

Everglide V3 'Water King' Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 02/28/2021

If you're reading this, then I've effectively gotten away with the most incredible, daring, and downright devious plan I think I've ever pulled off in a switch review. First, I picked a week where I was insanely busy with school, graduate school visits, *and* upcoming exams to write a review with more than necessary detail. Secondly, and following close on the heels of Part 1, I chose to post an updated 'family photo' on my social media after having officially reached 900 unique switches in the space of this same week. And then finally, with a whole new insane number of eyes on my website, I've chosen to review one of the most notoriously difficult switch types to photograph which have not only plagued my reviews in the past, but will make this one no doubt a pain in the ass to take photographs of. I'm a mad man.

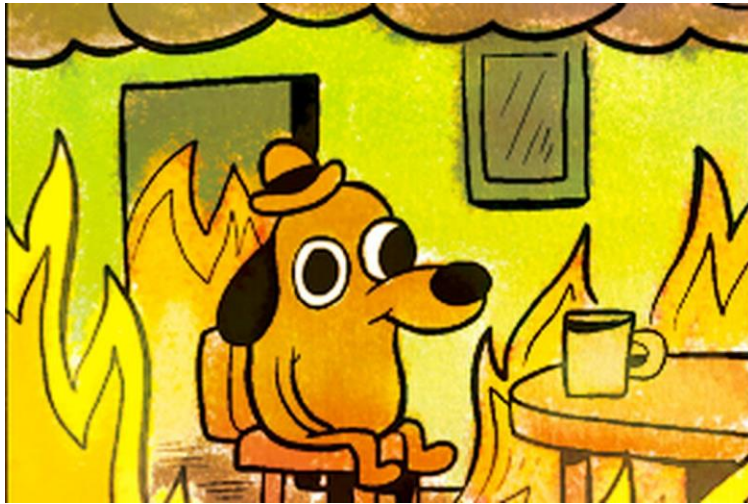


Figure 1: Artist's depiction of Goat's house, currently, as per description.

In all seriousness, though, I knew this was going to be an incredibly packed few weeks in advance and had planned out all of these things ahead of time. While I did start out writing content kind of 'at will', as the collection and especially the website has grown over the past year, I've begun to think about the scheduling of my content more consciously and how I can make sure to consistently be getting you all reviews and scorecards to keep you up to date with fresh reviews and opinions. Even though it isn't exactly the easiest to plan out what switches will *really* strike me as an absolute 'must review' weeks before they actually get to me, it is ultimately part of the territory that comes with having grown as much as I have. And simply put, I couldn't have done it without you all. Even though the website is an easy thing to point to as evidence of growth by community involvement, my switch collection really speaks more volumes to me personally about how things have changed. Not only did I never even dream of reaching 900 unique switches, but I could also have never imagined owning some of the switches that I do now own and get to bring to the attention of the wider community at large. So, while some weeks are busier than others, and some are definitely not conducive to an optimal writing schedule, thank you all for making the time worthwhile and the pursuit of each review that much more enjoyable.



Figure 2: 900 switches down and only several... thousand(?) more to go!

Switch Background

Everglide is without a doubt one of the more interesting brands that I have encountered over the last few years of collecting, and not even necessarily for their historical influence or linear progression as a brand line. Instead, with each successive release of Everglide switches my opinion apparently flip-flops extremely hard, oscillating somewhere between them being ‘quite great’ and ‘what in the hell were you guys thinking’. Surprisingly, though, these Everglide V3 switches did *not* end up falling in line with that flip-flopping trend that I’ve seen since Everglides first debuted in 2019. Though, before we actually get into which side of the x-axis my opinion landed for these switches, let’s take a stroll back through the entire history of Everglide in recent years to get to the modern day understanding of them.

Stretching all the way back to May of 2019, “Everglide” as a brand of switches was first introduced to western audiences by way of a Drop exclusive sale with absolutely no preemptive marketing. While there was almost certainly a history of Everglide before that with respect to eastern markets, I unfortunately was not as ‘in tune’ with the scene over there at the time, and am only capable of speaking to what I can physically remember. Sold in batches of 70 or 110 switches *only*, these initially sold with a fairly reasonable price of \$35 per pack of 70 and \$45 per pack of 110. Still with the Stealios Controversy fresh in mind, many people were skeptical about these switches being so cheap as they appeared like “recolored fake Tealios”, at least with respect to the linear options. Coming in 4 colors – Sakura Pink, Coral Red, Amber Orange, and Jade Greens – with the first three being linear and only the Jade Green being tactile, these were the V1 lineup of the new Everglide brand. While I wasn’t able to get my hands on these switches until much later after this initial sale, I overall had a fairly positive impression with the V1 Everglide linears. Relative to linear switch options available at the time, they were all fairly smooth and decent performing switches in a vacuum, but paired with the (at that time) quite low price per switch, they were definitely a worthwhile option for people exploring the budget-performance realm.



Figure 3: Think of a time machine like this, but with 'Switch' scrawled over the word 'Phone' instead.



Figure 4: All four Everglide V1 switches.

However, let's take a pause break and discuss the current status and understanding of Everglide as a brand before we delve into the much more convoluted history post-V1 switches. (While this seems a bit out of place, chronically, I think it will help shed some light on the drama and points of contention that we will mention below.) As you can see below, at the time of release I was woefully unaware of who Everglide was as a brand and how they were seen in the eastern markets. As time has progressed though, I've become aware that Everglide is a brand that runs out JWK in much a similar fashion to how Zeal operates out of Gateron. While I am still a bit fuzzy on whether or not to state that they officially have their "own" molds and production lines, they are a distinct enough branding entity that the eastern markets refer to them separately from JWK/Durock. Carrying a seemingly 'uwuified' Marvel Shield style logo as their brand image used, Everglide officially has a QQ group with this logo which they use to run sales out of in the eastern countries, often times before their release to western markets through Aliexpress, Taobao, or Drop.

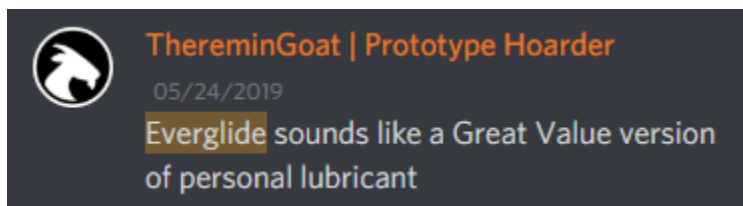


Figure 5: In case you thought I was just being hyperbolic when I had said I had never heard of them before.



Figure 6: Current Everglide logo as per their Taobao sales page.

Currently, much like with the JWK/Durock situation with respect to Stealios in the west, Everglide isn't exactly the most fondly looked upon company in the east. While I'm not entirely aware of their transgressions due to the language barrier, which doesn't seem to improve regardless of how much time I spend browsing ZFrontier, Everglide are often mockingly referred to as 'The Empire' in eastern circles. As well, while much of the commentary has been left to small, private circles and in text only, the very strong opinions of Everglide have even gone as far as to spawn a meme in which their logo has been posted artwork of German Nazi soldiers marching in a seemingly post-apocalyptic scene in which the Axis powers had won WWII. While I don't personally have an issue with showing this kind of content as I view it purely as historical, I'm going to choose to leave it off of this review in the interest not only of potentially offended parties reading these reviews, but also in the best interest of any impressionable younglings who may have made it this far.

Moving back to our normally scheduled broadcast, the history after V1 Everglides is where the loosely held order to things starts to fragment significantly. Stretching between September of 2019 and June of 2020, Everglide went full pedal-to-metal with new switch production. Closely following their release of the V1 linears, and further churning up suspicion about them being 'fake Tealio' clones, Everglide released their Tourmaline Blue V1 switches, which were nearly identically blue in stem color as Tealios switches. As well, both via Drop and Novelkeys shortly thereafter, Everglide released their 'Oreo' and 'Everglide Crystal Purple' switches. As to be expected in the same batch of release as the Tourmaline Blue V1s, the other two switches released around this same time carry their own respective bouts of controversy and debate.



Figure 7: The first three Everglide switches of the whirlwind ‘V2 Era’ of releases.

While the issues surrounding the aforementioned Oreo switches wasn’t entirely relevant until many months later, the Crystal Purple switches came out swinging with their controversial point. Initially marketed on Drop as ‘made of ABS plastic’, the Everglide Crystal purples were immediately called into suspicion on this point as no switch to date, other than these, have ever been marketed as having been made with ABS plastic. Even though this point, alone, isn’t necessarily much to scoff at, it seems extremely surprising that if these *were* made of ABS that this wasn’t explored by other companies given its greater-than-failure switch produced by Everglide. As well, Drop’s reputation for shit-tier advertising did these rumors no favor. Moving to the Oreos, though, it wasn’t until around September of 2020 that a rumor arose from supposed statements of an eastern competitor to Everglide claiming that the Everglide Oreo switches “weren’t from JWK”. Much like with the ABS Crystal Purple housings, though, this rumor has also yet to be substantiated either way and exists only as a speculation as to the real truth of the matter.

Only a brief time after the release of the Tourmaline V1s, Oreos, and Crystal Jades, Everglide also went on to release V2 versions of their original 4 switches as well as a V2 Tourmaline Blue switch. Coming with noticeably different mold revisions, as could be seen by a change in the stem wobble of the switches as compared to the V1 releases, the bigger surprise about the V2 releases that turned me sour towards Everglide as a brand were their ‘Pro!’ line of switches. As a slightly more expensive marketing gimmick alongside the release of their V2 switches, the ‘Pro!’ line, which came in Amber Orange, Coral Red, and Tourmaline Blue only featured hand lubrication in each switch rather than standard grade factory lubrication. While this was certainly an interesting marketing idea that hadn’t been attempted prior on such a scale, it ultimately backfired in the form incredibly overlubed switches that caused a ‘gummy’ like feeling that reminds me of my first ill-fated attempt at lubing linear switches.

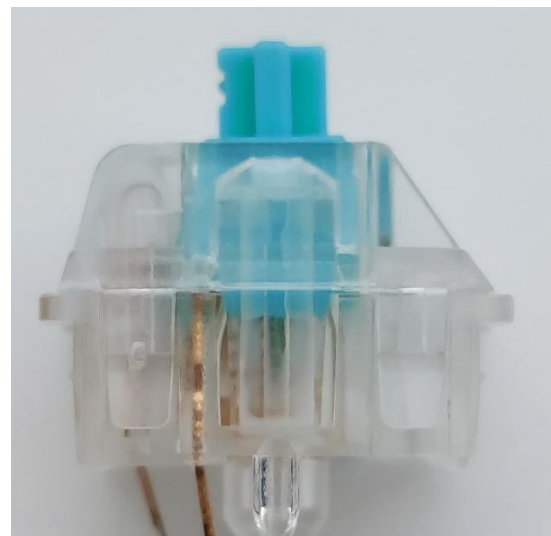


Figure 8: Side shot of Tourmaline V2 Pro! switch in which the hand lubing can easily be seen, especially at the top of the slider rail.

Finally, within this nearly year-long flurry of switch releases, the last set of Everglide releases in the ‘V2 Era’ came by way of Moyu Blacks and Hexin Workshop Bamboo Greens. In a surprising shift from their seemingly linear-centric line thus far, Everglide released these two highly tactile switches around April of 2020 to decent reception in the east and west. While the Hexin Workshop Bamboo Greens initially had a handful of weights marketed in pre-sale with them and were only available via Taobao, they ultimately ended up shipping with only 67g variants a few weeks before the western release of Moyu Blacks on Drop in May of 2020. Marketed as ‘Everglide Dark Jades’ as an alternative translation of the name ‘Moyu Blacks’, these sold on Drop at around \$1 per switch and continued to be restocked intermittently. For a bit more information about the history of these switches, or for a longer diatribe on why the entire marketing team of Drop should seriously have been fired years ago, you can check out my Moyu Black review here.

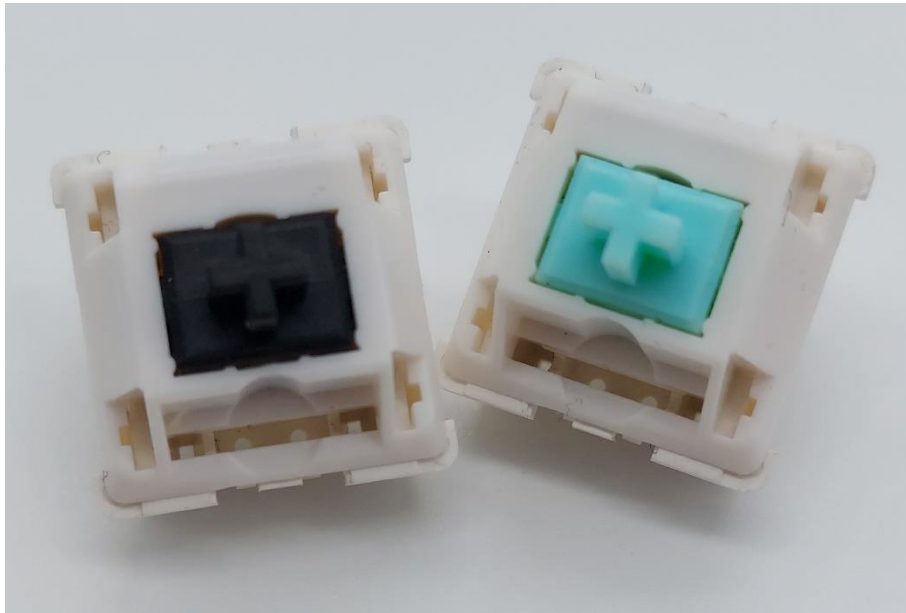


Figure 9: Moyu Black and Hexin Workshop Bamboo Green switches.

Aside the fact that Goats don’t even have fingers, I’m really starting to run out of them with respect to keeping track of all of these Everglide releases. I think somewhere shortly after the ‘V2’ era of all of those switches ended, around May of 2020, Everglide also released “V2.5 Sky Blue” switches, which were linear switches not reminiscent of the Tourmaline Blues, but an entirely new, one-off switch design featuring a translucent blue housing and a clear stem. That, as far as I can rack my brain and Discord search functions for, covers all of the Everglide releases up to switches that I will discuss in the actual review part of this wall of text. Please feel free to flame my less-than-optimally-caffeinated brain that is both writing and editing this mess in the event that I’ve forgotten one.

Finally, with everything caught up to date historically, the long and winding road of Everglide brings us to late August of 2020, in which the first teasers of the new ‘V3’ switches featured an all-clear housing and rumble about 62g and 67g offerings. While there are a few variations in what is considered ‘clear’ in the switch world, with milky housings, Cherry “clear” stems, etc., these were absolutely *transparent* clear both in housing as well as stem based on the photo. Pulling a meta step back a bit, I was honestly a bit concerned about these switches at this immediate teaser. On one hand, Everglide had impressed me quite fairly with V1 releases and then absolutely disappointed me with the clusterfuck that was the V2 Era. This would lead me to initially guess that these newer, V3 switches would then complete the flip-flop yet again and turn around my feelings about Everglide. On the other hand, though, this was not the first time that all-clear switches had been attempted. Aside the clicky all-Clear Outemu switch

from CES 2018 that I had wrote a scorecard about earlier this year, there was recently release of a ‘Gugu Ice’ all-clear switch in China that ended... not well. Taking the +1000 word increase to this review by showing a picture instead of writing about what happened, I’ll leave my commentary of the Gugu switches below:



Figure 10: Fuck.

So, needless to say, I was even more hesitant about the release of these switches come mid-December of 2020 when they went up for sale on Taobao. Listed as Everglide V3 switches, these ‘newly molded’ all-clear switches featured the shorthand translated name of ‘Water Kings’, which has since been ignored in the west for a new moniker of ‘Everclears’, instead. Being initially offered in four spring weights (37g, 55g, 60, 70g), this initial drop had each switch priced at 2.8 RMB (\$0.43) with subsequent releases jumping up to 4 RMB (\$0.62) per switch. With the sale of these switches going *incredibly* fast, it wasn’t entirely surprising that a subsequent, western release was held on Drop during February of 2021 at \$0.64 per switch.

Everglide V3 ‘Water King’ Switch Performance

Note: Since there are multiple spring weights of the Everglide V3 switches, I will be choosing to stick with the 60g ones for the performance review below. Your mileage will vary if you use a different spring weight.

Appearance

As I alluded to in the introductory section of this review, the actual photographing and visual inspection of these switches was by far one my least favorite experiences in the entire reviewing process. Personal woes aside, these truly do come in a ‘completely’ clear top housings, bottom housing, and stem combination that allows you to cleanly see the internal leaf mechanism as well as the spring without any obstructed view. While there is an ever so slight clouding to the nameplate region of the switches, it

altogether really isn't that noticeable overall. The springs, which can be clearly (ha) seen in the photographs of the switches in this review are gold plated.

In order to help take the discussion surrounding molds and JWK/Durock a bit further, I also opened and inspected these to see if they had a similar mold as current offerings or if these switches had a separate line given their separation in brand name and seller. Going top-down in approach, I was unable to photograph the mold markings on the inside of the top housings no matter how hard I tried due to how small the letter markings are on a basically see-through housing. What I was able to perceive, though, is that they share similar mold markings to the Alpaca V1 molds, with a double-letter top housing stamp just under the nameplate section on the inside of the top housing.

Moving next to the stems of these switches, they appear to be molded using the V2 stem molds as can be seen in the below picture which subtly displays the taper on the stem rails. As well, for an interesting point of note, the differences in clearness in this photograph is not a result of plastic inconsistency, but rather is the factory lube itself. As can be seen, there is a quite thin and consistent lubing across the outside, bottom half of the side of the stems.

Finally reaching the bottom housings of the switch, they appear to match the newer V1.5 molds that were shared by both the Lavender and Opblack switches that I reviewed last month. On the bottom of the bottom housings, they feature the single letter marking between the bottom right hand LED pins holes as a first point of authentication. As well, they not only feature identical internal mold circles from a top-down view, but also share the extra mold circles on the upper lip of the bottom housing as can be seen in the photo below which line up perfectly with the V1.5 markings I've demonstrated in prior reviews.



Figure 11: Picture of Everglide V3 stem which shows factory lube application as a function of the difference in clarity across the stem.

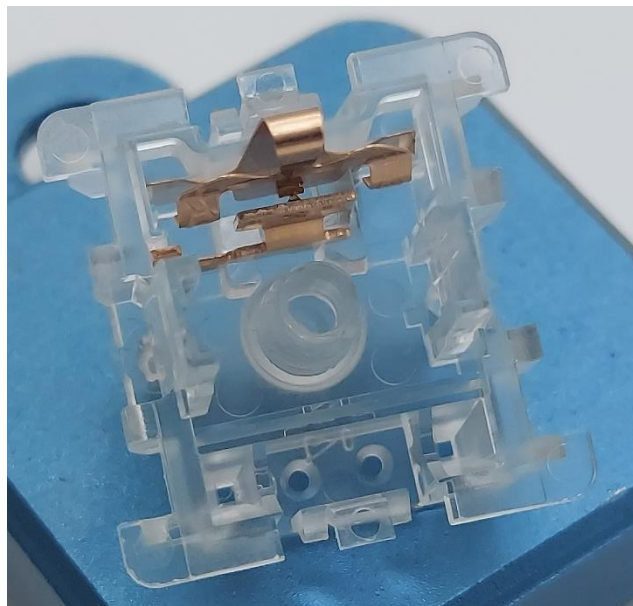


Figure 12: Mold circles on the bottom housings of the Everglide V3 switches.

Overall, while each of the components of these switches separately feature mold markings that would indicate they have been used before in previous switches, this is the first instance of this combination of molds being used for parts. Even though this really doesn't seem to be functionally all that different than compared to something like the V1.5 mold set identified first with the Lavender (as well as Opblack) switches, it is at least historically interesting if not interesting from a manufacturing perspective when considering that all of these switches are getting manufactured in the same facility and yet still being sold under various brands such as Durock, 43 Studios, and Everglide.

Push Feel

In case you were left still wondering about the implied cliffhanger from the end of my Background section regarding my true feelings about the Everglide V3 switches, you can rest assured that the sinusoidal trend was in fact firmly broken and I did not just bait you. However, rather than simply appearing 'great' or 'shit', these switches absolutely impressed me more than I could have possibly expected in terms of switch feel. While I have been quite lucky to have tried many a smooth stock switch in my time, these are among the best lubed linear switches - stock or modded - that I've tried to date.

The factory lubing on these switches is simply incredibly well done, consistent, and walks the tightrope line of lube extremely well without falling into the deep overlubed or underlubed voids below. In addition to a consistent push feel across the entirety of the stroke in each of the switches I tried, these Everglide V3s have a muted and cushiony, yet still solid and non-mushy feeling bottom out. As well, the topping out is definitely a bit more solid and firm feeling than recent JWK/Durock releases, though still just a hair on the noticeably thinner than bottoming outside.

Even though these switches, on their own, have absolutely stellar performance in each of the switches that I tried, my one caveat to my praises I sing about them is that they are not the most consistent between switches. However, when I say this many people will immediately jump to Gateron switch levels of inconsistency in which switches could go dry in the bag next to a switch that was seemingly triply lubed. That is not the case whatsoever here. Instead, the variance between the handful of switches I've tested is fairly minor, but definitely noticeable to someone who is looking for these kinds of things. While you, the reader, may get along fine with throwing these directly into your favorite hotswap board and likely wouldn't notice, I would likely notice these ever so slight inconsistencies between them.

Sound

I'm completely well aware that I've beaten to death the trend in recent reviews that "the sound often matches the push feel of a switch". Keeping that in mind, this is one of those switches that really does me dirty by making me walk back on that trend, but only a slight bit so that I can keep my ego intact. While the bottoming out of the switch perfectly matches the push feel with a soft, muted, and almost unnoticeable sounding collision, the topping out is ever so slightly higher pitched sounding than it feels. (No, this is not meant to be a subtle callout to the synesthiacs in the community.) This phenomena, as well, picks up in terms of magnitude of sound at higher activation speeds when in hand, but this sound is fairly well equalized across typing speeds with keycaps on the switch.

Wobble

Again, further adding to the blowing away of my expectations of these switches is the wobble on the stems and top housing, or rather lack thereof. While previously iterations of Everglide switches, and particularly those in the 'V2 Era', suffered from both noticeable stem wobble as well as a slight budge in the top housings, the Water Kings are about as good as you can get from factory tolerances. Without even getting to the comparisons section just yet, I immediately lumped these in my head with Gazzew's recent

Boba switches in terms of sheer near perfection of tolerancing with about as close to zero stem wobble as you can get.

Comparison Notes to Other Notable Linear Switches

Note – These are not aimed at being comprehensive comparisons between all factors of these switches as this would simply be too long for this writeup. These are little notes of interest I generated when comparing these pieces to the Everglide V3 Water Kings side by side.



Figure 13: Switches for comparison. (L-R, Top-Bot: Tealio V2, Gateron Black Ink V2, Durock POM Linear, Everglide Amber Orange V2, Lavender, KTT Cloud Blue)

Tealio V2

- The Tealio V2 switches, with respect to the upstroke sound, are both louder in magnitude than the Everglide V3 switches as well as a tiny bit deeper and fuller sounding.
- Obviously as could be guessed from the review above, the Everglide V3s absolutely blow the Tealio V2s, and literally all Zealio switches, out of the water with respect to stem wobble.
- The bottoming out of the Tealio V2 switches is definitely more firm, immediate, and noticeable as compared to the bottoming out of the Everglide V3 switches.

Gateron Black Ink V2

- Of all of the switches on the list, the Gateron Black Ink V2s have the most similar overall sound profile to the Water King switches.
- The bottoming out of the Black Ink V2s is a bit more cushiony in feeling than in the Everglide V3 switches. If we had a spectrum from hard firmness to soft squishiness in terms of bottoming out, I would say that the Everglide V3s sit squarely between the Black Ink V2s and the Tealios.
- Overall, Black Ink V2 switches are a bit less smooth than the Everglide V3 switches, but significantly more variable across an entire batch as opposed to the variation I've noted above between the Everglide switches.

Durock POM Linear

- While perhaps a bit rougher, the topping out feeling of the Durock POM Linears is noticeably more firm and solid feeling than that of the Everglide V3 switches.
- While I did review the Durock POMs prior and spoke quite fairly of the smoothness of them, the Everglide V3 switches still absolutely blow away the POM Linears with respect to smoothness.

- Aside these differences, though, the bottoming out experience between these two switches is fairly comparable with the Durock POM Linears being only a tiny bit more solid feeling.

Everglide Amber Orange V2

- As stated above the Everglide V2 switches, in general, have noticeably more stem wobble in both directions than the Everglide V3 switches do.
- I would imagine, based purely on the feel of the bottom housings of the switches and how similar they are, that these bottom housings are likely made out of the same material. (They also do have the same single letter bottom housing marks and mold circles...)
- Describing sound, an arguably abstract and wildly subjective sensory experience, is difficult. That being said, the topping out of the Everglide V3 switches is more ‘singular’ whereas the Everglide V2 switches have a more ‘layered’ sound to the topping out.

Lavender

- Of all of the switches on this list, the Lavenders have the most muted topping out sound and are noticeably quieter than that of the Everglide V3 topping outs.
- While I would say that these two switches are relatively similar in terms of overall smoothness, there is a noticeable amount of drag from the lube on the Lavenders as compared to something like the Everglide V3s.
- As well, much like the Gateron Black Ink V2s, these switches have a more cushiony bottoming out feeling than the Everglide V3 switches.

KTT Cloud Blue

- Not only do the KTT Cloud Blues have a significantly louder topping out sound than the Everglide V3 switches, but they also have a noticeably more plasticky sounding tone to them.
- Aside the scratch of the Cloud Blues, they also have a similar sounding bottoming out to the Water Kings, but definitely not identical in sound.
- Additionally, related to the sound profile of the Cloud Blues, they also contain an ever so slight spring ping that isn’t noticeable in the Everglide V3s as well as any other switch on this list, for the most part.

Scores and Statistics

Note – These scores are not necessarily completely indicative of the nuanced review above. If you’ve skipped straight to this section, I can only recommend that you at least glance at the other sections above in order to get a stronger idea of my opinion about these switches.

Everglide V3 (60g)		
32	/35	Push Feel
24	/25	Wobble
7	/10	Sound
15	/20	Context
8	/10	Other
86	/100	Total

Push Feel

The smoothness on these switches is honestly about as good as one can get from a factory lube job, and these have an excellent bottoming out feeling that is barely noticeable to boot. The only thing that is holding this score back just a tiny bit is a thinner-than-perfect topping out feeling and ever so slight inconsistency in smoothness between switches in a batch.

Wobble

Immediately upon testing these switches I was drawn to comparing them to Gazzew's Boba U4 switches in terms of wobble. Much like those near perfect switches with respect to wobble, these have absolutely no top housing wobble and only the most minor of stem wobbles in either direction.

Sound

While these are not bad at all in the sound department and have a fairly quiet operation save the topping out sound, they could stand to overall be a bit more substantial in all aspects with respect to sound.

Context

These are without a doubt a leap forward for Everglide in terms of performance and offerings. Aside this posing an interesting prospect for the future, their pricing relative to other Everglide branded switches as well as limited availability is a bit disappointing.

Other

While the performance of these switches genuinely excites me, and I feel inclined to give the 'Other' category this score based on a multitude of reasons, one of the more interesting ones to me is that these are the first 'successful' completely clear switches to have been made to date, which is incredibly interesting historically.

Statistics

Average Score			Everglide V3 (60g)		
25.7	/35	Push Feel	32	/35	Push Feel
16.1	/25	Wobble	24	/25	Wobble
5.8	/10	Sound	7	/10	Sound
12	/20	Context	15	/20	Context
5.9	/10	Other	8	/10	Other
65.5	/100	Total	86	/100	Total
Water King Overall Rank			2/67 (86/100)		
Water King 'Hard' Rank			T-#1/67 (63/70)		
Water King 'Soft' Rank			T-#5/67 (23/30)		

Final Conclusions

I'm impressed. Even though I had a sneaking suspicion deep down that Everglide's V3 switches would be good given my flip-flopping tastes regarding their switches with each successive release, I was not prepared for these to be this good. Further blowing my expectations out of the water, as well as to dog pile my incorrectness more, Everglide managed to succeed this well with their V3 line *on a completely clear switch*. Given the historical and particularly recent difficulty of producing entirely clear switches with Outemu and GuGu's previous attempts, I genuinely did not think that such a thing would be accomplished so soon. While there are things that I think still could definitely be improved upon with these switches, and especially so with respect to intangible qualities such as pricing, availability, and just their sheer association with Drop, it really is refreshing to know that even after all of the switches that I have tried that I am still able to be surprised about new stuff coming out. It does, on some level, bring hope in my heart that we will continue to see innovation and a strive towards "perfect" stock switches.

Further Reading

[Everglide Taobao Sales Page](#)

Link: <https://item.taobao.com/item.htm?id=628703622748>

[Drop Everglide V3 'Aqua King' Sales Page](#)

Link: <https://drop.com/buy/everglide-aqua-king-mechanical-switches>

[Everglide Oreo 'Not from JWK' ZFrontier Discussion Thread](#)

Link: <https://www.zfrontier.com/app/flow/Dybq3WVVR1GG>