

Novelkeys Cream Clickie Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 02/12/2023

This is the last time, I swear. For the final time in long form review introduction history I will be talking about graduate school, though not because of things going bad or being stressful this time around. Well, sort of. To cut the long story short, because of situations with respect to my advisors and project that were quite literally destroying my mental and physical health, I am leaving graduate school with a master's degree and officially turned in my lab keys on Friday of last week. Since I need to have *some* form of income in order to keep buying more switches, I'll also be starting my first big-goat job here on March 6th with a significantly higher switch budget than I had in graduate school. Aside the sadness with respect to all the Dr. Goat jokes which will now have to be thrown in the trash, I ultimately know that this is the best move for my sake and all of the real world and keyboard people that I have told about this situation thus far have been nothing but supportive of this decision.

While this news is all fun and exciting in the brief 30 seconds that you've had to process it since the last paragraph, this will change content both in the short term as well as the long term and I think that it is worth discussing briefly here. First and foremost, the job itself is outside of Cleveland, Ohio, which is a 12 hour move from Minneapolis where I am currently located. Given that I start work on the 6th, and have to make that drive twice for the UHaul as well as all the precious switches that I don't trust in that big ass box of truck, I will be cancelling the review on February 26th as I'm not certain my life will be set entirely up then by that point. However, beyond this date I will officially have *significantly* more free time which I'm certain will spill out into content in time. While all the normal maildays, reviews, and measurement content will resume shortly after this move, I definitely have been considering alternative written content, streaming, more meetup visits, and maybe even audio-visual content as avenues which I will finally have both the time and money to explore. All things said, while it will be a stressful few weeks for me to get all of this moved and re-setup again, I'm as excited as you (if not more so) as to what this means for the future of switch related content!



Figure 1: It also sure makes me excited for the prospect of my artisan and keyboard collections in addition to the switches...

Switch Background

As has been stated more than once at the start of a Novelkeys Cream family switch background section, there isn't all that much I haven't covered at this point with respect to the many switches in this family. Just in long form content, alone, I've made full length reviews of the original Novelkeys Creams, Cream Tactiles, Cream Arcs, and Cream+ switches as all of them have had interesting features to their designs or histories that made it worth the deep dive into their background. While certainly interesting from a broad historical perspective, the Novelkeys Cream Clickies which this review are based around certainly fall much more readily into the interesting design feature category given their unprecedented clicky design within the MX-style footprint. Given the unique nature of this click mechanism which will be beaten to horse paste in the coming performance sections, I figure it is worth retouching some of the lesser known modern clicky mechanisms which are out there to preface just how unique this design actually is, even amongst these designs.

Clicky, MX-style switches are without a doubt the least popular type of switches amongst the more dedicated and long running mechanical keyboard enthusiasts in the hobby. While plenty of newcomers buying prebuilts start out with the Discord call destroyers that are Razer Greens and Cherry MX Blues, even slightly more advanced beginners only ever venture as far as Kailh Box Whites, Jades, and Navies. And for all intents and purposes, that's the extent of exploration that most people have with clicky switches. Even though the lack of widespread clicky adoption in switches isn't all that surprising given that they don't operate well around anyone else other than the person at the keyboard, the fact that there are few people who do seek out more niche click designs is a bit strange to me, still. The entire hobby has been and will continue to be based on innovation and seeking out new and unique designs in everything keyboard related, and yet people rarely venture beyond the clickjackets seen in Cherry MX Blues, Razer Greens, etc., and the clickbar mechanisms seen in Kailh Box switches. So, in order to provide some more context as to some of the more unique click mechanism designs in MX style switches, here are three outside of clickjackets and clickbars that you may not have heard of prior:

Click Leaves



Figure 2: Zeal 3-in-1 Clickiez switches and their components.

Most recently revived and brought to the attention of many newer individuals in the hobby by way of Zeal's 3-in-1 Clickiez switches, click leaves are actually one of the oldest clicky switch mechanisms dating all the way back to the late 1980's/early 1990's by way of Alps brand switches. While the implementation and actual functionality of click leaves in Alps, Pro Worlds, and Zeal 3-in-1 Clickiez switches all vary to some degree based on each switch's internal mechanisms, all of them broadly operate on the same principle of the stem raking across a singular bent-metal leaf which produces an audible clicking sound as it is compressed and released. Similar to how stem legs and PCB leaves interact in normal switches, these click leaves often sit opposite of the PCB leaves themselves and produce a click part way through the downstroke of the stems when the switch is pressed inwards.

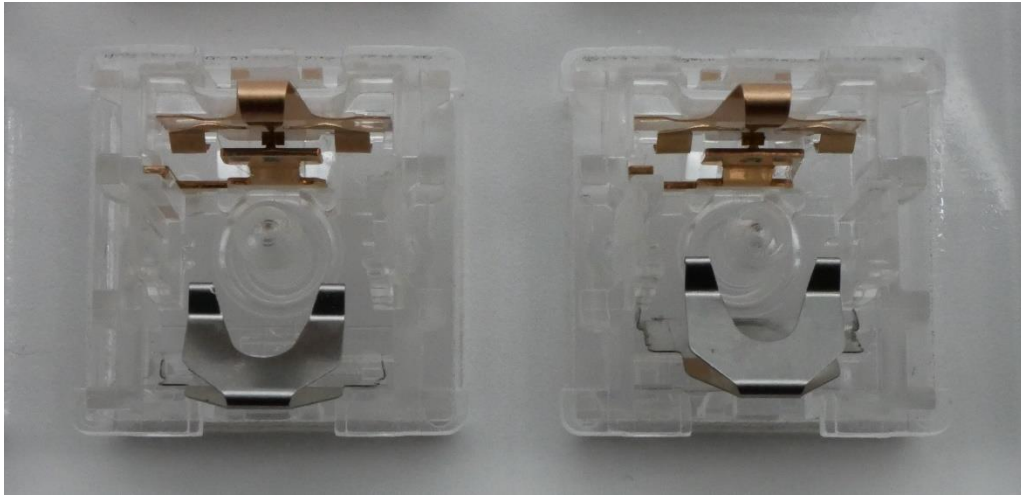


Figure 3: Click leaf placement in clicky and tactile modes of Clickiez switches.

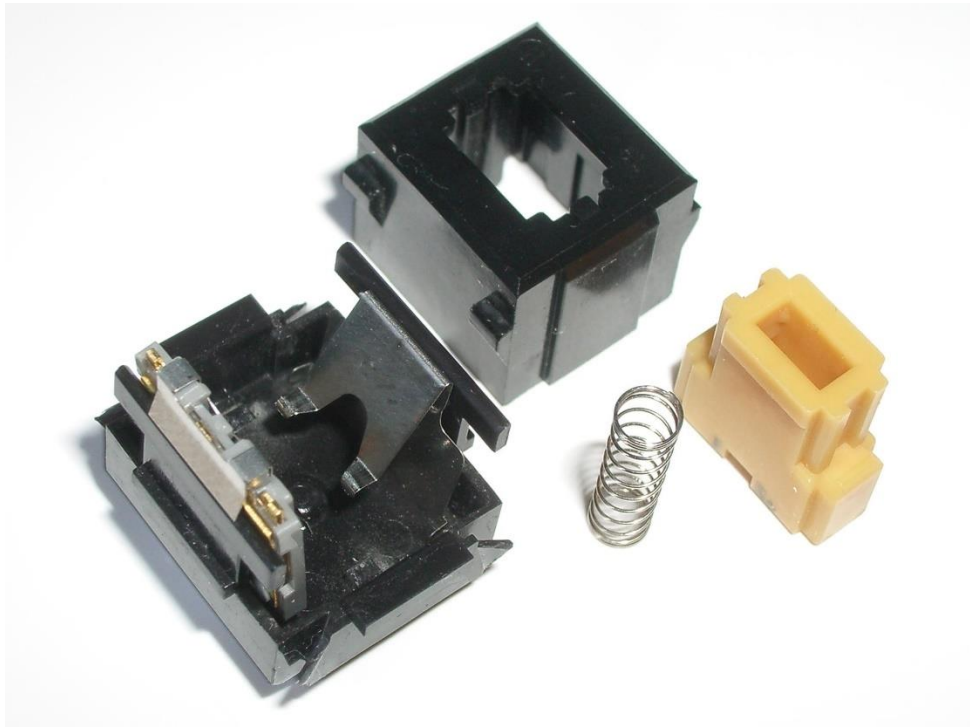


Figure 4: Alps SKCM Amber switch with click leaf in housing. Photo from Deskthority.

Aristotle Clones



Figure 3: TKC Blackberry stem showing Aristotle-like mechanism.

Making a click sound by way of a stem feature rather than an additional internal mechanism, the “Aristotle clone” style of clicky switches is also another click mechanism which is quite a bit older than most people would expect. Rather than first being introduced via TKC Blackberries or Gazzew’s Phoenix stems before them, this mechanism was first shown in ‘Aristotle Cherry MX Clones’ often found in old Chicony keyboards dating back to a similar late 1980’s/early 1990’s timeframe as Alps switches. Aristotle-style stems produce a clicking noise as a result of a two component stem which features a set of sharp, pointed legs that can freely slide up and down within a fixed construction of the stem keycap mount, center pole, and slider rails. As these stems are pressed down, these pointed feet operate like normal stem legs, raking across the leaves of the switch to produce a signal. However, instead of solidly passing through the leaves like normal linears, the aristotle-style stems ‘jump’ within their movable tracks after breaking through, leading to a clicking sound most similar to that of the design of the clickjackets in more modern MX switches.

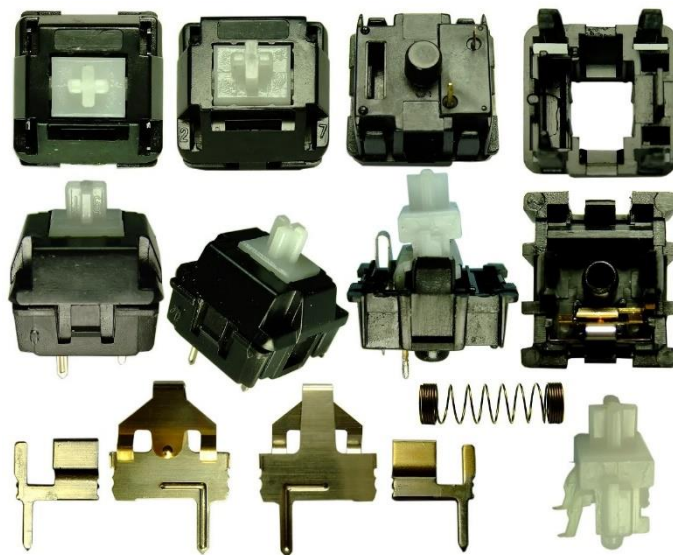


Figure 4: Aristotle Cherry MX clone components. Photo from Deskthority.

Snap Springs



Figure 5: Snap spring mechanism located within a large GTMX Blue switch.

Among the least common modern clicky mechanisms within the MX-style footprint is that of the ‘Snap Spring’ design as I’ve previously briefly touched on in my 25 Switch Facts You May Not Know article. The snap spring mechanism is more like click leaves than clickjackets in that it is based on an additional metal piece placed within the housings of the switches which are acted upon by the stem when pressing the stem in. However, rather than a single bent metal leaf, the snap springs themselves are a long, thin piece of metal shaped in a semi-loop fashion with openings at the upper end. These openings are pushed apart by a diamond-shaped outcropping from the stem design when the stem is pressed inwards, forcing the halves apart until they snap back together, causing the entire snap spring to jump around within the housing itself, producing a rather rattley clicking mechanism. To date, these have only been seen in a handful of OEM-style switch releases mostly based out of China and have yet to be popularized or re-released in any form by large vendors attempting to popularize on the ‘uniqueness’ of their designs.

Adding these three niche clicky mechanisms into the group that is clickjackets and clickbars, it’s a bit hard to imagine what further could be done within the MX-style footprint in order to make a clicky mechanism that doesn’t fall under the umbrella of these already. First teased back in mid to late 2022 by way of Novelkeys’ Discord server, the “Clicky Cream” switches were first hinted at by mgsickler as an entirely unique clicky switch design in the works by Novelkeys and Kailh. Going through at least one known round of prototyping based on statements regarding ‘final samples’ arriving in August of 2022, the Cream Clickies made several rounds of subtle hinting and marketing through Novelkeys’ YouTube updates and Twitch streams leading up their ultimate release on January 13th, 2023. Marked at \$0.90 per switch upon release due to their entirely unique click mechanism design, the Novelkeys Cream Clickies were marketed as featuring a “snapple cap” style mechanism completely different from all the prior mentioned click mechanism categories. While the future stocking of these switches beyond their initial sales date is uncertain, it is expected that these will remain as a stocked product on Novelkeys for several years into the future given the historical support of other Cream family switches to date.

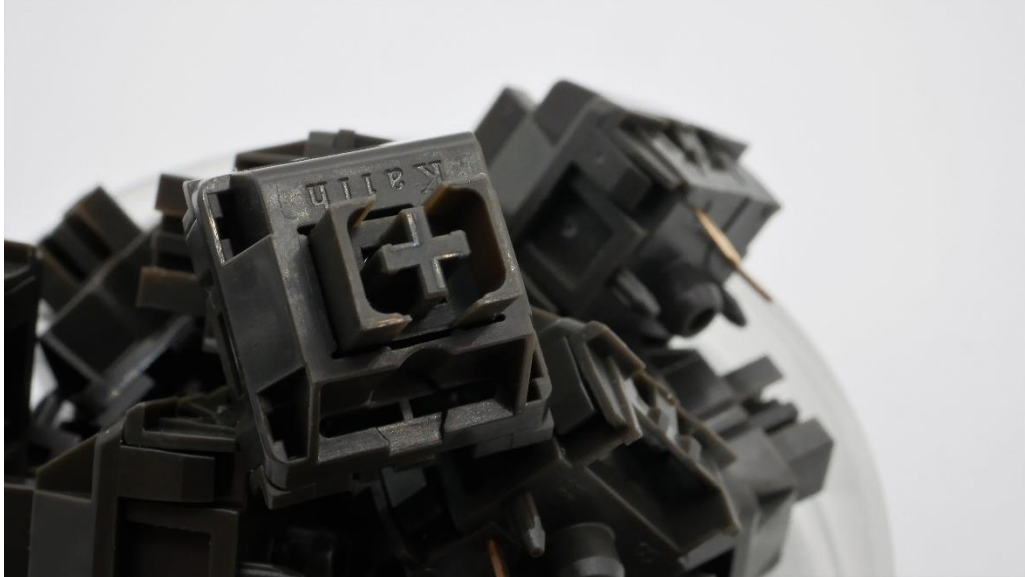


Figure 6: Overly stylized Novelkeys Cream Clickie switch photo.

Cream Clickie Switch Performance

Appearance

You're going to want to buckle up for this section, it's going to be a long one.

Before even breaking down into the nitty gritty details of the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches, its worth noting that they are *entirely* unique in each component and thus will likely have extended discussion points. Even before cracking them open, though, they are already fairly identifiable as unique beyond and their full dark grey with subtle notes of brown color scheme and dustproof stems. The first standout design choice amongst other Novelkeys Cream family switches is the use of the 'older' Kailh nameplates which feature a non-stylized, 'Kailh' nameplate with large spacing in between each letter. Furthermore, the underside of switches show a center mast with a hole in it, which while reminiscent of Gateron's KS-25 CAP style switches, is something I do not recall seeing in this fashion in Kailh switches prior.

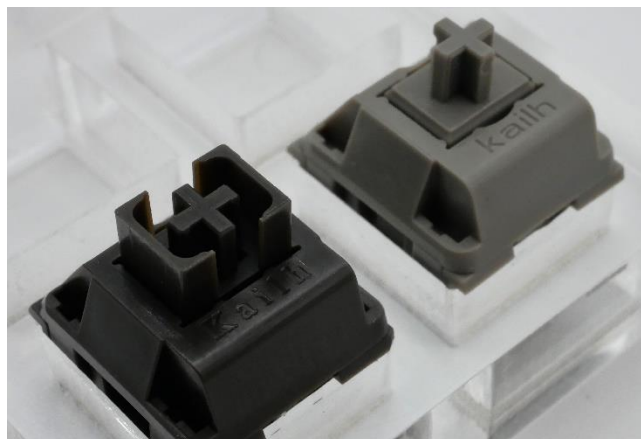


Figure 7: Comparison of Novelkeys Cream Clickie nameplate (Left) and Novelkeys Cream Arc nameplate (Right).



Figure 8: Novelkeys Cream Clickies and their components.

Looking first to the top housings of the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches, there is a pair of external features which stands out to me as odd relative to other Cream family switches. Aside the aforementioned and above shown differences in nameplate style versus other Cream family switches, the LED slot for the Cream Clickies also is bifurcated with a thin strip of plastic in the center – something of which none of the other Cream family switches have. Instead, all other Cream family switches which I’ve documented here appear to have a long, wide open rectangular LED slot with circular indentation only. While perhaps a bit conspiratorial in nature, these two points alone make me think that these may not have been entirely Novelkeys’ idea or solely driven by them, and instead may have been a product that Kailh had been working on to some degree and/or had component ideas already in motion prior to Novelkeys adopting it as a Cream family of switch. Otherwise, if it was an entirely Novelkeys driven idea I’m not entirely certain why they wouldn’t homogenize nameplates and LED slot designs as they have for all other Cream switches even across noticeable mold changes. Another point that supports this being a reasonable route for Novelkeys and Kailh is that it’s hard to argue that the Cream family of switches *aren’t* the most successful platform through which Kailh has been able to release switches in the past couple of years – something which they may have sought out for such an exotic and unprecedented design.



Figure 9: Novelkeys Cream Clickie top housings showing inverted, old 'Kailh' nameplate and bifurcated LED slot.

Internally, the top housings are also uniquely structured as a result of the leaf designs shown in the bottom housings below. These different design features are almost entirely located up underneath or adjacent to the hollowed out nameplate region. The first interesting feature is that of the split wall that would make up the north side stem hole slot. Assumedly, the functionality of this is to allow space for the centralized stem leg which moves up and down to interact with the singular point in the center of the leaf. The second features of note are those of the plastic outcroppings within the nameplate region gap, which are asymmetric in size and assumed to reside between the asymmetric gaps in the leaf on the upper left-hand side as can be seen below in Figure 14. Ideally, I imagine these helping with supporting the leaf during operation if not providing some sort of sound-based performance boost. The final of these features of note include a symmetric pair of rectangular holes in the upper perimeter of the top housing interior, which don't seem to correspond to any particular outcropping in the bottom housing interiors, leading to believe these may be vestigial from previous designs and/or placed there to help sound escape the switch..? Beyond these unique features, the only other point of note includes a very small mold marking on the circular ejection markings just south of these aforementioned leaf-supporting structures, featuring a single capital letter at an angle like those seen in the the Dream Cream and Cream Arc Switch Reviews.

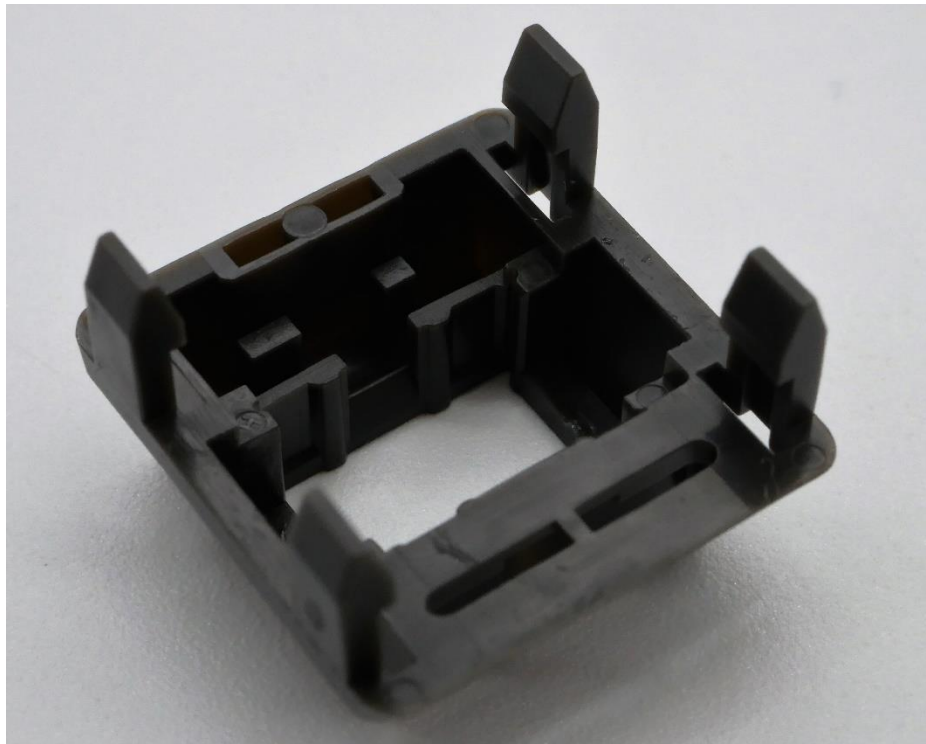


Figure 10: Novelkeys Cream Clickie top housing interior showing leaf-interacting structures and mold marking located in far left-hand corner of the center stem hole.

Moving next to the stems of the Cream Clickies, I was surprised to find that it's not actually just the stem but rather a stem and spring combined unit that come in these switches. While I will continue to refer to them as just stems for the sake of my sanity, the unit as a whole is... strange. Looking first to the more conventional features, the stems come slightly prelubed on their large, tapered slider rails and feature dustproof style keycap mounts, though beyond those few features there is very little resembling a garden variety stem. First, it's evident that there are not two legs on the front plate of the stem, but rather there is a singular, centralized one which acts with the one centered point on the leaf as opposed to the two interaction points in normal switches. Next, the spring itself is trapped in its normal position around the center pole of the stem via the use of a small plastic disc that is firmly attached to the spring bottom and presses upon the "snapple cap" mechanism in the bottom housing. The part that I find the most

strange about this, though, is that I am not certain how exactly this plastic piece attaches to the spring itself. While I was unable to fully disassemble and reassemble this ‘stem’ once, I can’t seem to get this done reliably *and* I cannot attach the round plastic piece to the spring separate from the stem itself. Given the difficulties in disassembling and reassembling this mechanism, I am assuming that these weren’t intended for modification and thus the implementation of other springs within these switches may be difficult if not altogether impossible.



Figure 11: Back (Left) and Front (Right) sides of the Cream Clickie stem unit showing contained spring design and singular centered stem leg.

Finally arriving at the bottom housings, we are yet again presented with a wide array of unique design choices that make these Cream Clickies truly one-of-a-kind switches. The first two features internally which stand out are that of the wide metallic circle in the base of the bottom housing as well as the shortened, ‘sideways’ leaf. While the slightly padded central point of contact in the leaf is different in and of itself, the leaves are rather reminiscent of Box switch leaves, which are shoved underneath of the box design inside to make room for the expanded stem designs in Kailh’s Box line of switches. Even though the sideways leaves in the Cream Clickies may be a tad bit too tall and wouldn’t have a way to properly actuate due to their centered point of contact, I could very easily see these fitting and operating within a true box-style mechanism and thus could very easily see adaptation to future ‘Box style’ switches in future releases by Kailh.

As for the metal disk in the base of the bottom housing, this is the “snapple cap” mechanism which has made the rounds with the marketing for the Cream Clickie switches. This rather thin metal disk, coming in around 0.03 mm in total thickness, is slightly bowed to one side and plastically deforms while making a ‘clicking’ sound when pressed inwards. While Snapple brand tea caps do this and appear to be the inspiration and/or marketing point of reference for these switches, this is a phenomenon also seen in mason jars and glass jar sealed products such as jellies or jams, which utilize this popping feature as a tamper proof seal. The disks do not appear to be able to be intentionally removable from the housings without some amount of effort, and it *is* worth noting that you can accidentally flip these upside down upon messing with them, making them both ineffective at creating the clicking noise as well as even more of a pain in the ass to remove. In the event they do fall out, though, they can clearly be differentiated in their ‘right side up’ and ‘upside down’ configurations as seen below in Figure 15.

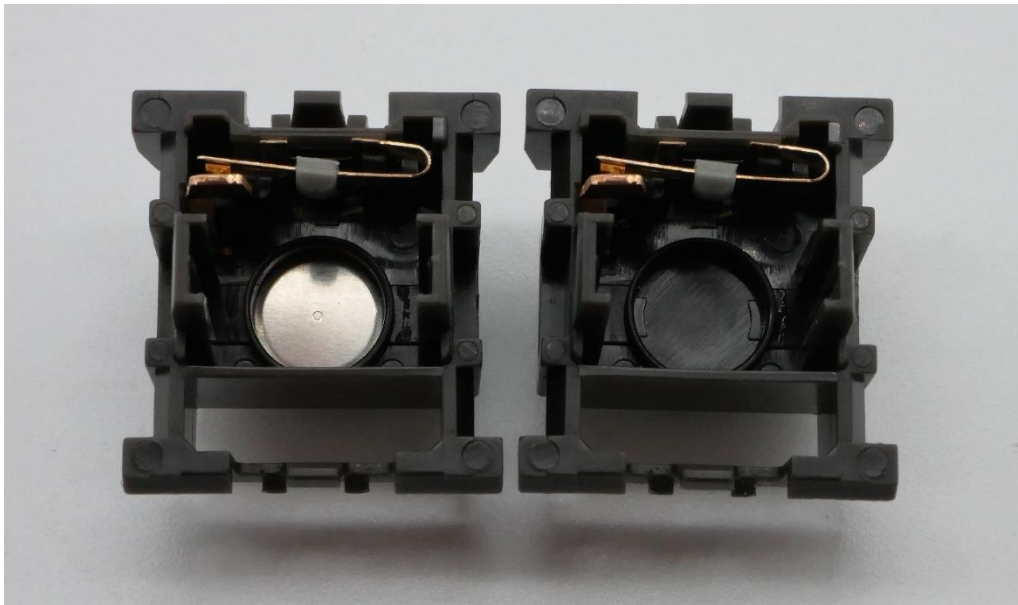


Figure 14: Novelkeys Cream Clickie bottom housing interior showing short, sideways style leaf design and the location of the "snapple cap" mechanism.

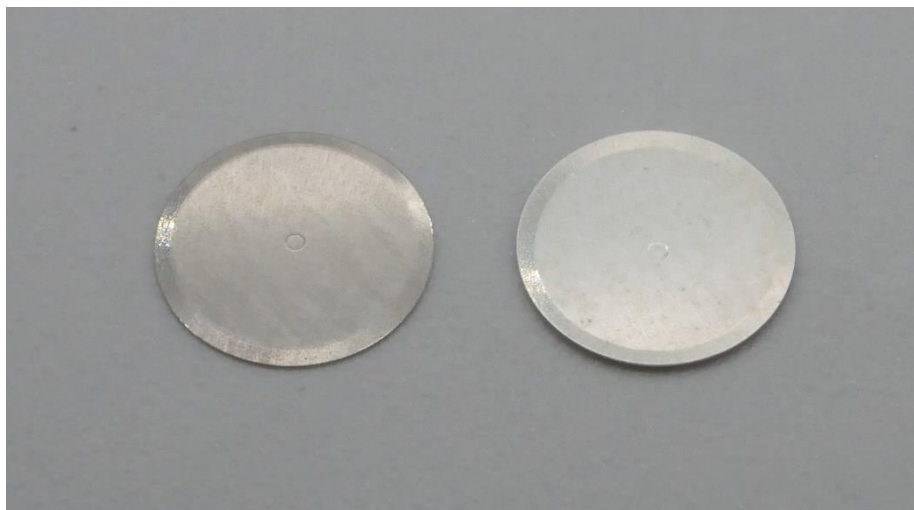


Figure 15: Right side up (Left) and upside down (Right) Cream Clickie "snapple cap" plates.

*As an additional side note that I want to force in here during final edits, as well, I am definitely not a fan of the phrase “snapple cap” as an actual descriptive term for this mechanism. While “snapple cap” is for sure on the cutesy fun side of naming conventions, I think that something such as ‘plate spring’ or ‘popping disk’ mechanism is much more descriptive of what is actually going on.

Finally arriving at the underside of the Novelkeys Cream Clickie bottom housings, there isn’t all that much worth noting. In a similar fashion to at least the Novelkeys Dream Cream switches, there is an entirely wide open LED slot as well as a pair of sideways mold markings located just above this region and below the PCB mounting pins. The one difference in this design, though, is the use of the hollow center mast rather than the filled in ones. My thought is that this was likely chosen in order to provide a mold ejection point on the underside of the switch given that there were no mold ejection circles in the base of the interior of the bottom housings as well as the fact that there are some in nearly every single modern, MX-style switch. The lack of these interior mold ejection points in the base of the housing was likely to prevent any ridges or grooves which may interfere with the plate spring mechanism located in the base of the bottom housing interior.



Figure 12: Novelkeys Cream Clickie bottom housing exterior showing wide open LED slot, sideways mold markings, and hollowed center mast.

Push Feel

Whereas the mechanism and internal design structures of the Novelkeys Cream Clickies make evident just how different their functionality and operations are, the perhaps most striking aspect of their performance is one which is the most subtle here. Just take a look at their force curve below in Figure 17. Does anything strike you as odd with this design? How about that extremely tiny blip in the downstroke just beyond 2.500 mm? This is the “snapple cap” mechanism clicking. Consider that there is effectively little if any force present in the actual push feel of this switch to create the clicking mechanism, something which no other clicky switch has managed to accomplish to date as far as I am aware. As you will very clearly be able to see in the force curves in the comparison section below, clickbars,

clickjackets, and click leaves *all* have some sort of interaction outside of the main up and down motion of the stem which causes some change in force throughout the downstroke, effectively leading to something akin to a tactile bump. Because the clicking mechanism in the Cream Clickies is located directly underneath the stem, however, there is no significant external force that must be overcome to actuate the clicking mechanism. Furthermore, because the disk sits in the bottom housing concave down and then is pressed downward into the bottom housing to produce the click, the added force to actuate this mechanism comes from the already natural direction of travel within the switch. Thus, for all intents and purposes, these are among the first primarily *linear* clicky switches.

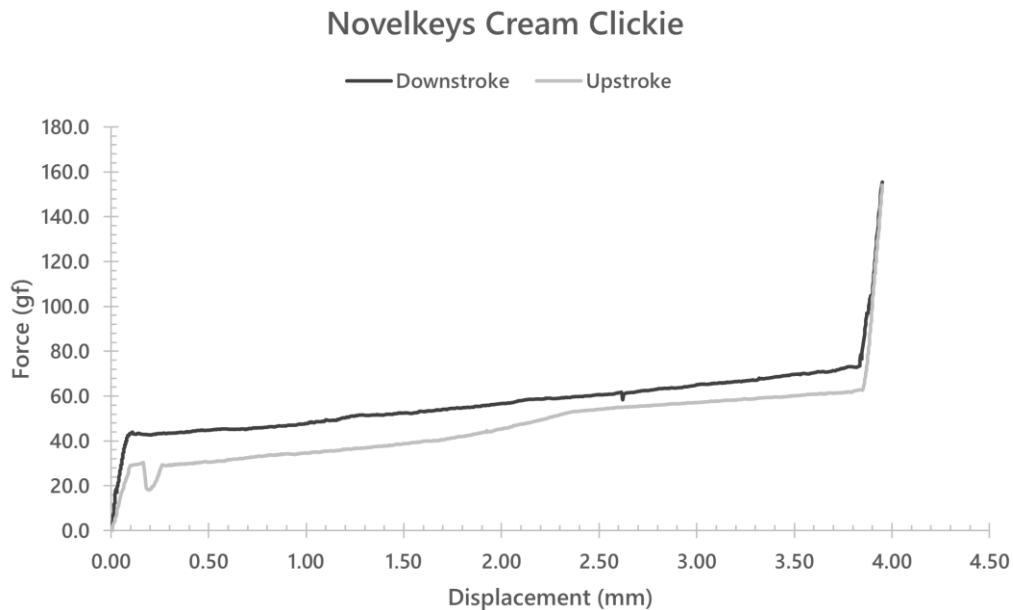


Figure 13: Novelkeys Cream Clickie force curve diagram.

Beyond the actual clicking mechanism, the Cream Clickies are also fairly well performing linear switches as well. Coming with a not overwhelming amount of factory lubrication on the slider rails of the stems, the switches are consistently smooth across the batch that I received and really would not benefit significantly from the addition of more. As well, the housing collisions beyond the “snapple cap” mechanism are both firm, solid, and hardly noticeable in the slightest – something of which the POM housings in the Cream family of switches prior have struggled with a bit.

Sound

In terms of sound, the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches are on the more mild side in terms of overall volume while carrying a bit more of the sharp pointedness that is expected of clickbar style mechanisms. Completely avoiding the scratchy, jumbled mess that are clickjacket mechanisms, the clicking sound carries a medium pitched sharpness with a subtle bit of depth to the tone that is like an extremely toned down version of the Kailh Box Jades. Furthermore, the sound of these switches does not appear to change much if at all with actuation speed, maintaining a fairly similar volume and almost identical sound both at in hand testing and the fastest typing speeds that I can manage. Beyond the clicking mechanism, there isn’t all that much present in the sound of these switches. Following the Push Feel section notes above, there is no presence of scratch in the switches and the deep collisions which are

present at topping and bottoming out more or less fade into the background behind that of the clicking mechanism and its sound.

One thing that *is* worth noting about the sound of these Cream Clickies, though, is that they change a lot in terms of their pitch upon breaking them in. While we haven't quite reached the Break In section of this review yet, it is worth noting that even at 17,000 actuations the pitch and volume of the Cream Clickies increases quite substantially. As further breaking in occurs up to 51,000 actuations, as well, the intensities of both of these features only increases putting them much more in the ballpark of traditional clickbar clicky switches in terms of aggressiveness at that most broken in stage. By comparison, the stock form of the Novelkeys Cream Clickies is *much* more subdued and subtle than many other clicky switches.

Wobble

By far the least savory aspect of the Cream Clickie switches comes down to the stem wobble of these switches. While the E/W direction is certainly not out of line for the Cream family of switches, there is a *surprising* amount of N/S direction stem wobble. Coming in with significantly more flexibility in this direction than would be expected in the stock form of most modern switches, this is particularly strange to me given the internal shape and structure of the stem and leaves as shown above in the Appearance section. Looking at those photos first prior to testing one of these switches in hand, one would easily make the assumption that the padded center portion of the leaf as well as the strong centered stem leg would prevent the stem unit from moving much in this N/S direction. Why these wobble to the degree that they do in the N/S direction is something that is a bit beyond me.

Measurements

Novelkeys Cream Clickie Switch Measurements			
	Component	Denotation	mm.
Stem	Front/Back Plate Length	A	7.14
	Stem Width	B	5.48
	Stem Length with Rails	C	8.33
	Rail Width	D	2.11
	Center Pole Width	E	
	Rail Height	F	5.15
	Total Stem Height	G	
Bottom Housing	Diagonal Between Rails	L	9.28
	Interior Length Across	M	9.46
	Rail Width	N	2.47
	Center Hole Diameter	O	5.17
Top Housing	Horizontal Stem Gap	X	7.56
	Vertical Stem Gap	Y	6.12
Methods	Number of Switches Used		3
	Replication Per Measurement		3

If you're into this level of detail about your switches, you should know that I have a switch measurement sheet that logs all of this data, as well as many other cool features which can be found under the 'Archive' tab at the top of this page or by clicking on the card above. Known as the 'Measurement Sheet', this sheet typically gets updated weekly and aims to take physical measurements of various switch

components to compare mold designs on a brand-by-brand basis as well as provide a rough frankenswitching estimation sheet for combining various stems and top housings.

Novelkeys Cream Clickie	
<i>Switch Type: Clicky</i>	<i>Kailh</i>
Total Stem Travel	3.835 mm
Peak Force	73.5 gf
Bottom Out Force	73.5 gf
# of Upstroke Points	1154
# of Downstroke Points	1326

Figure 19: Numerical details regarding the stock Novelkeys Cream Clickie switch force curve diagram.

The latest in the content-adjacent work that I've picked up, the new 'Force Curve Repository' is now hosted on GitHub alongside the Scorecard Repository and contains all force curves that I make both within and outside of reviews. In addition to having these graphs above, I have various other versions of the graphs, raw data, and my processed data all available for each switch to use as you please. Check it out via the 'Archive' tab at the top of this page or by clicking any of the force curve cards above.

Break In

Novelkeys Cream Clickie Break In Testing			
Metric	Activations		
	17,000	34,000	51,000
Push Feel (Overall)	+	+	+
Smoothness	+	+	+
Ping (Spring/Leaf)			
Wobble (Overall)	-	-	--
Stem Wobble	-	-	--
Top Housing Wobble			
Sound (Overall)			-
Scratchiness			
Ping (Spring/Leaf)			

Color Scale			
Improvement	+	++	+++
Deterioration	-	--	---
Null Change			

Break In Notes:

17,000 Actuations

- While neither a positive nor negative thing, it is worth noting that at 17,000 actuations that the Cream Clickies have a slightly higher pitched tone to their click than the stock switches. This is a fairly uniform increase across the batch that I tested as well.
- Even though the stock Clickies are fairly smooth right out of the box, the switches broken into 17,000 actuations do feel a tiny bit smoother throughout their stroke. Perhaps this may be a batch-to-batch variability and/or I am just imagining things that are not there, but I swear that its real.

34,000 Actuations

- Well, if the higher pitched tone of the Cream Clickies broken in to 17,000 actuations was a subtle change at best, all subtlety is removed at 34,000 actuations. At this stage, these switches have begun to take on almost clickbar-like levels of sharpness to their tone as well.
- Beyond this change in pitch of the clicking mechanism, the Novelkeys Cream Clickies do not appear to have changed much versus the 17,000-actuation batch, with the same improvement in smoothness and slight increase in stem wobble being the only points of change to note.

51,000 Actuations

- As is to be expected from the trend set by the last two testing groups, the Novelkeys Cream Clickies broken in to 51,000 actuations further increase in pitch making them sharper sounding than even the 34,000 actuation set. Furthermore, the volume of some of the switches increases drastically though it is not uniform across the batch that was received. This variability is *quite* noticeable as well and would likely require some cherry picking for uniformity in a build if these were broken in to this extent prior to building.
- The other points regarding stem wobble as well as slight smoothness increase over their stock form also applies at 51,000 actuations. The only change versus other actuation steps, though, is the slightest increase in N/S direction stem wobble.

Comparison Notes to Other Notable Clicky Switches

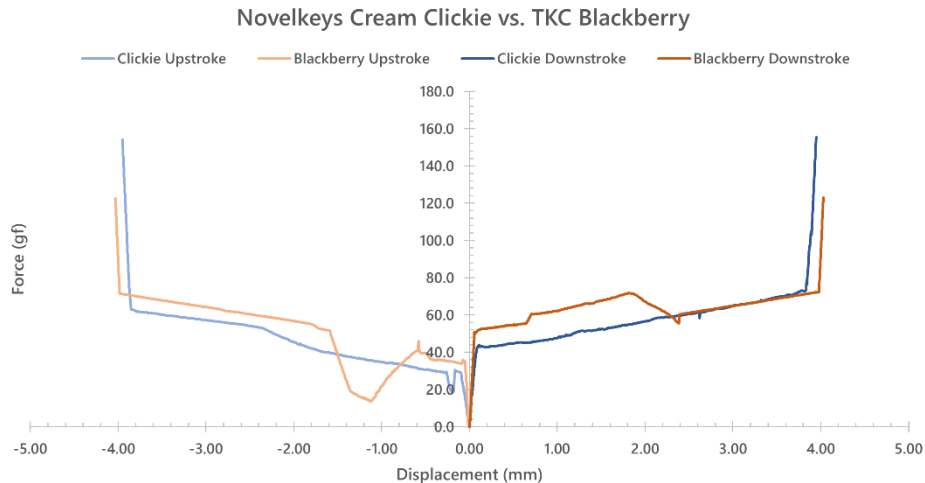
Note – These are not aimed at being comprehensive comparisons between all factors of these switches as this would simply be too long for this writeup. These are little notes of interest I generated when comparing these switches to the Cream Clickie switches side by side.



Figure 21: Switches for comparison. (L-R, Top-Bot: TKC Blackberry, Zeal 3-in-1 Clickiez (40g), Kailh Box Navy, Kailh Box Jade, Cherry MX Blue, and KTT Gold)

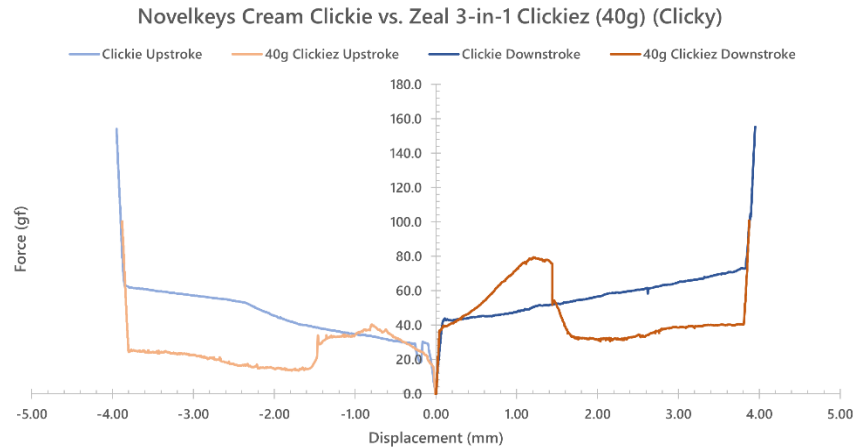
TKC Blackberry

- In their stock form, the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches are much sharper and louder than the TKC Blackberries, which by comparison have a more scratchy and snappy sounding click to them.
- With respect to stem wobble, even though the Cream Clickies and Blackberries are similar to each other in terms of their E/W direction wobble, there is significantly more stem wobble in the N/S direction in the Clickies than the Blackberries.
- While this is a horrible metric to try and draw a comparison on, the TKC Blackberries feel like a rough, cobbled together clicky switch in direct comparison to the Cream Clickies. That is they punch harder, have more scratch, and also pack some spring and leaf ping which is rough compared to the rather smooth and elegant click of the Cream Clickies.



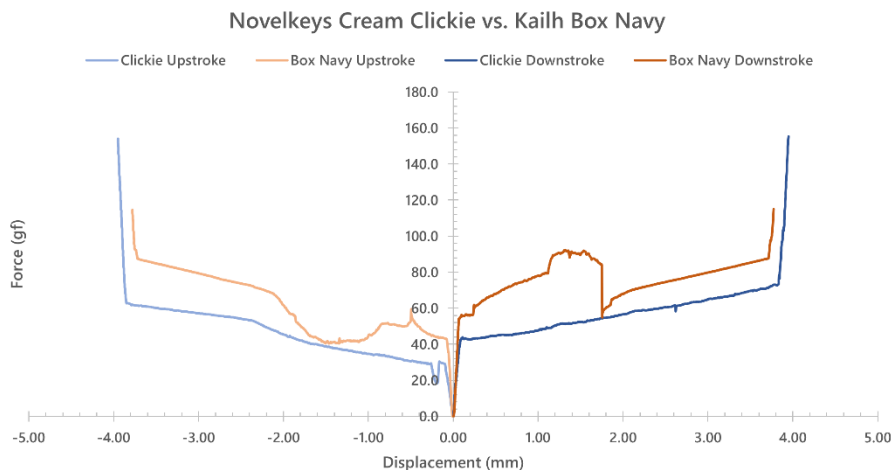
Zeal 3-in-1 Clickiez (40g)

- The sound of these two clicky switches couldn't be further apart from each other. While they are similar in terms of their overall volume, the 3-in-1 Clickiez are sonorous and carry a complex, rounded tone to their click whereas the are sharp, specific, and higher pitched.
- Much like as can be seen in the comparative force curves for all of the switches on this list, the actual click leaf mechanism in the Zeal Clickiez is much more noticeable and present in the feeling of the switch than the clicky mechanism in the Cream Clickies.
- While similarly matched in the E/W direction, there is noticeably more stem wobble in the N/S direction of the Cream Clickies than the Zeal 3-in-1 Clickiez switches.



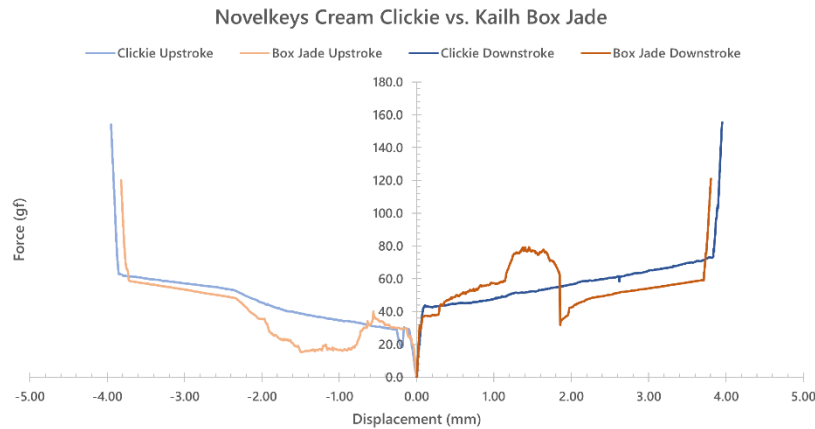
Kailh Box Navy

- To the surprise of nobody who has had the pleasure of testing Kailh Box Navy switches in person before, they are still far and away among the loudest clicky switches and absolutely dwarf the Novelkeys Cream Clickies in a direct volume comparison. As well, the Box Navy switches also carry a much more 'wide' sound that is not as sharp and prickly like that of the Cream Clickies.
- In terms of stock smoothness, given that this is evidently the most important metric of performance in a clicky switch, the Cream Clickies do edge out the Box Navies a bit in terms of their through-stroke smoothness.
- The housing collisions and especially topping out in the Kailh Box Navy switches are more forceful and hard hitting than those of the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches.



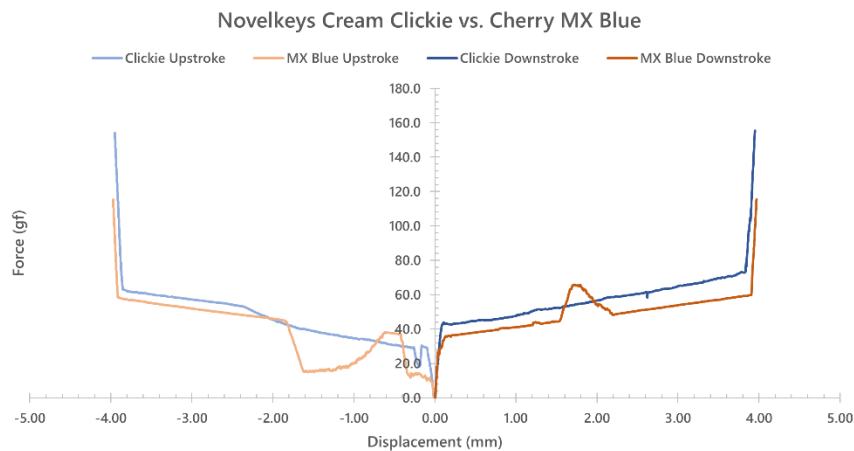
Kailh Box Jade

- Much like the comparison made above with the Kailh Box Navy switches, the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches couldn't possibly stand a chance at matching the overall volume put out by the Jades. That being said, though, their sounds are fairly similar to each other disregarding the large difference posed by volume.
- The Cream Clickie switches are fairly comparable to the Box Jade (and Box Navy) switches in terms of E/W direction stem wobble, though again, there is some pretty noticeable N/S direction stem wobble on these Cream Clickies.
- The Cream Clickie housing collisions are much more subtle, if not altogether unnoticeable compared to those of the much stronger Kailh Box Jade switches.



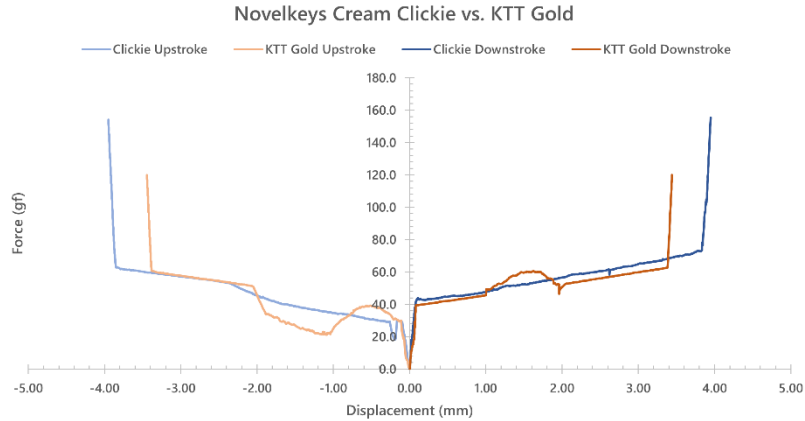
Cherry MX Blue

- With an extremely weak clickjacket mechanism, the Cherry MX Blues almost hardly register as clicky switches at all when compared to the much more deliberately-designed-to-sound-clicky Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches.
- Surprisingly for all the mention of N/S direction stem wobble for the Cream Clickie switches in this review, the Cherry MX Blue switches also beat out the Cream Clickies on this metric. This is likely the first and only time a stock Cherry MX offering from years ago edges out a modern switch in terms of wobble in a full-length review of mine.
- Moving in the opposite direction of expectations, the Cherry MX Blue switches are of course much more scratchy throughout their stroke than the push feeling of the Novelkeys Cream Clickie switches.



KTT Gold

- Of all of the switches in this list, the KTT Golds and the Novelkeys Cream Clickies are most similar to each other in terms of overall volume, with the Cream Clickies perhaps sounding a touch louder due to their much sharper and more pointed clicking mechanism.
- The same comments regarding the scratchiness and more gruff nature of the Cherry MX Blue switches in comparison to the Novelkeys Cream Clickies also applies here with the KTT Golds since they too use a rather unrefined clickjacket mechanism.
- Finishing the comparisons out with one more comment about it for the road: The Novelkeys Cream Clickies have much more N/S direction stem wobble than the KTT Golds.



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.

Novelkeys Cream Clickie		
<i>Switch Type: Clicky</i>		<i>Kailh</i>
31	/35	Push Feel
15	/25	Wobble
8	/10	Sound
15	/20	Context
10	/10	Other
79	/100	Total

Push Feel

Given the almost non-impact of the clicky mechanism in the Cream Clickies on their push feel, it’s almost necessary to discuss these switches based on their linear properties. In that regard, these switches are pretty damn solid performing linears with a healthy amount of factory applied lubricant

which is consistent across the batch and a pair of subtle, barely noticeable topping and bottoming out housing collisions.

Wobble

The stem wobble, particularly in the N/S direction, is the weakest link in the entire design of these switches. While the E/W direction stem wobble isn't all that great, the N/S direction is enough to likely bother some users, even if not particularly sensitive to stem wobble.

Sound

Clicky switches have always carried a reputation of being aggressive on the ears and to other people in any room. The Cream Clickies, on the other hand, are definitely much more subtle and refined, with a medium volume and pitch, pointy but not sharp clicking mechanism that is consistent both across the batch that I received as well as typing speeds in stock form.

Context

At the point in which these switches were released in 2023, it's almost impossible to argue that the Novelkeys Cream family isn't one of the best platforms for a switch to debut in. Constant support, big budget marketing, and nearly constant accessibility will do wonders for these switches, though the steep (but not altogether unexpected) price point of these switches at \$0.90 per switch as well as being clickies may stunt their widespread adoption and use.

Other

While many 'innovative' switches in recent years have effectively just dug up old mechanisms and designs from switches of old, these are truly revolutionary and unique in design in each component. The creativity and execution here is worthy of nothing short of praise.

Statistics

Average Score			Novelkeys Cream Clickie		
26.4	/35	Push Feel	31	/35	Push Feel
17.0	/25	Wobble	15	/25	Wobble
5.6	/10	Sound	8	/10	Sound
12.7	/20	Context	15	/20	Context
6.1	/10	Other	10	/10	Other
67.8	/100	Total	79	/100	Total
Clickie Overall Rank			T-#14/222 (79/100)		
Clickie 'Hard' Rank			T-#42/222 (54/70)		
Clickie 'Soft' Rank			T-#2/222 (25/30)		

If you are looking at this statistics section for the first time and wondering where the hell are the other 221 switches that I've ranked are, or what 'hard' versus 'soft' ranks refer to specifically, I'd encourage you to head on over to my GitHub linked in the table above or at the links in the top right hand of this website to check out my database of scorecards as well as the 'Composite Score Sheet' which has a full listing of the rankings for each and every switch I've ranked thus far.

Final Conclusions

The entirety of 2022, and at least this far into 2023, have been some incredible years for modern, MX-style switches. Sure, the glut of low effort, new manufacturer switches is as prevalent as ever, but the amount of novel designs, incredible execution, and switches just simply getting better is undeniably exciting for the mechanical keyboard hobby. Seeing designs like the Novelkeys Cream Clickies, though, especially touch on this excitement as it shows that even almost a decade after Cherry's patent expired that there are *still* entirely unexplored designs that have yet to be dreamt up and manufactured in the MX style. At least prior to testing these switches, I was not of the opinion that a linear clicky switch, or at least one that was more linear than tactile in nature, would even be possible, and yet here I am still being proved wrong. Because of the fact alone that these switches are unique as they are, I would encourage anyone and everyone to try them out if they could.

That being said, though, these switches still do have their issues for as exciting as they are. Completely disregarding the N/S direction stem wobble which has been mentioned many a time in the review above, the amount that these switches change as they are broken in is quite a bit more than the average. Pack this into a very premium price point at \$0.90 per switch and it's a hard sell to get many people to try out one of the least trafficked types of switches out there. With those caveats in mind though, for much the same reason that I was excited for Zeal's 3-in-1 Clickiez and the TKC Blackberry switches before these, even if the Cream Clickies are a bit pricy and 'not really your thing', its well worth trying them *because* of how fresh of a take they are on clicky switches. Unlike those previous two, though, the Novelkeys Cream Clickies are bar none the most unique MX-style switch design that I've reviewed on this website to date.

Sponsors/Affiliates

Mechbox.co.uk

- A wonderful UK based operation which sells singles to switches that I've used above in my comparisons for collectors and the curious alike. Matt has gone out of his way to help me build out big parts of my collection, and buying something using this link supports him as well as my content!

KeebCats UK

- A switch peripheral company based out of the UK which sells everything switch adjacent you could ask for, they've been a huge help recently with my film and lube supply for personal builds, and they want to extend that help to you too. **Use code 'GOAT' for 10% off your order when you check them out!**

Proto[Typist] Keyboards

- An all-things keyboard vendor based out of the UK, proto[Typist] is a regular stocker of everything from switches to the latest keyboard and keycap groupbuys. While I've bought things from the many times in the past, they also are a sponsor of my work and allow me to get some of the great switches I write about!

MKUltra Corporation

- We may have stolen a few government secrets to get this one together. MKUltra is a US vendor that truly fills all the gaps other vendors simply don't offer and is continuing to expand their switch and switch related peripherals by the day. **Use code 'GOAT' for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

Divinikey

- Not only do they stock just about everything related to keyboards and switches, but they're super friendly and ship out pretty quick too. Divinikey has been a huge help to me and my builds over the last year or two of doing reviews and they'll definitely hook you up. **Use code 'GOAT' for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

ZealPC

- Do they really need any introduction? Zeal and crew kicked off the custom switch scene many years ago with their iconic Zealios switches and the story of switches today couldn't be told without them. **Use code 'GOAT' (or click the link above) for 5% off your order when you check them out!**

MechMods UK

- A rising vendor based in the UK, Ryan and crew have been a pleasure to work with and have nearly everything you'd need to build your first or fourteenth keyboard. **Go build your latest or greatest one right now with them by using code 'GOAT' at checkout for a 5% discount!**

Dangkeeps

- A longtime supporter of the website and the collection, Dangkeeps has quite possibly the widest variety of switches of any vendor out there. Not only is their switch selection large, but it rotates and is constantly adding new stuff too. **You're going to need 5% off your order with my affiliate to save off the cost of all those switches!**

SwitchOddities

- The brainchild of one my most adventurous proxies, SwitchOddities is a place where you can try out all the fancy, strange, and eastern-exclusive switches that I flex on my maildays with. **Follow my affiliate code and use code 'GOAT' at checkout to save 5% on some of the most interesting switches you'll ever try!**

Cannonkeys

- Does anybody not know of Cannonkeys at this point? One of the largest vendors in North America with keyboards, switches, keycaps, and literally everything you could ever want for a keyboard always in stock and with an incredibly dedicated and loving crew. **Follow my affiliate link above in their name to support both them and I when you buy yourself some switches!**

Kinetic Labs

- One of the most well-rounded keyboard vendors out there, Christian and crew have been supporters of all my switch and switch-adjacent needs for some years now. **I'm honored to have them as an affiliate and think you should check them out using my affiliate link above to support both them and I when you check out their awesome products!**

Further Reading

Novelkeys Cream Clickie Sales Page

Link: <https://novelkeys.com/products/cream-clickie-switches>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20230211232122/https://novelkeys.com/products/cream-clickie-switches>

Novelkeys' Fall 2022 Updates with Mike

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqrrRcQ8qa4&t=1s&ab_channel=NovelKeys

Captain Sterling's Cream Clickie Review

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqIaJO7cdEU&ab_channel=CaptainSterling

Testo Testerson's Cream Clickie Sound Test

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXUhRagIKZg&ab_channel=TestoTesterson