MacBook Air teardown finds positive progress for repairability

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- Inside the MacBook Air.
- It’s the same new/old keyboard design we saw in the 16-inch MacBook Pro.
- Peeking underneath the trackpad and getting a glimpse at that cabling.
- The full teardown of the MacBook Air.

iFixit, a company that sells gadget-repair parts and publishes regular teardowns of popular devices, dug into the new MacBook Air this week and found it to be a slight step-up for MacBooks in terms of repairability.

The site found that the move from the butterfly keyboard to the new scissor-switch one only added “half a millimeter to the thick end of the new Air.” And the site speculates that these keys should be much more reliable, noting that no silicone barrier is needed as it was on the butterfly keyboard to mitigate that design’s problems.

Keyboard aside, the teardown uncovered a larger heartsink for the CPU, plus a couple of things that might make this laptop a bit easier to service than its predecessor.

First, the speakers are now secured in place with screws, making for easier removal. Second, a new “cable configuration between the logic board and the trackpad” makes it fairly straightforward to remove the trackpad.

Previously, these cables were beneath the logic board, so repair pros can now deal with both the trackpad and the battery while leaving the logic board where it is.

All in all, iFixit gave the 2020 MacBook Air a 4 out of 10 for repairability, citing the re-routed trackpad and various modular components. That said, the new keyboard is integrated into the top case, so it’s going to be a real challenge for people to service it. Hopefully, though, they won’t have to as much as was necessary with the butterfly design.

Head over to iFixit for a couple more photos and details; the site also promises an iPad Pro teardown is in the works. And as for us, we’re almost ready to publish our MacBook Air review, so look out for that.

Listing image by iFixit

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