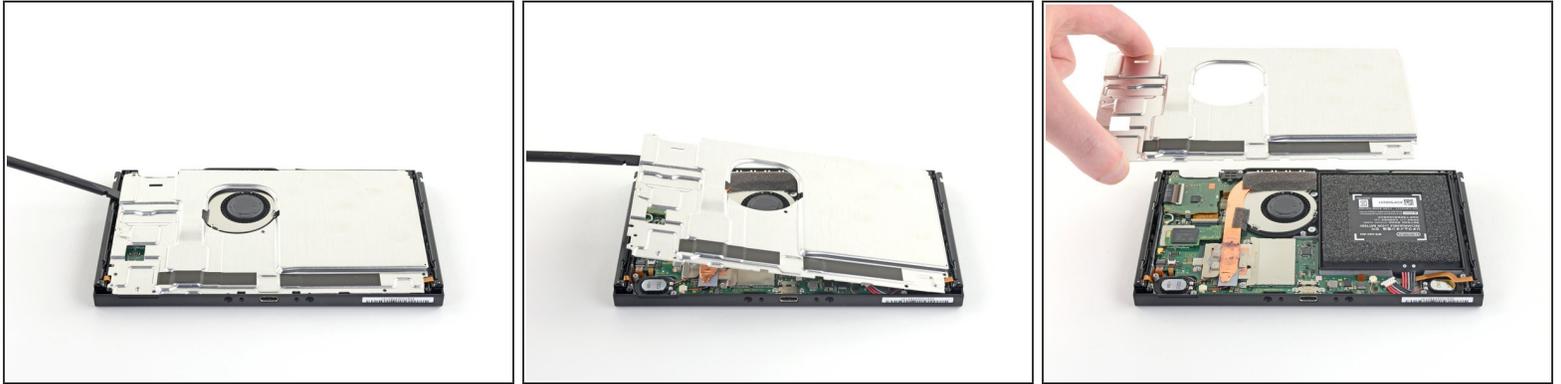
Step 12



- Use your fingers or a pair of tweezers to peel back the piece of foam on the top edge of the device near the fan exhaust port.

⚠ If the foam doesn't easily peel away, don't force it as it might end up tearing. Carefully peel at different spots to pull back the foam.

Step 13



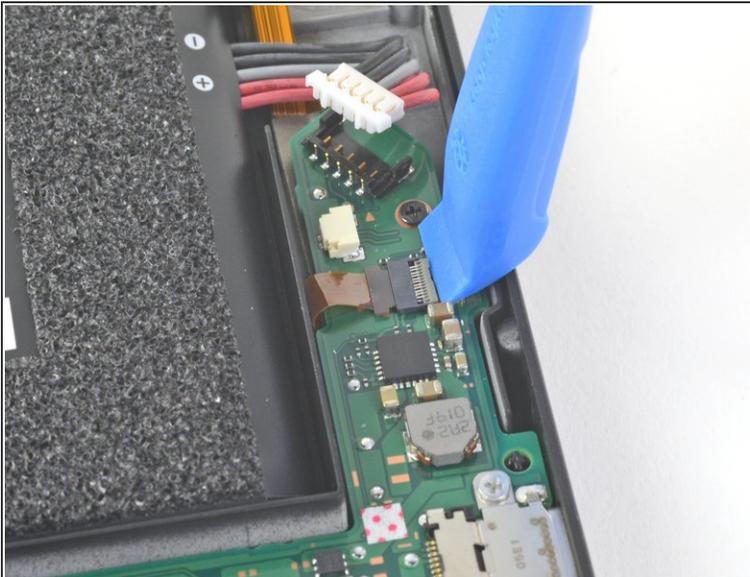
- Insert a spudger underneath the shield plate along the edge of the device.
- Pry up to lift the shield plate and remove it from the device.
- ⓘ You may feel a bit of resistance. This is normal, since the shield plate is slightly bonded to the heat sink with thermal paste.
- ⓘ A thick pink thermal compound bridges the gap between the shield plate and the copper heat sink underneath. This helps prevent the Switch from overheating.
- You can reuse the pink thermal compound if you're careful. Keep the compound clean and make sure it makes solid contact between the heat sink and the shield during reassembly.
- If you need to replace it, refer to our [thermal paste guide](#) to remove the old thermal compound and replace it with an appropriate compound, such as [K5 Pro](#), during reassembly.

Step 14 — Disconnect the battery



- Use the point of a spudger to pry the battery connector straight up and out of its socket on the motherboard.

Step 15 — Remove the left Joy Con sensor rail



- Use an opening tool, spudger, or your fingernail to flip up the small, hinged locking flap on the Joy Con rail data cable's [ZIF connector](#).

Step 16



- Use a pair of tweezers to slide the Joy Con rail data cable out of its connector on the motherboard.

Step 17



- Use your fingers or a pair of tweezers to lift the battery connector up and out of the way of the Joy Con rail's data cable.

Step 18



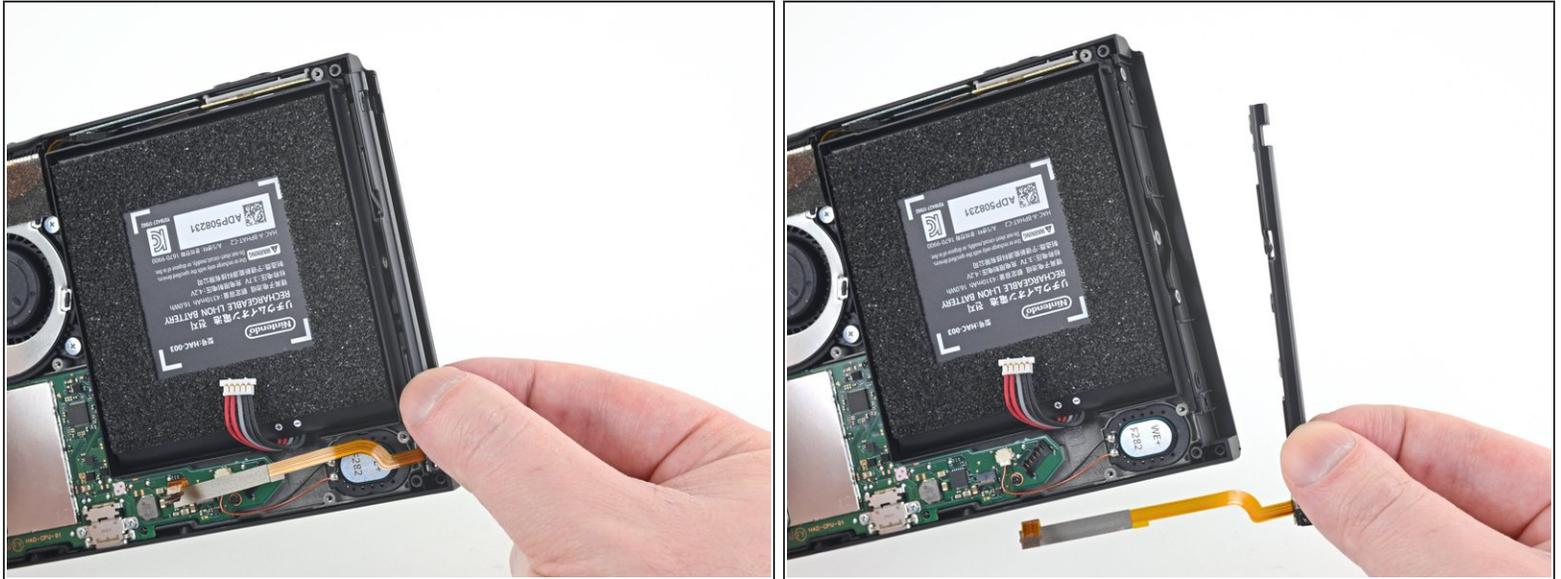
- Use your fingers or a pair of tweezers to lift the battery connector up and out of the way of the Joy Con rail's data cable.

Step 19



- Use a JIS 000 screwdriver or an official iFixit PH 000 driver to remove the four 3.7 mm screws securing the left Joy Con rail to the frame of the device.
- ⓘ These screws are torqued down and can be difficult to remove. To prevent them from [stripping](#), apply firm downward force, work slowly and try a different screwdriver if the screws won't come out.

Step 20



- Remove the left Joy Con sensor rail from the device.

Compare your new replacement part to the original part. You may need to transfer remaining components or remove adhesive backings from the new part before installing.

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

Take your e-waste to an [R2 or e-Stewards certified recycler](#).

Repair didn't go as planned? Try some [basic troubleshooting](#), or ask our [Nintendo Switch Answers community](#) for help.