

# H1 Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 03/11/2020

Look at that, two reviews in the same *day*. I must really have my shit together as if this is some sort of special thing. That being said, though, with the recent releasing of the N1s on KBDfans literally as I was writing this document, I realize this 'X1' naming scheme is going to get really annoying really quickly. For the time being, though, we only have T1s, H1s, and N1s, in case you are reading this way in the future and playing around with an alphabet of switches.

## Switch Background

Normally in this section I would go through the extensive background of these switches and how they came about, but being that I literally wrote an entire document about this already, I'll just defer you to 'H1s, Obsidians, and More Switch Drama' for a much more intricate background surrounding these switches. The only thing worth noting that has changed about these switches since the previous document was posted is that these will *not* be being sold via groupbuy format, and rather will be stocked at six different vendors for ~ \$0.60 per switch. The vendors, as of writing this document, are Novelkeys, MyKeyboard, iLumKB, DailyClack, ApexKeyboards, and letsgetit.io (HHHH's store for Korea).

## H1 Switch Performance

### Appearance:

Originally designed to be a 'Vintage MX Black' replacement, these switches feature an unadorned, black on black housing with a matching black stem with a light amount of factory lubing on the rails and feet. The top housing is made of Polycarbonate while the bottom is made of a Polyamide material. As discussed in the other document, Polyamides are a larger class of molecules under which Nylon falls. While it is quite similar to Nylon in functionality, it is not technically Nylon for pedantic purposes. Inside the black-on-black-on-black housings, a gold-plated 78g linear stem can be found. While in-hand feeling less bulky and more streamlined than their Cherry MX Black inspirations, these definitely do capture the 'vintage black' vibe, for a lack of better phrasing.



**Figure 1:** See, all it takes is poor eyesight and you pretty much can't even tell them apart.

### Push Feel:

I am honestly quite impressed with how these feel, even keeping in mind that they are effectively made by JWK, who is known for producing incredible feeling switches out of the bag. Overall, the stroke is extremely smooth and consistent the entire way throughout, with no pretravel or differing-weight

section to the spring resistance as you travel along the switch. One thing worth noting is that I think JWK is improving upon their overall factory lubrication process, as these do feel marginally better than some of the linears of past. While they still don't quite compare to the Equalz C<sup>3</sup> Tangerine V2s, which boast their own improved manufacturing line at JWK, these do feel a bit better than other linears in recent memory.

#### Sound:

While in not any sort of demeaning manor, I personally think the sound is the biggest let down with respect to these switches. While there is no sound at all from the minor scratch that is present, the bottoming out sound and upstroke sounds feel a bit 'plasticky' and doesn't quite hit the same deep sounding tones that MX Vint Blacks do. While it's not altogether an unpleasant sound, it was definitely a bit of a letdown with their intent of being 'Vint Black' replacements. That being said, I definitely will be doing some experimentation with these in order to see if a differing amount of lube as well as films may make a difference to the depth of sound of these pieces. I would also highly recommend checking out the full build sound tests linked below under "Further Reading" as they will be able to give a much better approximation of the sound across a full build.

#### Wobble:

The wobble, in both the N/S and E/W directions, is absolutely fantastic on these switches. While I am testing one of the Korean releases and not necessarily the production batch that is running for the western markets, I am sure that JWK can deliver a similar experience. The wobble is extremely small and definitely within the margin of 'I'm not even sure this is there' once caps are put on them.

#### Other:

78g in a linear switch is personally a bit heavy for me in terms of weight, though the out-of-box feel of these definitely does make me consider wanting to see how they'd feel in a completed build based on their other qualities.

### **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 H1s side by side.



**Figure 2:** After some requests from people, I think I will start including a picture of all of the comparison pieces together in case you aren't familiar with what they look like.

### Cherry MX Vintage Black:

- Pretty much identical N/S and E/W wobble in these switches as well as the H1s.
- As stated above, these have a much deeper, ‘thockier’ sound to their bottoming out than the H1s, which have a much lighter and thinner plastic sound to them.
- Without lube, though, these definitely do feel a bit scratchier both in terms of sound and feel than the H1s do out of the box.

### Gateron SMD Yellow:

- I didn’t realize until I was comparing the two sound-wise that the Gateron Yellows have a minor amount of spring ping to them on bottom out whereas the H1s have none.
- The SMD clear tops have a bit more N/S wobble than the H1 tops, but a comparable lack of noticeable E/W wobble.
- While I don’t normally do lube tests with switches, I have a board featuring lubed Gateron Yellow stems, and when properly lubed they feel on par with the H1s.

### Tealios V2:

- I include Tealios in every one of these linear reviews but at this point I’m not even sure why? It feels on par with that gym membership you renew every month because you used it once upon a time and are now ignoring because you are off to bigger and better things like the Chick-fil-a drive through for the fourth time this week because their chicken sandwiches are just too goddamn good.
- Significantly more wobble in both the N/S and E/W directions as compared to the H1 linears.
- Significantly scratchier in terms of both sound and especially feel. (Yes, I know that stock Tealios come unlubed, but I shouldn’t have to lube them if they cost this much when a switch literally half of the price has better factory lube.)

### Mauve:

- These have a slightly lighter sound to them in terms of stroke when compared to the H1s, but the sounds are definitely of the same quality. I would venture to guess that the ever so slightly lighter sound is due to a difference in the bottom housing material.
- Pretty much comparable on all other metrics – which is not surprising given the proximity in manufacturing dates by the exact same manufacturer.

### Gateron FF Cheese:

- Infinitely better name than H1s and 85% of all switches currently available on the market.
- Have both a scratch sound and a spring ping that definitely are more noticeable than the H1 switches.
- The springs also feel as if they have an ever so slight pretravel to them, especially when compared next to the consistent stroke of the H1 switches.

## **Final Conclusions**

Overall, I am quite happy with these switches in terms of their out-of-box feeling and their attempt at creating an alternative to the ‘Vint Black meme’. Granted, they don’t quite hit the same feeling and sound as Vint Blacks, they do offer a nice linear option moving forward for black themed builds. However, and an ever more pressing question, though, will be how these stack up to the 43 Studios Obsidian switches. While I wait for my 43 Studios’ Obsidians to arrive, I can only venture a guess for now.

## **Further Reading**

Original Enigma Geekhack Interest Check Thread

Link: <https://geekhack.org/index.php?topic=104578.0>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/save/%20https://geekhack.org/index.php?topic=104578.0>

Keyrunc Duck Orion V3 with lubed H1 Switches Typing Test

Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFwqGrmi4fI&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFwqGrmi4fI&feature=emb_logo)

aRtFiLm E7-V1 SE Quad H H1 Switches Typing Test

Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfR35mq6VHw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfR35mq6VHw&feature=emb_logo)

ApexKeyboards H1 Sales Page

Link: <https://www.apexkeyboards.ca/products/h1switches>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/save/https://www.apexkeyboards.ca/products/h1switches>