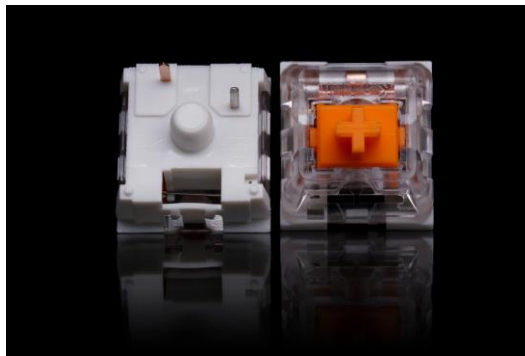


# Novelkeys Sherbet Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 1/25/2020

## Switch Background

If you've read my rather recent review on Laserons and UHMWPE Stems, you are aware of my relative surprise at how 2020 has kicked off for mechanical keyboard switches. In keeping with this trend of surprise, building on the hype from a new stem and switch housing material, to the utter disgust at the pricing of some new pieces, Novelkeys has brought confusion in the form of the first clicky switch of the year. In fact, there was pretty much no indication or hints posted anywhere that these pieces were coming out, thus I truly am at a loss for words with respect to what I am to write for the *background* of these pieces. The only mention of them, prior to their release, was a single line on the Inventory page of Novelkeys' website which has since been replaced after their recent restocking.



**Figure 1:** I mean seriously, they barely have anything about them on the sales page.

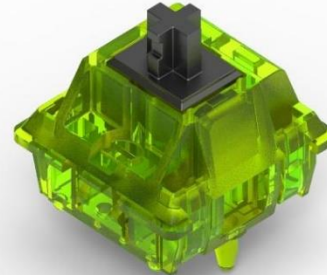
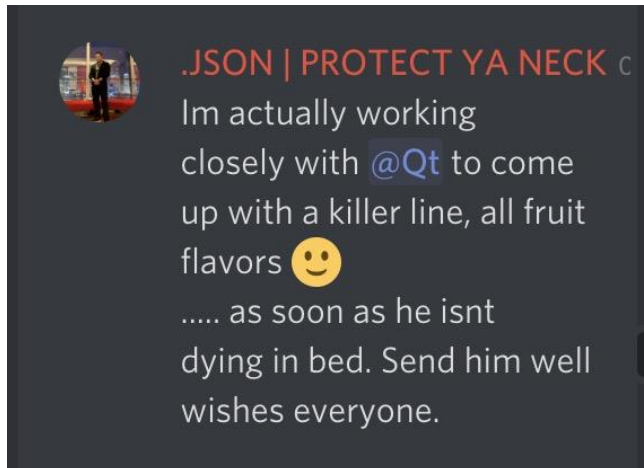
Thus, in order to buff out my word count (as if I am getting paid for this), I figure I should discuss some interesting ramifications and future pieces that are going to spin out of the Novelkeys Sherbet switch. First and foremost, replacing Sherbets in the 'Coming Soon' section of Novelkeys' website is a new switch with no other information by the name of "NK\_ Blueberry." While I would love to wantonly speculate on these switches to some extent, there is a much more interesting perspective 'switch arms race' on the horizon. (And yes, this time this is a hyperbole I'm aware of.)



**Figure 2:** Picture of Novelkeys' Inventory page since it appears to erase when updated.

In addition to Novelkeys now hinting at the release of a fruit themed switch, and their second food based one this year, one would naturally think of Equalz Tangerine V2's as the obvious food-based competitive switch on the market. However, these are not the *only* fruit themed switches that .JSON and TKC have planned. In fact, and as you can in Figure 3 on the next page, Jason has spoken publicly about a line of fruit themed switches to be released in the future, and even provided a render of another potential

fruit switch. So, while I'm certain that this will not be a tasty Cold War between Novelkeys and TKC, I'm certainly interested to see who will have the most interesting fruit-themed switch by the end of the year.



**Figure 3:** Public hint at the new line of fruit themed switches to come out in the future. (Thanks to NGP-windd#8960 for helping me find these pictures.)

### Sherbet Switch Performance

The Sherbet switch is not only the first clicky switch we've seen in quite a while, but it's also the first non-box, clicky switch with a clickbar in a much longer stretch altogether. (I believe that the last clicky switches that were released were the Gateron Blue Inks, but I'm not quite sure.) Featuring a 4.0 mm travel distance, these switches run the gamut of weights – starting with a 45-gram activation force, a peak force of 83 grams, and a bottom out force of 70 grams. Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, no force curves have been released for this switch by any party so I can not provide with any certainty where these forces are occurring along the travel.

#### Appearance:

As can be seen from Figure 1, which is the picture of the Sherbet switches on Novelkeys' website, the look of this switch is pretty simple and clean. It has a white bottom with a clear polycarbonate top, which also has a split LED slot which allows for LEDs to be used, unlike other box clicky switches. The stem is pretty orange in color, and similar to that of their already released Helios (or Zeal's clicky switch prototype if you're really feeling the conspiracy theory kick).

#### Push Feel:

All lightheartedness aside, the actual feel of these switches is definitely my least favorite of all the new pieces I've picked up this year. (Please take the next commentary with the grain of salt that I have no force curve of these pieces.) The 45-gram actuation force appears to be present in a very consistent but noticeable presence right up until the point where the actual clickbar activating mechanism on the stem makes contact with the clickbar. Since the clickbar feels as if it has a heavier force than the bottoming out weight of the switch, I assume that this is roughly where the 83-gram peak-force is at. Thus, this linear 45-gram feeling followed directly by a 83-gram click bar allows you to pretravel the



**Figure 4:** Zeal's Clicky switch prototype announcement...

stem with little effort. This effectively allows you to pre-travel Sherbets right up to the clickbar and back quite easily and leaves to a sloppy feeling as if a linear switch was slapped directly on top of a clicky switch. The lack of a cohesive feel in the stroke, regardless of my personal distaste for high pre-travel switches, certainly leaves me disappointed with the feel of these switches.

But fuck feel, right? These are clickies – I'm here to piss off coworkers, not to enjoy my <Insert Name Here> Alice clone board that I paid a 100% markup on and then chose to put Sherbets and an overhyped GMK set on.

#### Sound:

For such a small, relatively unassuming switch with respect to advertising and reviews, this switch packs quite a click to it. The sound is both relatively high pitched as well as clear, with no muffling from the housing like certain other box switches that have a clickbar. Compared to other clicky switches this appears to have a solid body and depth to the sound on the initial stroke. The backstroke is pretty even to the downstroke in terms of pitch but doesn't feature the same depth in tone. Overall, even at a high rate of activation, this switch has a very satisfying sound to it that I'm sure many clicky switch enthusiasts would enjoy and doesn't suffer from spring ping that other non-box mounts have seen in the past.

#### Wobble:

With respect to wobble for these pieces, there is surprisingly little in the N/S direction, though I anticipate that this is likely due to the clickbar activating mechanism preventing much rocking in the S direction as it would come to rest on the clickbar. The E/W wobble, however, is significantly more noticeable and is starting to get to an amount that would raise concern about the wobble being able to be felt under keycaps in a full build.

### **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 pieces to NK\_Sherbet's side by side.

#### Box Jades (Clickbar)

- Box Jades appear to have less depth in sound than the Sherbets but feature a much more pitchy and sharp sound than the Sherbets.
- While Box Jades also have that slight pretravel until the arm makes contact with the clickbar, it is significantly less noticeable than with the Sherbets.
- Wobble is comparable between these switches in both N/S and E/W directions, somehow even though one is a box mount and the other is a traditional MX mount.

#### Box Navies (Clickbar)

- Of all the switches on this list, the Box Navies appear to closest match the Sherbets in terms of sound profile, though they are still different.
- Unlike the Box Jades, which were sharper with less body in sound than the Sherbets, the Box Navies are less sharp than the Sherbets but boast a deeper body sound to them that would likely resonate more in a proper housing.
- The overall volume of Box Navies is pretty comparable to the Sherbets.

#### Box Pinks (Clickbar)

- Unlike the Jades and Navies, which are arguably the champions of clicky switches, the Box Pinks have a significantly more muted sound and are noticeably quieter than both them and the Sherbet switches.

- Box Pinks feature almost no body to their sound at all and have a very ‘pin-prick’ like feel to the noise as compared to the more robust noise from Sherbets.

#### China Box Glazed Green (Clickbar)

- In my limited experience with these switches, I’ve found that they have almost no sharp clicking noise until you start to actuate them rapidly, and even then, they appear to be decently inconsistent with the noise.
- China Box Greens are quieter than Sherbets, with less of a sharpness to the sound *and* less of a solid body feel.
- If you are looking for a strong clicky switch, this is not the best choice for you.

#### Kailh Speed Heavy Pale Blue (Clickbar)

- I truly have forgotten how strong of an option these are for clicky switches – they are loud and sound pretty damn good.
- Unlike the Sherbets, these have a *sharp* sound to them, and feel quite pointy as compared to the more robust click of the Sherbets.

#### Gateron Ink Blues (Click Jacket)

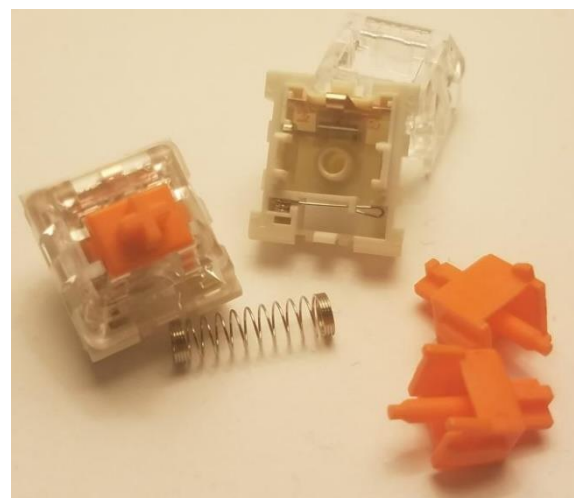
- If you told me that the point of these switches was to produce sound through a pinging spring, I would have honestly believed you.
- These are almost not even comparable to the Sherbets in any way, shape, or form and sound drastically worse in all ways.

#### Cherry MX Blues (Click Jacket)

- When I initially took my MX Blue off of my tester to compare it to the rest of these switches, I was genuinely concerned that I had somehow damaged the click jacket or spring prior. Upon fishing through my extras and finding more MX Blues to compare, I discovered that that was in fact how they normally sounded.
- These are honestly dumpster tier compared to everything else on this list, and much to my surprise. I honestly didn’t think these were that bad.

### Final Conclusions:

First and foremost, I feel its worth pointing out here that I am not a clicky switch guy in any way, shape, or form. While I personally hold nothing against these switches, I have found myself getting distracted at my own typing while using them before in personal settings. That being said, though, if you chase clicky switches for the sound alone, I think Novelkeys has a great hidden gem here in terms of a switch that is relatively inexpensive given the per piece price. However, I am distinctly turned off by the massive pre-travel that I talked about earlier in the writeup, and I don’t think I could ever build with Sherbets purely because of that feel. I have a feeling that as these switches get more exposure in the public that they will be met with very polarized views – people will either absolutely love them for their sound or (in my best guess) hate the weird travel and feel on these switches. That being said, I’m still excited to see if these will gain any attraction or attention over the next few months.



**Figure 5:** I went a bit more avant-garde with the picture this time around.

## **Further Reading:**

Novelkeys' Sherbet sales page:

[https://novelkeys.xyz/collections/switches/products/nk\\_-sherbet](https://novelkeys.xyz/collections/switches/products/nk_-sherbet)

Wayback Machine:

[https://web.archive.org/save/https://novelkeys.xyz/collections/switches/products/nk\\_-sherbet](https://web.archive.org/save/https://novelkeys.xyz/collections/switches/products/nk_-sherbet)

Novelkeys' Sherbet announcement via Reddit Update:

[https://i.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/eplets/novelkeys\\_updates\\_nk\\_sherbet\\_switches\\_nk65\\_extras/](https://i.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/eplets/novelkeys_updates_nk_sherbet_switches_nk65_extras/)

Wayback Machine:

[https://web.archive.org/save/https://i.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/eplets/novelkeys\\_updates\\_nk\\_sherbet\\_switches\\_nk65\\_extras/](https://web.archive.org/save/https://i.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/eplets/novelkeys_updates_nk_sherbet_switches_nk65_extras/)

Sherbet discussion on Keebtalk:

<https://www.keebtalk.com/t/novelkeys-sherbet-switches/7914>

Wayback Machine:

<https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.keebtalk.com/t/novelkeys-sherbet-switches/7914>

Literal Dumpster Fire of a 'review' of Sherbets by u/ObjectivelyMK on Reddit:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/et5kai/short\\_review\\_of\\_novelkeys\\_sherbets/](https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/et5kai/short_review_of_novelkeys_sherbets/)

Wayback Machine:

[https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/et5kai/short\\_review\\_of\\_novelkeys\\_sherbets/](https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/et5kai/short_review_of_novelkeys_sherbets/)