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Super ICybie Upgrade - RS-232 Installation

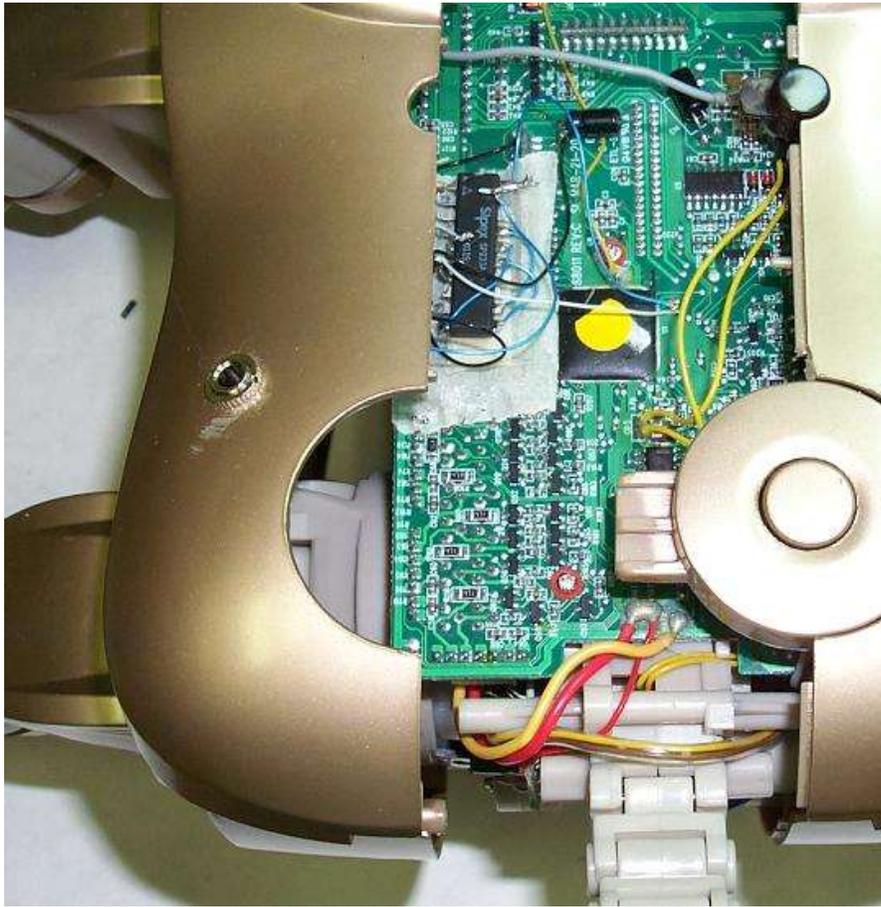
WARNING: if you have a newly re-released "Outrageous" I-Cybie, do not attempt this modification!!!

Hardware Requirements

- One ICybie - **built before 2005 !!!**
- A PC computer with an available serial port

For the Hardware modification:

- A MAX233 or MAX233A chip ([Jameco](#))
- A small (stereo) phone jack and plug (1/8" recommended).
- An RS-232 connector that will connect to the serial port on your computer (typically a 9 pin female DIN connector)
- A few simple tools like small screwdrivers, and a fine tip soldering iron
- A little bit of wire-wrap wire
- A steady hand



The following are the instructions for installing an RS-232 port into your ICybie. After the RS-232 serial port is working, and CROM is installed (see below), your mild-mannered ICybie will be a "Super ICybie".

Step 1 - remove the ICybie Shell

NOTE: Perform this step first (even before you buy the parts). If you don't have the heart to take apart your ICybie, stop right here.

You need to separate the two sides of ICybie's main body shell. OPTIONAL: you can remove the leg shields to give yourself more room. You will need two triangular screwdrivers (or otherwise improved tools). If you only want to do the Super ICybie upgrade, you don't need to bother.

To separate the main shell, you must remove **seven** phillips (cross shaped) screws holding the body together. On the dog's left side, there is only one screw. On the dog's right side, there are **six** (one for each hole).

About half are visible, and can be easily removed. The other half are hidden under plastic covers/caps. Stick a long wood screw in the remaining holes, and give them a small turn - gently pull out the screw and the plastic cap should come out with it. NOTE: there may be two plastic caps in the same hole.

Once the plastic cap is removed, throw it away (it is not needed), and remove the phillips screw like all the rest.

The sides will easily move apart. If the sides are still stuck together, you probably forgot a screw, or didn't remove one completely.

Take a look around, and decide where you want to put your phone plug. If you don't have all the parts, reassemble ICybie until you do. Once the plastic caps are removed, it is very easy to take ICybie apart again.

Step 2: Get Parts, Borrow/Download a cartridge with the CROM installer on it

Get all the parts required before moving to the next step.

The MAX233 (or 233A) chip is recommended (single chip, no external capacitors), even though there are cheaper alternatives. For the phone plug/jack, a 1/8" stereo phone plug/jack is recommended. The smaller 3/32" size is harder to fit through the ICybie plastic shell so is not recommended. These can be found at Radio Shack stores or other electronics sources. Any three conductor plug/jack will work, limited only by your imagination and how well you can fit it into the ICybie case.

To finish the installation, you need to run the "CROMINST" installation cartridge once. You can borrow one of these cartridges, or if you have a SilverLit downloader, you can download the CROMINST cartridge software yourself.

Step 3: The hardware modification

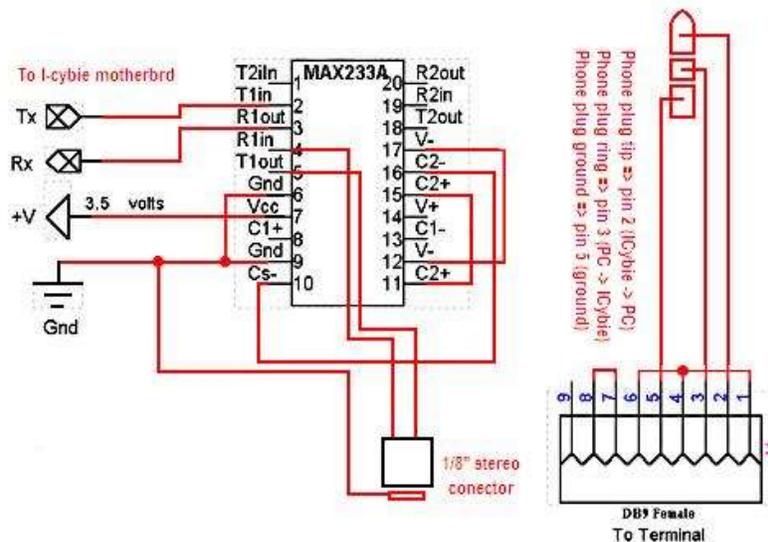
WARNING: This design is over 10 years old. Many computers don't come with RS-232 Serial/COM ports anymore.

Instead of installing an RS-232 level shifter inside of the iCybie, you can use a USB to 3.3 volt RS-232 adapter based on the "FT232RL" or other similar chips connected outside the robot. The adapter can be plugged directly into your computer's USB port, and appears as a virtual Serial/COM port. A common adapter board is available at [SparkFun](#). If you use this approach, you won't need a MAX233 or 232 chip or a 9 pin DIN plug. This simplifies some of the construction, but the difficult steps remain unchanged:

- You must wire directly to the iCybie main board, and bring out the RX, TX and Ground pins to the FT232RL board.
- You must find/buy/build a working iCybie cartridge, initially programmed with "CROMINST".

If not already apart, repeat Step 1 to separate the two halves of ICybie's shell.

Schematic



Thanks to Juan for the schematic.

Step 3A: the phone jack

Find a location in ICybie's shell where you want to install the phone jack. The location shown in the photo is very tight for a 1/8" jack. You may want to place it on the side or bottom of ICybie instead.

NOTE: be sure it is a stereo jack (ie. 3 conductors).

Drill the proper sized hole and install the jack. It will be connected in step 3C.

Step 3B: the MAX Chip

Take the MAX233 chip, and wire it up as shown below. If you are comfortable soldering directly to an IC chip, it is rather easy. If you would rather build a small circuit board, be my guest - but don't make it too big, size is at a premium inside the ICybie shell.

```

+-----+
nc - 1 | | 20 - nc
to TxD0 of CPU - 2 | | 19 - nc
to RxD0 of CPU - 3 | | 18 - nc
to ring of jack - 4 | | 17 - to pin 12
to tip of jack - 5 | | 16 - to pin 10
Ground - 6 | | 15 - to pin 11
+3.6V - 7 | | 14 - nc
nc - 8 | | 13 - nc
Ground - 9 | | 12 - to pin 17
to pin 16 - 10 | | 11 - to pin 15
+-----+

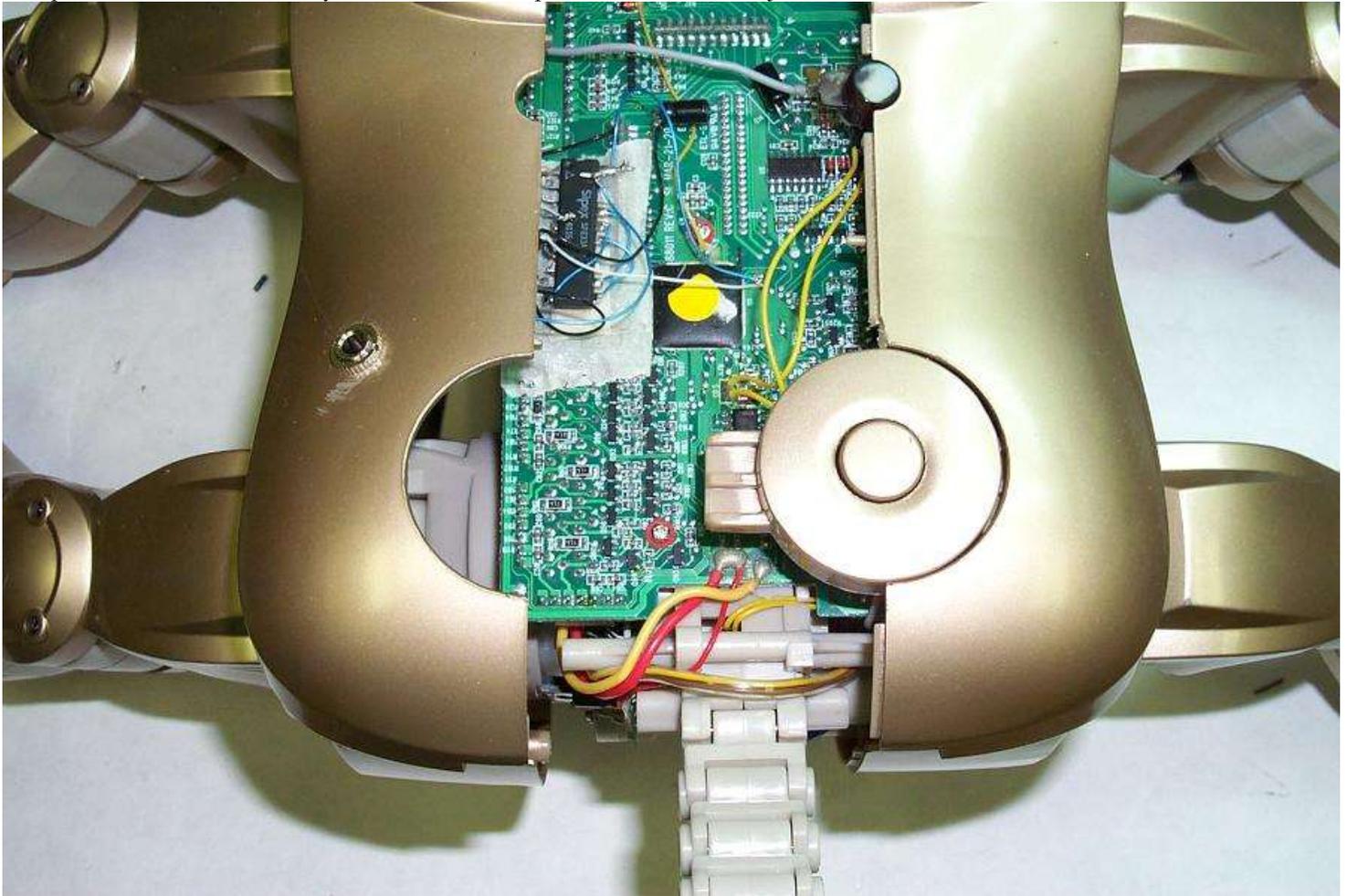
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+3.6V from ICybie motherboard (see photos below)

There are 4 ground wires all connect together
 Two from MAX chip (pins 6 and 9)
 One from phone jack (ground - base part of jack)
 One to ICybie motherboard (see photos below)

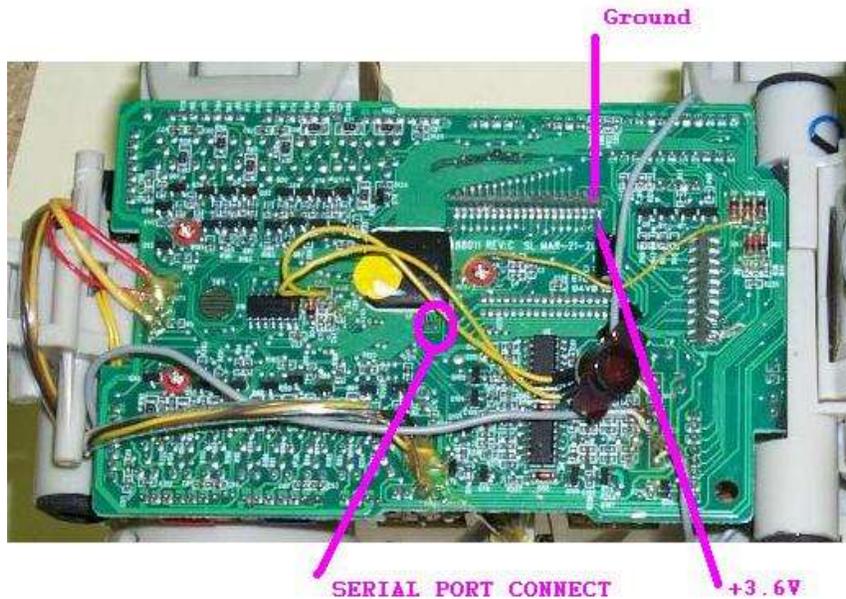
Step 3C: wiring it together

Find a location where you want to put the MAX chip. I put down a little masking tape to prevent electrical shorts and put the chip directly on top of the main board. You may decide to do a more professional installation job.

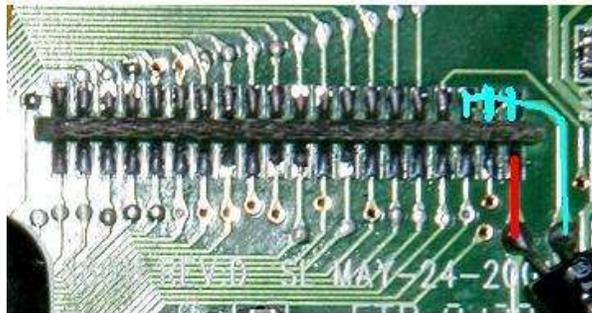


The phone jack is easy to wire up.

You must get power and ground from the main board. An easy place to solder is the connector to the system ROM.



The top right corner of the photo shows two pins soldered together - this is ground. Right below that (the lower right corner) has one pin that is +3.6 volts. You can solder on the connector or the capacitor next to it (the black thing below it in the photo).



Red = +3.6V Blue = Gnd

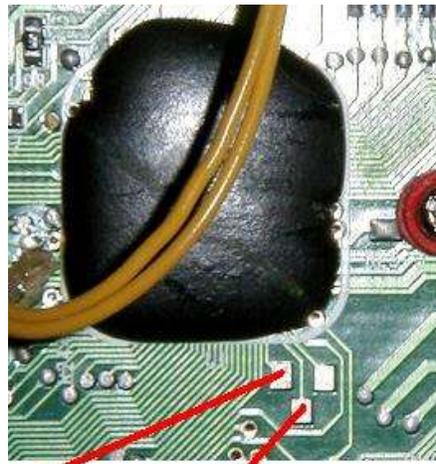
Step 3C cont'd: Revision C or Revision D?

The next step is wiring the two leads to the pads right next to the CPU. There are two revisions of board, Revision "C and Revision D (clearly marked on the board). With the Rev C board, soldering to the small pads is very difficult. You need thin wire-wrap wire, a fine and clean soldering iron, and a steady hand. With the Rev D board, soldering to the large pads is very easy.



TxD0 RxD0 /CTS0

Revision "C"



TxD **RxD**

Revision "D"

In either case, leave the "/CTS0" pin unconnected. After soldering, inspect with a magnifying glass for solder bridges.

Step 3D: the RS-232 cable

This is the easy part. Connect the three wires of the phone plug to the RS-232 connector that will attach to your computer (usually a 9 pin female DIN plug). If you have a camera with a serial interface that connects to your camera with an 1/8" stereo plug, you may already have a compatible cable.

Phone plug ground => pin 5 (ground)
Phone plug tip => pin 2 (ICybie -> PC)
Phone plug ring => pin 3 (PC -> ICybie)

You should check the voltage on pins 2 and 3 to make sure they are connected properly.

The tip of the jack from ICybie, and pin 3 on the PC side should both be RS-232 transmit signals (measuring -10 volts or so with a voltmeter)



==> Nothing to install <==

CROM Installer Commands:

I = Install (whatever needed)

U = Uninstall CROM

Step 4: Use it

Try some of the YICT202 images.
