

From the Vault: Geekmaker Creamy Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 04/04/20

First and foremost, I want to start out this review by saying that I hope you and your loved ones are doing fine in these tough coronavirus times. Obviously, we are here reading because we all love keyboards and love the impacts they've made in our lives, but in times like this they might not get to occupy the same 'front and center' view that they normally do. And segueing off of this point, I wanted to say that I've been dealing with quite a lot the last few weeks with respect to housing and my job because of the coronavirus, so it may help explain part of why I haven't written anything in two weeks. Without detailing much further into it, I simply wanted to say thank you to you all for your understanding and support throughout these last few weeks – I appreciate it more than you know.

With the coronavirus abound, unfortunately there hasn't been much activity as of late with respect to new switches being released for sale, nor really talked about. Assuming you are intentionally ignoring the company who decided to release a switch with a name already in use and then shrug it off when pointed out to them, no companies have released switches in the last few weeks and the few that have stuff ready for shipping, such as ThicThock's Marshmallows, are held up due to quarantine restrictions. Thus, due to the lack of new content, I've wanted to do reviews of older pieces that have kind of fallen out of the limelight and aren't quite as discussed as they once were. I plan on releasing these under the banner of "From the Vault Reviews" moving forward.

Switch Background

Due to the fact that Reddit doesn't keep the original post dates intact, it makes it kind of hard when looking back to accurately ascertain when old switches first made an appearance into the community. That being said, around August of 2018, "Geekmaker Creamy" switches first made an appearance on the Play Keyboard store, 'erroneously' marketed as a new set of Gateron branded linear switches. Quickly being questioned in a post by u/dofboke, these switches were quickly "fixed" back to the Geekmaker branding after being shouted at a bit by u/Zeal in the comments section. While this didn't exactly ring any bells at the time, we now know that this original sale was likely connected with Durock and served as the very first warning signs of the impending Stealios controversy. (For a bit of a more detailed explanation of their connection to Stealios and Durock, please refer to the Stealios Controversy document I previously wrote.)



Figure 1: Picture of real Geekmakers (back) and the fake Geekmakers (front) acquired directly from a Durock sales rep.

However, setting aside this initial ‘accident’ in marketing, they began to see usage in the community and discussion starting roughly a year later in mid to late 2019. Overall, the acceptance of these pieces was pretty nonchalant, for lack of better phrasing. While there were quite a few discussion posts expounding about the smoothness of the switches, there was an early discussion about how their sound was deeply marred by a pinging noise that came from either the spring or the leaves of the switches. Likely due to this relatively even acceptance out of the gate, they have never quite caught on in the community and have existed as a viable and very rarely discussed option.

Since their initial release on the Play Keyboard store, the set of four brightly colored, linear switches has seen appearances on Drop, Candykeys, and KPRepublic, though no established vendor has had these for sale in quite some time. In the various times they did make an appearance on these sites, though, they sold for somewhere between 50 and 60 cents per piece, which was and still is mid to high range in terms of prices for linear switches. In addition to the actual switches which were sold, KPRepublic, at the time of this writing, still is selling aftermarket Geekmaker top housings of various colors aimed to go with the Geekmaker switches. Unfortunately, I do not have any of these to review alongside the switches for this document.

Geekmaker Switch Performance

As mentioned above, the Geekmaker line of switches contains four linear switches of varying weights. The weight and properties of each of these switches were as follows:

All Switches:

- Linear
- 1.8 mm of Pretravel
- 3.6 mm of Total Stroke Travel

Geekmaker Creamy Yellow:

- 55g Actuation Force

Geekmaker Creamy Pink:

- 62g Actuation Force

Geekmaker Creamy Purple:

- 67g Actuation Force

Geekmaker Creamy Blue:

- 78g Actuation Force



Figure 2: Unnecessarily pretty picture of the Geekmakers as listed from Left to Right.

Appearance:

Featuring completely clear, see-through housings and gold-plated springs, the Geekmaker switches themselves are a decently pretty looking stock switch. In addition to this, the stem colors are both vibrant and relatively unique even to this day when compared to other switches that have been released. While the Blue is awfully close to a Tealio stem in terms of color, the Purple, Pink, and Yellow switches all stand out as compared to other similarly colored switches. My only complaint about the appearance of these switches is the relatively ugly ‘GEEKMAKER’ name which was stamped on the nameplates.

Push Feel:

Even upon editing this document for final passes and inevitably missing grammatical mistakes that will be thrown back in my face here later today, the push feel of these switches still impresses me deeply. For the time in which they came out, pre-Durock and super high-end linear switch days, these switches are insanely smooth and consistent. For all four spring weights, the stroke is smooth and consistent in weight throughout the entirety of the stroke, and I have little to complain about the performance that they would likely be used in. Testing them in hand, though, there is this ever so slight pre-travel to the springs in which they don't push back with full listed weight prior to the beginning of the stroke – but its so subtle and only a fraction of a millimeter so I doubt that this would likely be noticed in usage. To be entirely honest, this may also be a partial artifact of the wobble of these switches, but I'm not entirely sure.

Sound:

To tear the bandage off quickly, the sound of these switches is by far the most disappointing aspect, and I'm nearly certain that this is why these switches never quite picked up traction in the community. While there is no audible scratching noise during the stroke, nor noticeable spring ping, there is a bit of a weird noise that comes from the leaves of these switches. Somewhere between a light rattle and a spring, under heavy activation the Geekmakers unanimously have this odd rattle that is likely due to the leaves of the switches and is mildly reminiscent of the same issue that Gateron Ink V1 switches have had in the past. Given the similarity to the issue with the Ink V1 switches, I'm certainly curious if a reissue of these switches would see success if there weren't already so many viable linear options on the market.



Figure 3: Picture of the springs, stems and housings of the Geekmaker switches conveniently placed here because it was too close to the last picture if placed right after the 'Appearance' section.

Wobble:

Continuing on the roller coaster of opinions for these pieces, the wobble on these switches is quite a solid selling point of these switches. Featuring slightly more E/W wobble than N/S wobble, these switches have barely any noticeable wobble in either direction and feel as if the stems fit the top housings quite well. While I don't normally do frankenswitch reviews nor reviews outside of the stock quality of switches, out of pure temptation I found that the wobble amounts on both axes are nearly identical for these stems in Gateron tops as well.

Other:

With the exception of the leaves in the switches, I genuinely think that each of the parts in these switches – top housings, stems, and springs all serve as both viable and desirable frankenswitch building material. Knowing what we do now about the fact that Geekmakers were made by Durock, and thus are compatible with Gateron branded switches, I honestly am surprised that I have not seen more usage of these to date.

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 Geekmakers side by side.



Figure 4: Switches being compared to Geekmakers. (Back, L-R: Tealios V2, Gateron SMD Yellow, Mauves. Front, L-R: C³ Equalz Tangerine V2, Cherry MX Vintage Black, Gateron Ink V1)

Tealio V2

- Like the comparisons I've done with most higher end linears in reviews, the Tealios have more scratch both in sound and feel as compared to the Geekmaker switches.
- The Tealios also have a bit more of a deeper bottoming out sound aside the aforementioned leaf rattle.
- Tealios feature an ever so slightly greater N/S wobble but no real difference in wobble in the E/W direction when compared to Geekmakers.

Gateron SMD Yellow

- For some reason, Gateron Yellows in general have begun to pick up an insane amount of traction as of the last week, and I suspect Taeha is at fault.
- Gateron Yellows have an extremely similar wobble in both directions to Geekmakers.
- The SMD Yellows that I tested feature a relatively smooth scratch sound throughout the stroke that is the biggest noticeable difference between them and the Geekmakers.

Mauves

- While they are also linear switches, the bottom out of these switches has a much more rich, snappier sound than the Geekmaker switches.
- The Geekmakers do not feature a solid upstroke noise as they come back to the resting position. The Mauve switches, on the other hand, do have a decently solid upstroke sound.
- I honestly think that these are pretty comparable in terms of smoothness of the overall stroke to Geekmakers.

Equalz C³ Tangerine V2s

- In no particular negative way, the stroke of these switches have a much more hollow and thin sound than the Geekmakers.
- Even though the Geekmakers are incredibly smooth, these switches still, somehow, are ever so slightly smoother.
- There is slightly more E/W wobble in both weights of the Tangerine V2s than any of the Geekmaker switches.

Cherry MX Vintage Black

- Obviously, with no surprise to anyone, these switches feature a bit more scratch in terms of feel and sound than the Geekmaker switches.
- Of all of the switches listed here, as a nature of the switch housing material in the Vintage Blacks, these have the deepest sounds in nearly all aspects.
- While they are included here on this list, they're not entirely comparable to the Geekmakers on any metric – you should definitely be considering these as a completely different type of linear switch as compared to the Geekmakers.

Gateron Ink V1s

- I'm going to be entirely honest here: These switches are eerily similar on nearly every metric. They feel, sound, and wobble nearly identically to the Geekmakers.
- The only minor difference I could note between these switches is that there is ever so slightly less wobble in the N/S direction of the Ink V1s than the Geekmakers.

Final Conclusions

Overall, while I'm not surprised these switches didn't gain much traction with respect to the sound issues that the leaves of these switches have, the fact that these didn't pick up further traction as a result of their feeling and/or as frankenswitch fodder is entirely beyond me. Given the fact that Gateron Ink V1s compare *so* closely with these switches, I honestly think that people should consider getting their hands on some if they enjoy the Ink V1 feel and don't mind perusing mechmarket. As well, I truly think that these stems and top housings of the Geekmakers, aside their ugly-ass logo, would be a great addition to any frankenswitch building box to try and create an ideal linear switch for someone. Maybe if these were released at a different time they'd have caught on better, but alas we will never know.

Further Reading

Play-Keyboard Store Geekmaker Sales Page

Link: <https://play-keyboard.store/collections/group-buys/products/creamy-switches-geekmaker?variant=18636674302070>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/save/https://play-keyboard.store/collections/group-buys/products/creamy-switches-geekmaker?variant=18636674302070>

Drop Geekmaker Sales Page

Link: <https://drop.com/buy/geekmaker-creamy-switches>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/save/https://drop.com/buy/geekmaker-creamy-switches>

KPRepublic Geekmaker Top Sales Page

Link: <https://kprepublic.com/search?type=product&q=geekmaker>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/save/https://kprepublic.com/search?type=product&q=geekmaker>

u/dofboke Geekmaker Creamy First Mention Post

Link:

https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/97b4gt/creamy_switches_from_a_guy_named_geekmaker_does/

Wayback:

https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/97b4gt/creamy_switches_from_a_guy_named_geekmaker_does/

u/SamusCroft Geekmaker Creamy Mention

Link:

https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/a32hkw/geekmaker_cream_switches_not_novelkeys_are_on_md/

Wayback:

https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/a32hkw/geekmaker_cream_switches_not_novelkeys_are_on_md/

u/OnceSavedGaming Geekmaker Creamy Mention

Link:

https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/a35q1e/geekmaker_creamy_switches/

Wayback:

https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.reddit.com/r/MechanicalKeyboards/comments/a35q1e/geekmaker_creamy_switches/

Simple Life's Orion V3 with Geekmaker Creamy Yellows Typing Test

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tgv9e1SufMI>

Unigo66's Geekmaker Creamy Yellows Typing Test

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsuJve2-jQI>

Salt Rock Lamp's Beautiful Geekmaker Exploration Stream

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRvMF8pfnvw>