



How to Shuck a WD Elements External Hard Drive

Shuck a WD Elements external hard drive in order to use the drive in a PC or NAS.

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INTRODUCTION

Shucking an external hard drive involves disassembling the external enclosure and harvesting the bare hard drive inside. From there, you can use the drive in your home server, NAS, or PC. This procedure shows you how to remove the hard drive while keeping the enclosure intact.

Shucking external hard drives is a great way to get a lot of storage at a better price. Many external hard drives use server-grade hard drives that cost nearly twice as much if you were to purchase them standalone without the external enclosure.

This guide demonstrates shucking a WD Elements 12TB external hard drive from Western Digital, model WDBWLG0120HBK-NESN, but the procedure can apply to any WD Elements 3.5" external drive.

Note: Before shucking, be sure to boot up the external drive and run a deepscan for bad sectors using a program like HD Tune Pro or Stablebit Scanner. If any errors are detected, return the drive to the retailer or manufacturer.



TOOLS:

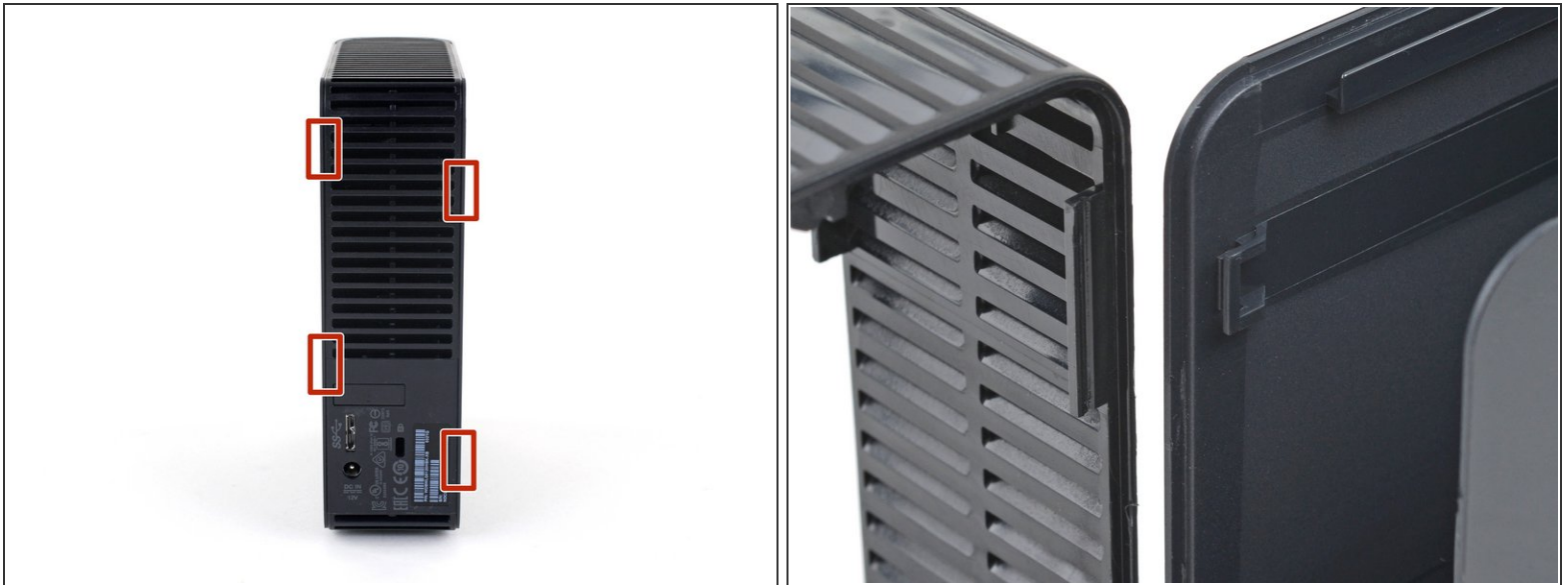
- [Jimmy](#) (1)
- [Phillips #2 Screwdriver](#) (1)



PARTS:

- [Polyimide Tape](#) (1)

Step 1 — Locate the enclosure clips



 Make sure to turn off and unplug the drive prior to disassembly.

- The external enclosure cover is attached to the vented frame with four plastic clips from the inside. Note their locations before moving on to the next step.

Step 2 — Insert a Jimmy into the seam of the enclosure



- Insert a Jimmy into the seam between the frame and the cover on one side of the drive, roughly halfway between the top and bottom.

i You may need to wiggle the Jimmy in order to slide it in between the frame and the cover.

Step 3 — Release the bottom clip



- With the Jimmy inserted in between the frame and cover, pry the frame outward to release the bottom clip.

! Take care not to pry too forcefully, as that may break the enclosure.

i If you're having trouble releasing the clips, slide the Jimmy closer to the clip and try again.

Step 4 — Release the top clip




- Slide the Jimmy up along the seam and pry the frame outward to release the top plastic clip.

Step 5 — Release the clips on the other side



- Repeat steps 2-4 on the other side of the enclosure.

 Take care not to pry too forcefully, as that may break the enclosure.

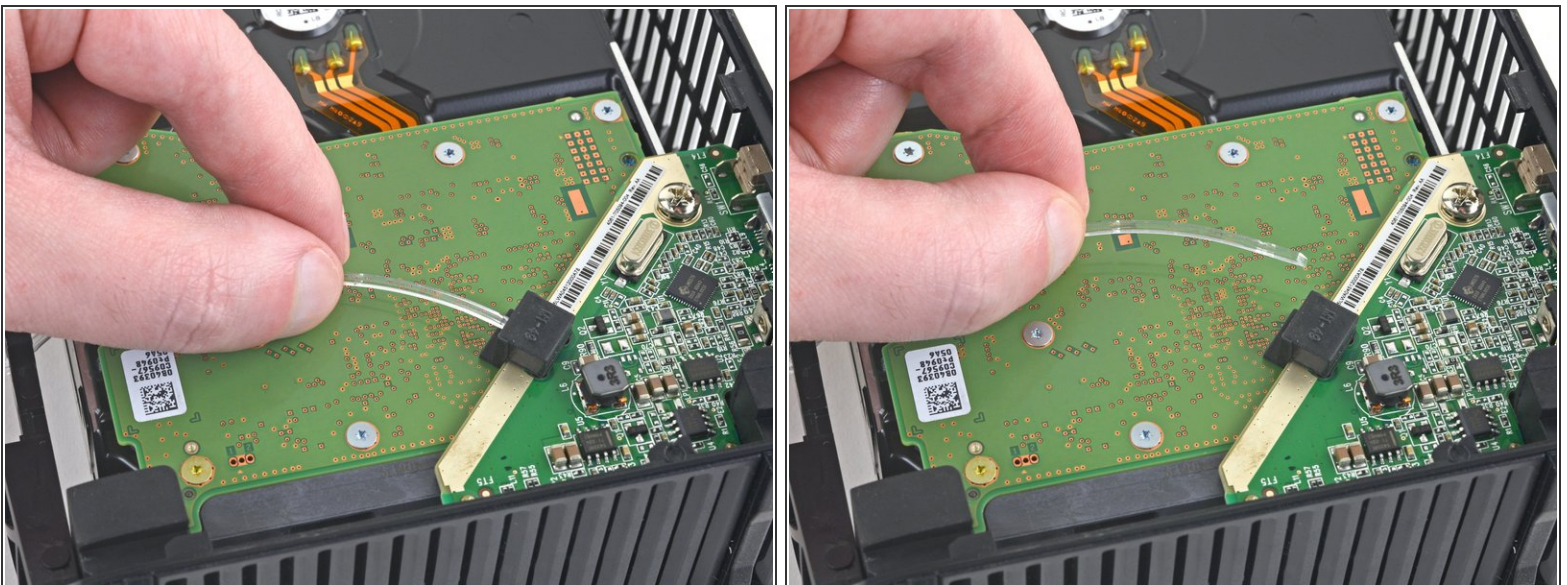
 If you're having trouble releasing the clips, slide the Jimmy closer to the clip and try again.

Step 6 — Remove the cover from the enclosure



- Slide the cover straight off the frame to remove it.

Step 7 — Remove the LED light guide



- Slide the LED light guide out of the LED slot on the drive's controller board.

Step 8



- Grab the end of the LED light guide and slide it completely out of the frame to remove it.

Step 9 — Remove the hard drive from the frame



- Use your hands to push on the four rubber blocks in the corners to unseat the hard drive from the frame.
- ⓘ Slowly push one or two blocks out at a time until the hard drive is completely unseated from the frame.

Step 10



- Remove the hard drive from the frame.

Step 11



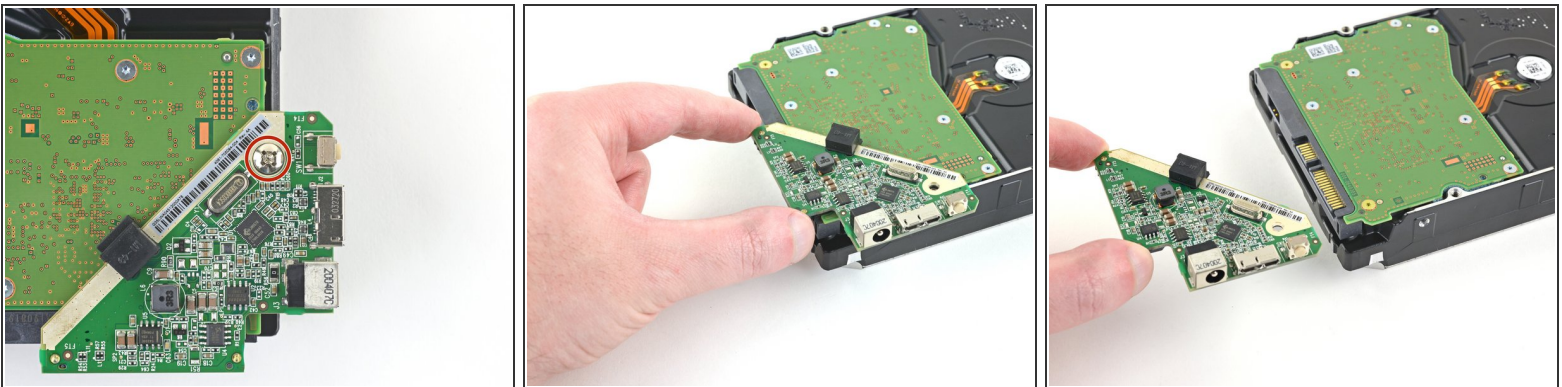
- Remove the rubber blocks from the hard drive if they're still attached—some of them may have already fallen off when you removed the hard drive.

Step 12 — Remove the controller board metal bracket



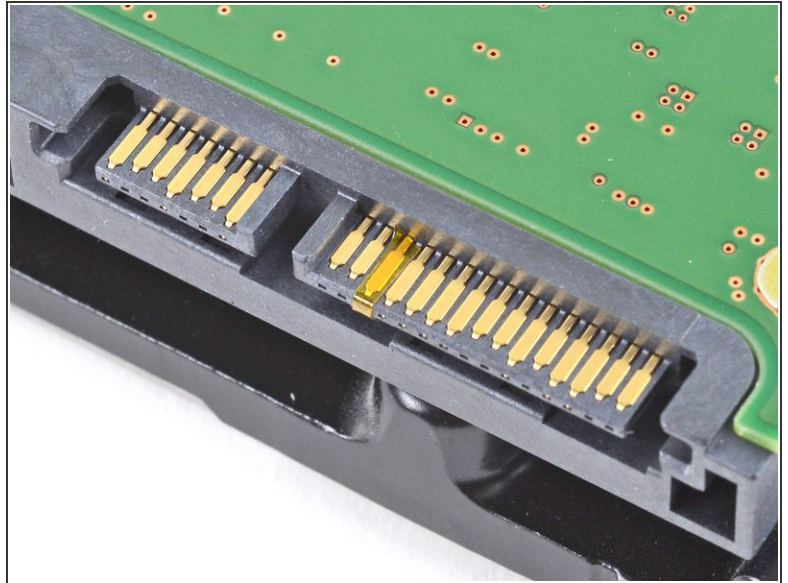
- Use a Phillips screwdriver to remove the 8.5 mm-long screw securing the small controller board metal bracket to the hard drive.
- Remove the metal bracket.

Step 13 — Remove the controller board



- Use a Phillips screwdriver to remove the 8.5 mm-long screw securing the controller board to the hard drive.
- Slide the controller board straight off the end of the hard drive to remove it.
- ⓘ There will be a bit of resistance when removing this board, since it's connected to the hard drive's SATA and power connectors.

Step 14



- Just the bare hard drive remains.
- ⓘ If the hard drive isn't recognized when you connect it to your PC, home server, or NAS, you may need to [tape over the 3.3V pin on the hard drive's power connector](#) using polyimide tape.

Be sure to keep the enclosure—as well as all the parts and screws that accompany it—until the warranty has expired. After that, take them to an [R2 or e-Stewards certified recycler](#). You can also offer them to folks on [r/DataHoarder](#) to be reused.

To reassemble the drive and enclosure, follow these instructions in reverse order.