

Jim T's Rio Karma Disassembly Guide

All of the disassembly guides I've been able to find seem to have the same weakness; you have to gently finagle the circuit board out of the front half of the cover. This invariably results in breaking off the scroll wheel or the keylock switch, or both. Taking off the top case piece that surrounds the scroll wheel frees everything up so that you can open it easily like a pizza box.

Below is my step-by-step disassembly of a used unit I got in. It has a broken scroll wheel, keylock, and LCD connector so clearly someone has been into it once already. You can also download this guide in [PDF format](#). For more information about my Repair Depot please check out my website www.karmalimbo.com.

N.B. All the pics below can be clicked on to see a much bigger version (oooo...I love that 8Mpix Cybershot!)

1. Get yourself a nice clean work surface with a comfy chair and lots of light.
2. Find yourself a small Phillips head (#0) screwdriver, a 1" putty knife, a small plastic container for parts, and a thin but soft cloth rag.



3. Using your Phillips screwdriver, remove the two screws on the bottom of the player.

4. After the two bottom screws are out, grasp the rubber'ish side panel with your hand and pull out to the right. The side panel should pop off.





5. Starting at the bottom right corner, slide your putty knife under the lens and gently twist to separate it from the case. Be careful not to insert the putty knife so far as to overlap the LCD screen and potentially damage it. The lens is held down with double sided tape, and is relatively easy to pry up.

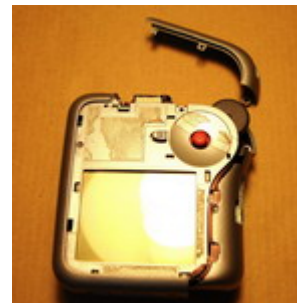
N.B. I cover the end of the putty knife with a soft rag so as to not scratch the lens. The rag is not shown in these pictures for sake of clarity.

6. Work your way around the lens perimeter counter-clockwise, until you get to the center of the top edge. Then twist the putty knife and lift with your other hand on the free right hand edge until the lens is free.



7. With the lens and side panel off, you will see two screws now exposed. Remove these two screws.

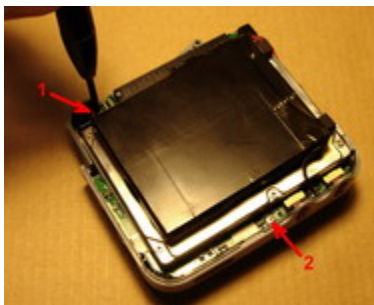
8. Gently spread the front and back case pieces with your fingers, and pop off the top right piece that surrounds the scroll wheel.





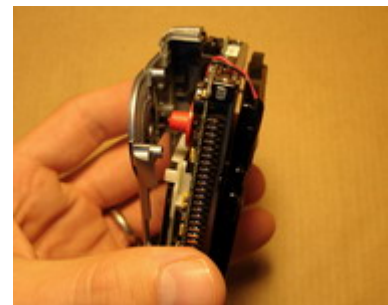
9. The back case piece should now come off easily, starting from the scroll wheel side and hinging open like a pizza box.

10. You can now see the battery and hardrive exposed. The battery seems connected tentatively (weakly) to the mainboard, but in fact it's not to bad. The black wires go to some kind of temperature sensor (a thermistor or RTD, I'm not sure which) that is taped to the side of the battery. You can slide the sensor out from under the tape to give you more maneuverability if you like.



11. You should also be able to see two Phillips screws holding down the mainboard. Remove them.

12. Now the tricky part where most people break something! Gently separate the mainboard assembly from the front case piece starting at the top, and slide it up and out. You may have to flex the front case piece a bit to free the connectors at the bottom. Pay attention to what's happening around the keylock switch since this is the most fragile point. Everything else is pretty robust.





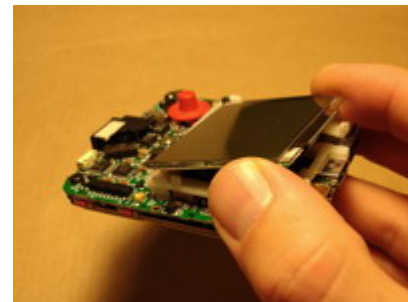
13. Ta-da, the case is off.

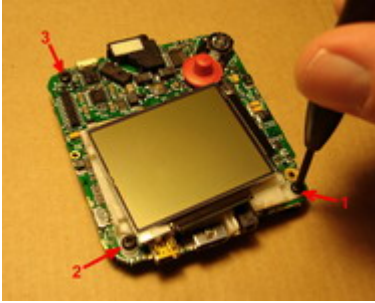
14. Now remove the battery circuit board from the mainboard by prying it up with your fingers.



15. With the battery circuit board disconnected, the battery is free.

16. Examine the LCD and how it is hooked into its holder. Gently flex the tabs on the lower edge, just enough to lift up the lower edge of the LCD and slide it down to free it from the other tabs.





17. With the LCD now loose on its ribbon cable, you can access all three of the screws holding the hardrive. Remove them.

18. Gently flip the brown lever up on the LCD connector to release its ribbon cable from the main board. You will have to tug the ribbon cable out of the connector to free it. Then flip the mainboard over to look at the hardrive. Lift the edge opposite the HD's connector just enough to clear the volume buttons, and wiggle the hardrive out free of its connector.



19. Now you have everything apart that is worth taking apart.

N.B. Note the broken LCD connector lever on this unit. It is pretty fragile, so go easy on it. I don't know what I'll do with this mainboard!

20. Here it is, the Rio Karma in pieces. Follow these steps in reverse to reassemble.



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