Subject: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by Madison on Sun, 29 Jan 2023 14:12:50 GMT

Long story short, my daughter got hair dye all over her keyboard. I've worked on it enough that the keys are no longer sticking. I've dissembled it as much as possible and there's some dye inside, not much, but it's there. How do I remove this layer of dye without wrecking the keyboard? Is it even possible?

I know I haven't been on here in a while, but that's because I've been busy with my new job. Since the kids are older, I've finally able to go back to full time-employment. I hate to pop on just because I've got an issue, but I'm desperate, and I know you guys know your stuff.

Subject: Re: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 29 Jan 2023 18:37:20 GMT

The problem, of course, is to use a solvent that will dissolve the dye without attacking plastic parts or anything that might have been silkscreened or painted on your keyboard.

I generally like to use flux removers and/or alcohols for circuit boards. I use (automotive) brake cleaner on really tough stains, but it will destroy most plastics so that's not an option for you. And really, flux remover will damage some plastic and some silkscreens, as well as PCB markings done in ink, like an ECO level, serial-number or revision number hand-written on a board. Isopropyl alcohol is usually pretty safe, but even that can damage some materials. Still, I'd start there 'cause it's the most "friendly" of the three solvents mentioned in this paragraph.

Using 91% isopropyl alcohol, rub a little on a part of the keyboard that's safe, like behind the faceplate and/or on the edge of the circuit board. Make sure it doesn't damage the part you're trying to clean. If it's safe, start using the alcohol to clean the areas where dye remains.

Subject: Re: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by gofar99 on Mon, 30 Jan 2023 01:48:22 GMT

Hi, I have to presume from the discussion that it is an attached keyboard and not a plug in for a PC. If it was that then the answer is replace it. They are not costly. Since it is hair dye I might consider something like hydrogen peroxide to bleach it out. Even bleach might work. As noted the possibility of damage is quite real. If it is a costly device then a repair shop might replace the keyboard for a reasonable fee. Plus you can go on U-tube to see if anyone has already done that procedure. I am not a great fan of U-tube, but once in a while there are good things like this.

Subject: Re: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by Concorde on Wed, 01 Feb 2023 17:07:28 GMT
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Q-Tips are needed.

Just do a bit of research on what solvents are plastic safe, use the Q-Tips for the cracks and crevices, and you should be good to go.

Subject: Re: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by Madison on Thu, 02 Feb 2023 01:01:40 GMT
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Gofar99, it's an electronic keyboard (Korg brand). We bought it used, so it's one of those situations where it wouldn't be worth it to ship it to a professional to fix.

Did everyone think I was talking about a computer or laptop keyboard rather than the musical instrument? If so, that's pretty funny because I used the advice from this thread to clean the Korg. There's still some light staining visible, but you have to know where to look in order to really see it. When I first turned it back on, the keyboard had an odor, but that's slowly gone away. What really matters is that it plays okay. It didn't look like the dye got down to the pads, so we probably got off lucky.

Subject: Re: Stripping dye off keyboard
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 02 Feb 2023 01:33:59 GMT
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I love old Korg and Moog synthesizers. Especially the early analog units. ARP too. So cool!

And the Fender Rhodes piano too. Classic!

The later digital stuff is great too, especially after sampling became popular. But I have a soft spot for the 1970s and 1980s analog keyboards. The ones where you set the waveform, filters and attack and decay.

As for the cleaners, it's pretty much the same whether it's a computer, typewriter or electric piano or synthesizer. But surely the replacement cost is a difference. If it were an inexpensive item, then I could see where replacement might be the best option. The more rare or expensive it is, the more repair and cleaning makes sense.