TI-99/4A Reset Switch Installation

By Chris Schneider (SHIFT838)

Users of the TI-99/4A like myself have often wondered why Texas Instruments did not design this computer with a reset switch. As we have all probably experienced a hard lock-up of the system and the only solution is to flip the power switch. Of course this can cause a lot of wear and tear on the switch.

I myself have experienced a power switch failure on the unit and have had to replace it. After much questioning and researching of the modification, I wanted to publish what I thought was a good solution for all level of users. I have chosen this solution as this does not require any soldering to the CPU or cutting of traces on a board and is an easy upgrade for anyone, even the beginner.
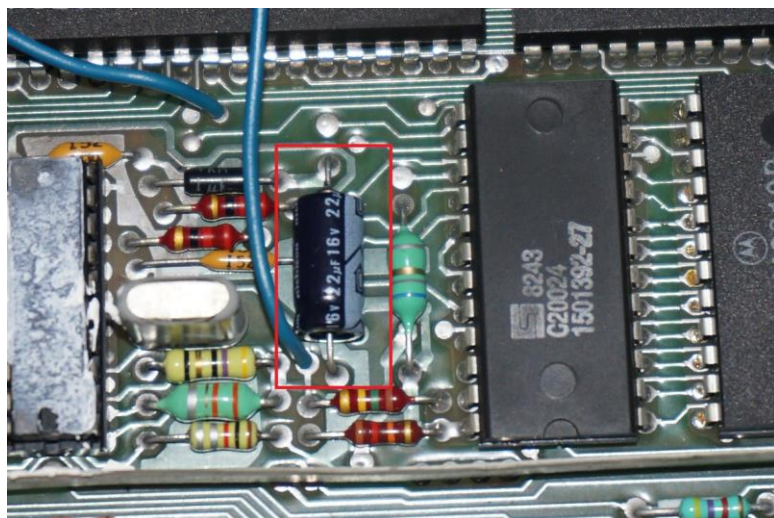
Parts List:

1 x Momentary Pushbutton Switch (Normally Open)
2 x 12 Inches of wire (Ribbon cable works great)
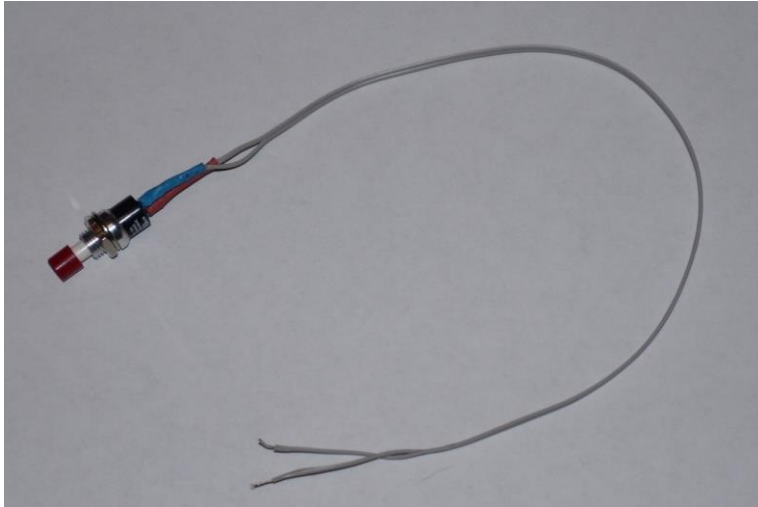Some small shrink-tube or electrical tape
Some Patience

Installation Steps:

Step 1: Disassemble Console Good disassembly steps can be found on http://www.mainbyte.com
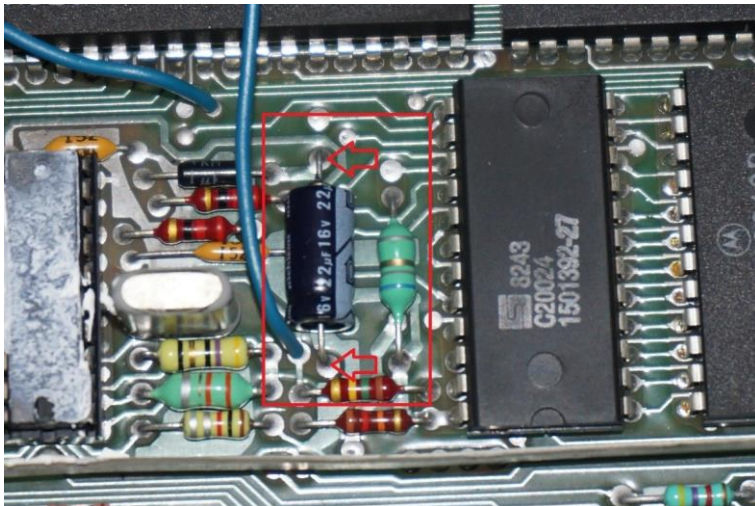
Step 2: Locate Capacitor **C606** – This capacitor is located on the right of the grey crystal under the TMS9900 processor. See below:
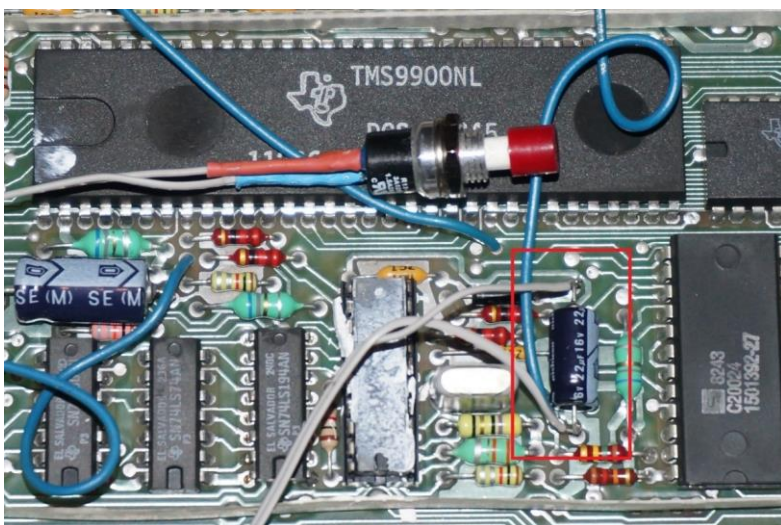

Step 3: Solder Cables to momentary Switch and use 2 pieces of shrink-wrap tubing to cover terminals.

Step 4: Solder wires from momentary switch to capacitor C606 (one on each side of the capacitor)

Once soldered it should look as the below picture does.

Step 5: Clip a center vent hole on the top back right of the console to mount the switch. (May need to use a round file as well to get a good fit).

Step 6: Mount momentary switch

Step 7: Reassemble the console

You now have a reset switch. You can mount the switch anywhere and it can be any type of momentary push-button switch as long as it is 'Normally Open'.

If you choose to mount in other locations just make sure to use the appropriate amount of wire and the switch does not interfere with the console in any way. Pressing the switch will reset the console without having to engage the power switch.

For other projects and TI-99/4A information visit http://shift838.99er.net

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