

Obsidian Pro Switch Review

-ThereminGoat, 02/20/2022

Crane? Alert? Taser? While I feel like I've opened the last slew of reviews discussing the all-consuming, time warping, Lovecraftian practice of graduate level courses, the past few weeks since the last review have seemingly been encapsulated by one singular thing – *Wordle*. Big shocker that the goat who likes to write a ton in his very narrow windows of free time would be a big fan of a word-based game, I know. Ever since one of the keyboard Discord channels which I frequent began playing it, I've effectively forced it onto everyone around me including my fellow graduate students, making sure that everyone has done it by the time that we are done with classes for the day so we can at least hash out who is the dumb one for the day and if our streaks are still alive. Aside distracting us ever briefly from our daily lives, Wordle has seemingly been a nice break from just the way that 'things' are right now in the world at large. Perhaps my age in my mid-20s is showing when I say this, but it quite honestly feels like the first time that me and my friends have been *excited* about a mobile game. Either that, or we are simply using it as a way to talk about something other than the homework assignments we stayed up late the night prior doing in order to narrowly have it turned in by class in the morning.

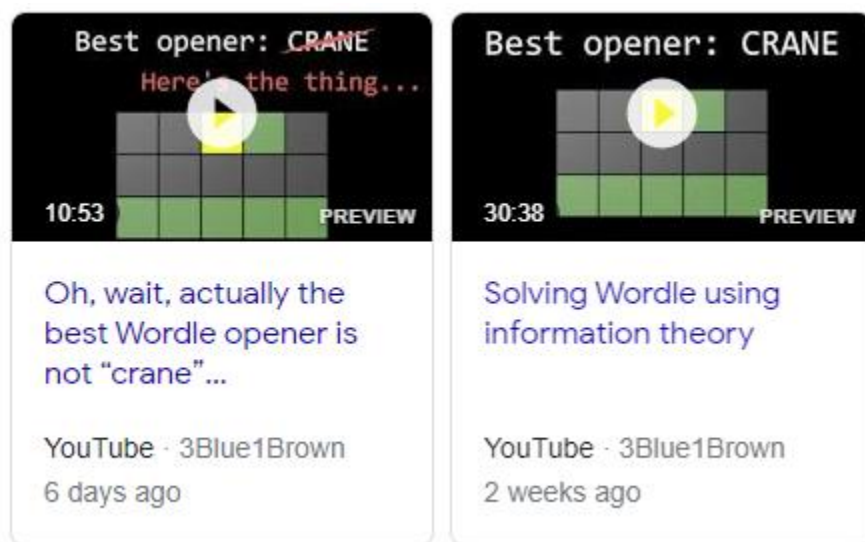


Figure 1: Surely it wasn't because we were up late watching 3Blue1Brown's videos on Wordle and Information Theory.

Returning to that point made above, though, the game has provoked a certain emotion that is hard for me to pin down. It's somewhere between a nostalgia and childlike excitement that used to be filled several handfuls of years ago by games like Flappy Bird or the peak of Pokemon Go, more recently. Maybe these odd, nostalgia-adjacent feelings are things that just come with age, but altogether I can't help but see the parallels between Wordle and these games but in a time so distinctly separated from them. While I sincerely doubt that Wordle will lead to people running around in parks like Pokemon Go, or sending endless pages of death threats to the New York Times to take it down ala Flappy Bird, I am curious to see how the lifespan of the game progresses and if it will be remembered in another half dozen or more years down the road like I imagine Pokemon Go or Flappy Bird may be remembered. Or maybe it will just crash and burn entirely because of the New York Times' acquisition, as so many people seem to have insinuated over the past week or so since their corporate takeover. Maybe it's just me, but it *does* feel like there has been more double letter words since NYT took over...

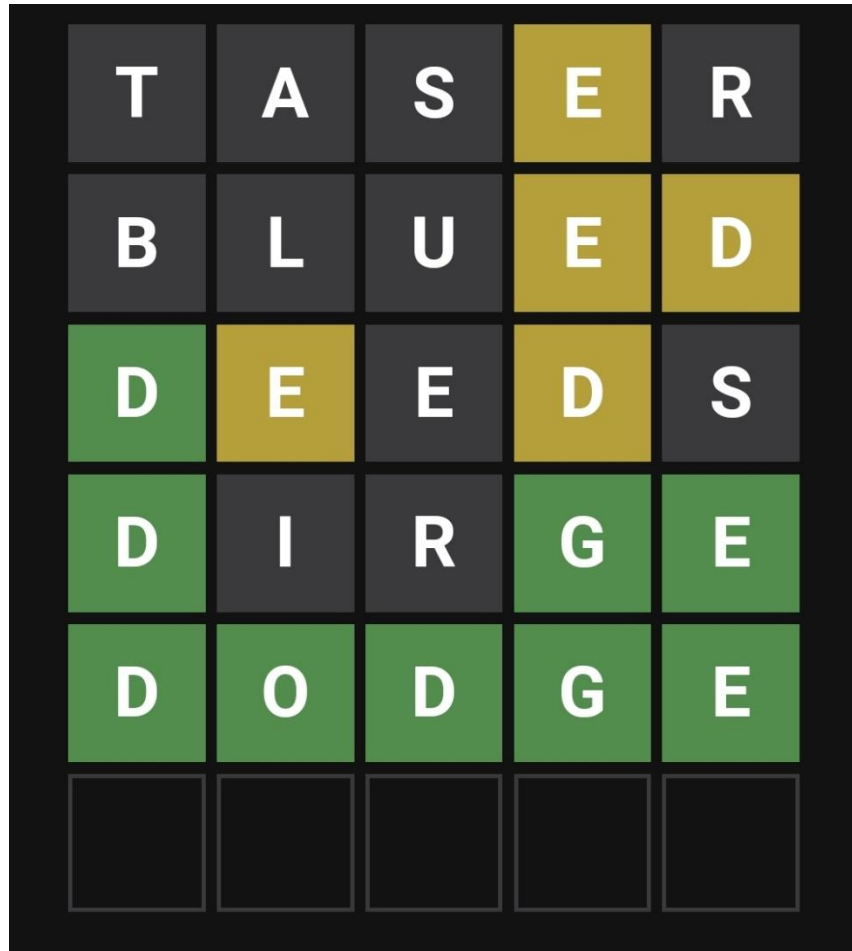


Figure 2: You can say whatever you want about me getting a 5/6 on #244, but I'm damn proud of my strategy here.

Switch Background

It was rather surprising for me to sit down and plan out a rough outline of what I wanted to go through in this Switch Background section simply because of how much history 43Studio has packed in over the last few years of making switches. Hell, simply the fact that it has been *a few years* since they first made their debut announcement via ZFrontier is something that blows my mind a little bit. Since the Obsidian switch groupbuy announcement (and ensuing drama) was first made at the very tail end of December, 2019, 43Studio has gone on to release nearly a dozen new switches in just a few short years and has apparently no plans of slowing down in the future. In a funny way, as well, the weird nostalgic qualia that I alluded to in the first part of this review was actually a literary device to tie into how 43Studio's switches makes me feel about my own content. For those of you who have been reading my content for a fairly long time now, you'll recall that such articles as 'H1s, Obsidians, and More Switch Drama', 'Obsidian Switch Review', and the 'Opblack Switch Reviews' all being quite big back when they first released, constituting some of my more formative articles which grew my audience to what it is today. As well, the Obsidian switches were also released roughly around the time that I started both my Instagram and Twitter accounts which have been bringing in growing numbers of people to the website month upon month, doubling up on this strange emotion. To simply see how far both they have come as well as I have come in just a few short years is... Well it's hard to describe.



Figure 3: Early 43Studio's releases including (L-R, Top-Bot) Obsidians, Opblacks, Caramels, and Raras.

While I could retrace my steps all the way back at the start of 43Studio's history regarding their switch releases, upon a brief and slightly self-criinge inducing look back at my old content I feel like I did a half decent job at mentioning the details of the 'early' 43Studio releases seen in Figure 3 above. Instead, I feel it would be more apt to very briefly touch on the details of the various 43Studio releases that have come after these formative releases in order to provide the future switch historians with some details for them to ponder while also hopefully keeping this review under 7000 words. Again, as if I clearly give any sort of shit about verbosity, comma based lists, or run on sentences that likely needed punctuation several conjunctions and/or thoughts ago. Some of the switches that 43Studio has released between those early days and the time of writing this review include:

Rara V2



Figure 4: Apparently also finding images of ones with the nameplates is hard. We're going to have to use our imaginations a tiny bit on this one.

Running for a brief window in the latter half of October 2020, the Rara V2 switches are not different enough that many people would consider them to be entirely separate switches from the original Rara switches which were run. However, because I am both pedantic and the exact goat who *would* care about these kinds of details, the Rara V2s featured the ‘43Studio’ comic sans nameplate font whereas the original ones did not, constituting their one and only differentiating point. That’s entirely it. All of the specifications with the 63.5g bottoming out spring, polycarbonate over nylon housing design, \$0.69 per switch price tag (post initial sale), and Durock/JWK production are identical otherwise. (And no, I still don’t have one yet because I’ve just not gotten around to actually buying one from someone yet.)

Toy Brick

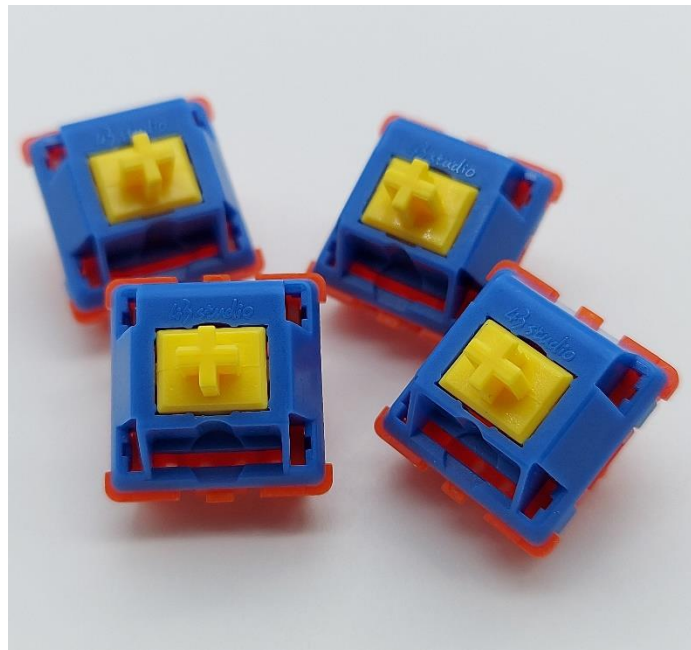


Figure 5: 43Studio’s Toy Brick switches.

First announced as in-stock and available to the public around late December of 2020, these tricolor ‘Toy Brick’ switches were the first vibrantly colored switch to be released by 43Studio, breaking from their established, Warped Tour inspired muted palette of switch colors. Running (and actually delivering) around a similar time as the Lil’ Tykes switches made by infamous exit scammer TheRoyal, these infinitely more popular switches came with full nylon housings and a standard 63.5g. bottoming out spring weight. The additional interesting sales pitch regarding these switches were that of polished slider rails in the bottom housing as well as polishing of the rails on the stems, themselves, in order to promote a smoother stock feeling. While only sparsely available as of the time of writing this review via a few remaining vendors and resellers as far as I can tell, these switches were fairly well accepted by the community at large and had a great run throughout 2021 in the \$0.60-0.70 per switch price range.



Figure 6: Look, I even *got* my Clarabelle keyboard from him and not even that is enough to bias me into liking this colorway over the Toy Brick switches.

Popu



Figure 7: 43Studio's Popu switches.

After a sort of brief respite from switch releases throughout most of 2021, 43Studio's big return to switch production last year came by way of the Popu linear switches at the end of August, 2021. These milky topped, lilac-purple colored switches were aimed at being the second switch in the 'Opblack' theme of switches, joining the likes of Opblacks. Coming with a 50g. bottom out gold-plated spring and no-factory lubing, much like the Opblacks, these switches featured the 'mystery top housing material' supposed to emulate that of Cherry MX Nixdorf Black switches over nylon bottom housings. At the time of their announcement, they were initially released at \$0.57 per switch though today occupying slightly higher price points in the west at \$0.65-0.70 per switch as is common post initial sale for 43Studio.

“The Switch with No Good Name”



Figure 8: 43Studio’s grey and yellow 'Switch with No Good Name'.

The latest of 43Studio’s switch announcements with the exceptions of the Obsidian Pros is that of “The Switch with No Good Name”, debuted at the end of September 2022 via a ZFrontier post of the same name. In this announcement thread, 43Studio shared details of their first dustproof-stemmed linear switch purported to have several improvements with respect to ‘more stable stems’, ‘better PCB LED compatibility’, and a “brand new lubrication method” based on grease. Being one of the first Durock/JWK switches to ever be produced with a dustproof style stem, these switches were made with all nylon housing and 58g. bottom out springs not all that out of line for prior 43Studio switch releases.

The rather unique name used here for this switch, as well, is deserving of its own paragraph to provide it a small bit of context. Coming directly from the title of the announcement which debuted these grey and yellow linear switches, the translated name according to our Google overlords is that of “The Switch with No Good Name.” In line with the uncertainty of the name of these switches, 43Studio appeared to be offering a naming suggestion competition in this post, implying that this long winded phrase would not be the penultimate name for this switch upon official release. However, upon discussion with 43Studio about 20 minutes before posting this review, and thus leaving me to frantically edit this review before it went live, these switches never actually received an official name nor have any plans of being released in the future. Regardless of the fact that these are not going to be released, this relatively long-winded and humors naming scheme is not a first for switches out of the east. Completely disregarding the Leobog Pig Synapse switches (more likely translated as ‘Boar Rush’ switches) that I scorecarded a week ago as a great example of such, the moniker of the Opblack-inspired ‘Opgrey’ switches by Revo used to be translated as ‘Follow the Wind Dog’ switches prior to adopting their much more official name. (To be entirely honest, I still refer to them by their longer name because it is infinitely more fun.)

Unnamed Pink-ish Prototype



Figure 9: Unreleased/unannounced 43Studio Pink and Black prototype switches.

While not an official release switch, I felt compelled to include these on the list of 43Studio related switches for posterity as I received them in my package directly from 43Studio alongside the Obsidian Pro switches. That being said, though, I don't know the first thing about them at all. Assumedly either an unused prototype that will not be released to do unforeseen design choices, or perhaps their next, latest-and-greatest release after the Obsidian Pro switches, I felt the need to share them because I think they are rather neat on their own. (As well as to slightly flex on the other switch collectors out there.) To the best of what I can tell, these switches are linear with thicker, potentially nylon style housings, and are definitely within the high 50g to low 60g. spring weighting that 43Studio seems to historically be a fan of using.

Obsidian Pro



Figure 10: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro switch with components.

With a much less dynamic and striking name as ‘The Switch(es) with No Good Name’, the actually latest switch to be released by 43Studio is that of the Obsidian Pros, which is likely what brought you here today. Named to imply an expansion and revamping of the switches which propelled 43Studio into the switch making scene, these switches ironically hardly resemble that of their original namesake inspiration. Rather than plain, matte black nylon exteriors of the original Obsidians, the Obsidian Pros come with dustproof linear stems and an entirely new black colored plastic material in their housings reported to be different than polycarbonate, nylon, *and* the material used in the milky top housings of that of the Opblacks and Popus. Additionally, these switches feature a 62g. bottom out spring from ThicThock, the vendor/brand which designed and released the Marshmallow and Konpeitou switches which I’ve previously touched on in reviews. Initially priced at 3.6 RMB (\$0.57) per switch during a brief window around their initial sale at the end of December, 2021, the price rose to 3.8 RMB (\$0.60) per switch for sales beyond this date.

Obsidian Pro Switch Performance

Appearance

At the highest level, the Obsidian Pro switches appear to be designed with a ‘return to roots’ style color scheme for 43Studio. Rather than another release with vibrant, multi-colored housings and stems, the Obsidian Pros are clad entirely in an all-black design like the original Obsidian switches. Unlike the original Obsidians, though, the Obsidian Pros feature a dustproof stem and entirely new housing material which appears rather glossy and almost ever so slightly translucent in the top housing and opaque in the bottom housings unlike any switches that 43Studio has released prior. While many people may initially read ‘translucent black top housings’ and assume something in line with Gateron Ink V1 or V2 switches, I want to note that these are significantly darker and more opaque than that of Ink, or other semi-translucent colored housings in general. Additionally adding to the all-black aesthetic, the springs themselves are also black colored, marking what I believe to be the first non-traditional colored ThicThock springs to be released in switches.

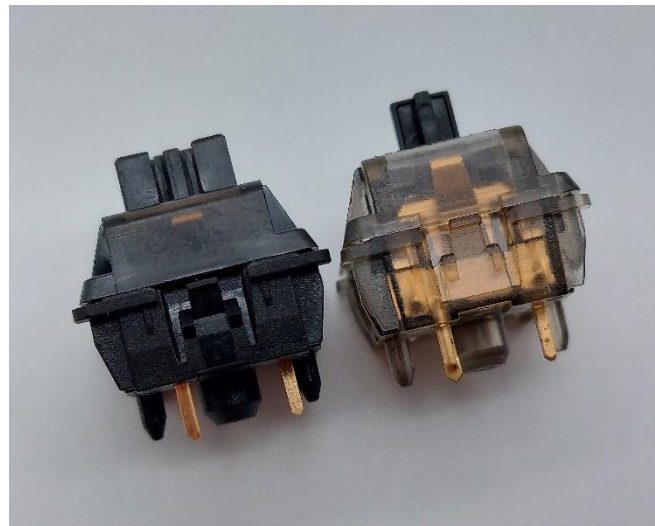


Figure 11: Housing translucency comparison between Obsidian Pro (left) and Gateron Black Ink V2 (right).

Inspecting the top housings more closely for mold-based details, its rather striking how few appear to jump out as distinctly ‘unique’ amongst the history of Durock/JWK or even just 43Studio switches. Externally, these feature the classic, comic-sans font ‘43Studio’ nameplate as well as a wide, long open LED slot with slightly depressed central region for placement of round LEDs. It’s also worth noting, as well, that the translucency of the top housings is particularly noticeable here with the housing separated, when one looks down past the nameplate region into the spot where the switch leaf would sit. Internally, these also feature basically no details which are unique to just these switches. The rectangular

attachment pads along the upper rim of the top housing, as well as the two, single letter mold markings in both upper corners are in line with previously released Durock/JWK switches of a fairly wide variety.



Figure 13: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro top housing externals showing nameplate and wide LED slot region.

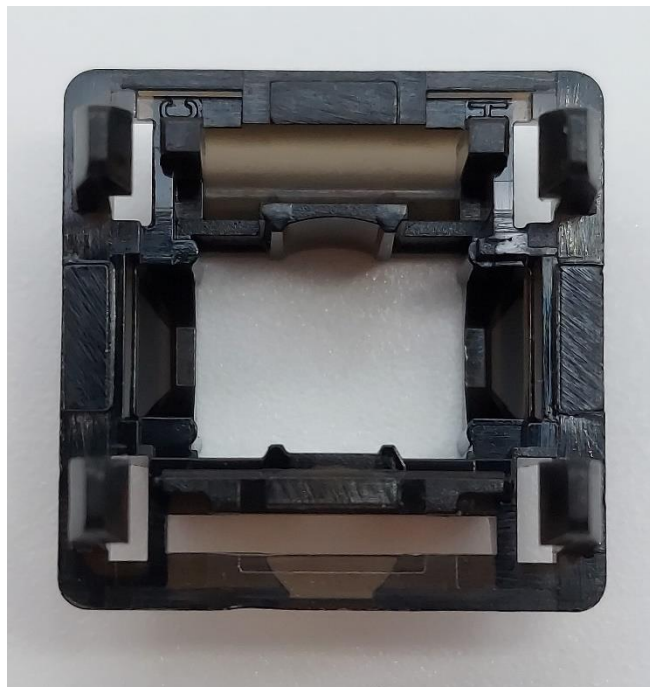


Figure 12: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro top housing internals showing two, single letter mold markings in upper right- and left-hand corners.

Moving next to the stems of these switches, these are of course going to be interesting with respect to the scope of my reviews done to date as I have not yet inspected Durock/JWK-made dustproof stems. That being said, they didn't exactly leave me all that many surprises, unfortunately. The stems are rather unadorned and feature fairly flat, smooth, and featureless slider rails as well as front and back plates. The slider rails are untapered and sit incredibly directly in line with the overall average slider rail length of all 98 switches that I've measured up to the point of this review at 5.07 mm in length. The central poles on these stems are fairly mundane with a modest tiered taper to the bottom portion with the overall total length falling under the 'normal' realm of switches at 12.25 mm. The mold markings on the stems, rather than being found on the side of the keycap stem mounts, sit at the internal base of the keycap stem mount much like that of other dustproof stems made by companies such as TTC. The one rather interesting point about these stems, though, is that the injection molding point appears to be on the actual top of the stem of the switches on either the East or West sides in a random assortment throughout the batch of switches that I received. To date, this is the first and only time I've seen dustproof stems injected at this location, and I find it rather interesting to say the least.

Moving onto the bottom housings of the Obsidian Pros, these too do not feature striking amounts of unique detail relative to other Durock/JWK releases but still do have a few small quirks worth noting. Internally, there are no mold ejector circles along the bottom of the bottom housing, but there are rather large, oblong padded bottoming out regions as well as a substantial south-side spring collar. Additionally, the LED region in the bottom housing is entirely open, which is different than other 43Studio releases which feature closed off LED regions with 4 holes out for LEDs and Diodes. (Ostensibly, this is the improvement to 'PCB LED' compatibility that was mentioned in the initial ZFrontier announcement post.) Externally, the bottom housings are actually striking unadorned. The two details worth noting here are the significantly reflective rings around that of the PCB mount legs of the bottom housing as well as the unique, sideways, and very small mold marking between the pins of the switch consisting of a single letter followed by two numbers. Located in roughly the same position and orientation as that of the 'GATERON' anticounterfeit measures on recent Gateron switches, this is the first time I've seen mold markings in this fashion before.



Figure 14: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro stem wide shot showing non-tapered slider rails and tapered center mast.



Figure 14: Ultra-high contrast image of Obsidian Pro stem showing both west side injection molding point as well as stem-based mold marking.

Additionally, it's worth noting that these features are also shared on 'The Switch with No Good Name' for both the bottom housings as well as the stems.

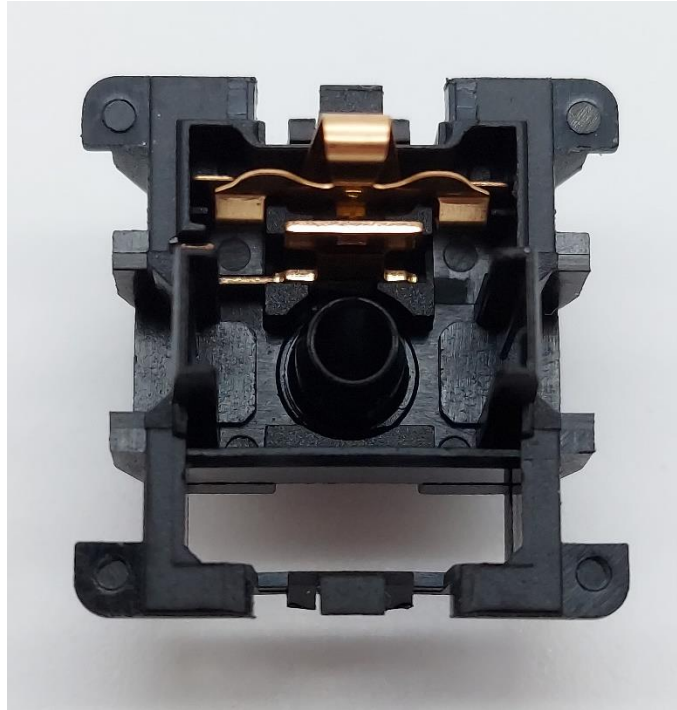


Figure 16: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro bottom housing internals showing padded bottoming out regions and wide-open LED slot region.



Figure 15: 43Studio's Obsidian Pro bottom housing externals showing polished regions around the PCB mount pins and unique mold marking.

Push Feel

In about as blunt terms as I could possibly put it, the push feel of these switches is both strange and grows on you quite a bit with usage. In fact, throughout the planning, writing, and editing of this review I've found my opinion of the push feel of these switches swing quite rapidly around until arriving to its final, publishable state here. The first and most distinctive thing about these linear switches, is that of the topping out onto this 'new mystery material' top housing. Feeling more thin than thick, my initial reaction was that these may as well just be other polycarbonate top housings based on the thinness alone, but the more I played with them the more I realized that they didn't feel sharp, nor plasticky. It is, in a very strange way, as if these are polycarbonate top housings except for the vast majority of the issues that make polycarbonate topping outs feel not so great. This strange thin, but not-plasticky-thin feeling to the material doesn't entirely translate as well to the bottom housing which feels a bit more sharp given the smaller areas of contact at bottoming out than that of the topping out, but not to any real extent to be off-putting in the slightest.

The one thing that I wish to stress, though, is that even though these housings don't quite feel as thin and plasticky as traditional polycarbonate housings, they definitely do still occupy the same ballpark in the grand, overall scheme of switches. I make this point especially targeted towards people who are particularly opposed to polycarbonate housings due to thinness, alone, as even with the subtle differences I don't think they would very much like them. For those out there who are a little more adventurous, though, these definitely may be worth checking out for something a little bit different with respect to housings. Beyond the housing collisions, though, the switches are also quite smooth for coming factory unlubed with perhaps a small bit of scratch that could be easily fixed by a very thin layer of aftermarket lubrication. As well, the spring has an overall consistent and non-flimsy feeling to it, though perhaps it does strike me odd just how light these springs feel for being 62g. at bottoming out. As someone who personally prefers linear switches on the lighter side, without seeing the marketing I would have anticipated these springs to be weighted closer to the 50-55g. bottoming out range. Regardless of *where* it truly sits, though, I would definitely up the weighting a tiny bit if I was the one making design decisions here.

Sound

Much like with the push feeling of these switches, this mysterious housing material that is used in the Obsidian Pros really does separate out the more and less favorable aspects of polycarbonate top housing sounds and keeps the majority of the brighter points. While they do still definitely stand out as switches a bit on the higher pitched and less solid side than, as compared to something like nylon housings, they don't at all have that sharp, piercing style topping out that polycarbonate top housings have become notorious for. The bottoming out doesn't quite share this same sound property, coming in in a significantly more muted but still middle pitched bottoming out, which is likely due purely to mechanical thickness differences between the two housings.

It's worth noting here, as well, that this thinness in the housing collision sound is rather highly tunable to aftermarket lube applications. While I am not personally a fan of going through and over-lubing every switch such that it loses its character, and then subsequently sticking them in foamed out, tape-modded builds to the point that the board loses any semblance of its original character, these switches are definitely ones that this could easily be done for. For those of you who are slightly more cultured, though, these switches are actually rather readily tunable and have a fair degree of variability that can be achieved based on your lube type used, application, and overall care taken.

Wobble

In a switch that is overall rather solid performing, the stem wobble of the Obsidian Pros are their one weakness, albeit a tiny one at that. Coming in with a noticeable, potentially problematic amount of stem wobble that is slightly more N/S than it is E/W, it's enough to mention it here, but not so much that it stands out distinctly opposed to that of other Durock/JWK or other 43Studio switch designs. I would imagine that unless the build these are being used in exasperates stem wobble (such as tall MT3 or SA keycaps) or the user is particularly bothered by stem wobble in the first place, that it likely won't be an issue in its stock form for many people in the community at large.

Measurements

Obsidian Pro Measurements			
Component		Denotation	mm.
Stem	Front/Back Plate Length	A	7.17
	Stem Width	B	5.52
	Stem Length with Rails	C	8.53
	Rail Width	D	2.13
	Center Pole Width	E	1.88
	Rail Height	F	5.07
	Total Stem Height	G	12.25
Bottom Housing	Diagonal Between Rails	L	9.47
	Interior Length Across	M	9.57
	Rail Width	N	2.92
	Center Hole Diameter	O	2.15
Top Housing	Horizontal Stem Gap	X	7.68
	Vertical Stem Gap	Y	5.99
Methods	Number of Switches Used		3
	Replication Per Measurement		3

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 switches to the Obsidian Pros side by side.

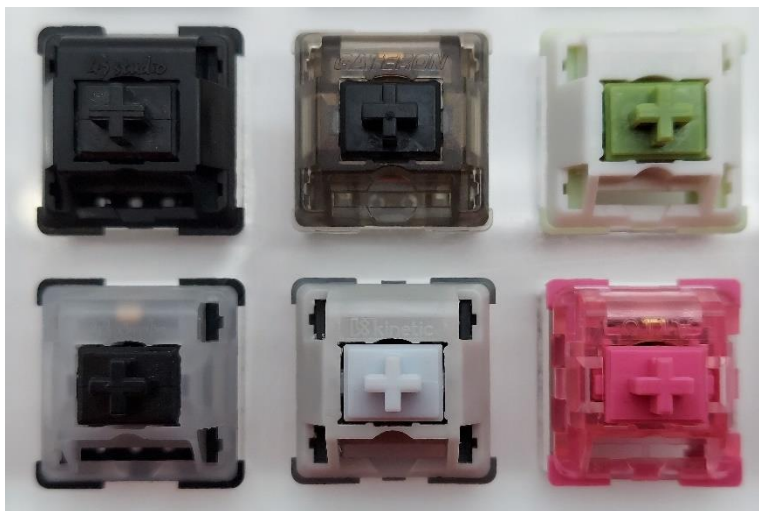


Figure 17: Switches for comparison. (L-R, Top-Bot: Obsidian, Gateron Ink Black V2, Invokeys Matcha Latte, Opblack, Husky, Akko CS Rose Red)

Obsidian

- The topping out of the original Obsidian switches is surprisingly much more thin, pointed, and ‘ploppy’ feeling than that of the topping out of the Obsidian Pro switches.
- In terms of sound, the Obsidian Pros switches have a more ‘full bodied’ sound in that they have elements of both bass and higher pitched sounds whereas the original Obsidians sound more flat and bass focused.
- Surprisingly, in terms of stem wobble I’d say these two switches are rather comparable with perhaps the newer Obsidian Pros having ever so slightly less E/W direction stem wobble than the originals.

Gateron Ink Black V2

- In terms of overall sound, the Obsidian Pro switches have just a tiny bit more of a bass tone to them at topping and bottoming out than that of the Ink V2 switches. As well, Gateron Ink V2 switches also occasionally have a subtle spring ping that I did not notice across my batch of Obsidian Pro V2 switches.
- Regarding stem wobble, these two switches are rather close to each other in terms of N/S and E/W wobble, with the Gateron Ink Black V2s having a minor bit more N/S stem wobble.
- The smoothness of both of these switches is definitely noticeable, though the subtle ‘scratch’ characteristic of the Ink Black V2s feels significantly longer and across the entirety of the stroke than that of the Obsidian Pro V2 switches.

Invokeys Matcha Latte

- The Matcha Latte switches are overall *significantly* quieter than the Obsidian Pro switches in their factory lubed state. In the unlubed state, the Matcha Lattes are definitely still quieter than the Obsidian Pros, but not by nearly as much of a margin.
- The Matcha Latte switches, as well, completely beat out the Obsidian Pro switches in terms of stem wobble in both the N/S and E/W directions.
- Even though the bottoming outs of the two switches have a different firmness and thickness to them, there is a similarity in the ‘sharpness’ of bottoming out, as if they shared the same bottoming out footprint as each other.

Opblack

- In terms of overall sound, the pingy sound-based issues that I noted in my review of the Opblack switches is entirely not present in the Obsidian Pro switches.
- The topping out feeling of the Obsidians is noticeably more sharper and in line with the stereotypical characteristics of that of polycarbonate top housings than the Obsidian Pro switches, which I’ve discussed in length in the review above.
- In terms of overall stem wobble, the latest batches of Opblacks seem to have comparable amounts of stem wobble in both N/S and E/W directions. The one knock I’d have here against Opblacks, though, is that they are much less consistent on this metric across a batch of switches than that of the Obsidian Pros.

Husky

- While similar in overall volume at topping out to the Obsidian Pros, the Husky switches carry a bit more of a ‘plasticky’ type sound to them.
- In terms of stem wobble, the Huskies are better than the Obsidian Pros in both the N/S and E/W directions.
- Out of all of the switch comparisons on this list, the Huskies (which are factory lubed in their stock state) are the only ones to make the Obsidian Pro switches feel and sound scratchy when comparing them closely to each other.

Akko CS Rose Red

- The Akko CS Rose Red switches are overall significantly quieter, deeper, and scratchier sounding than that of the Obsidian Pro Switches.
- While these two switches are both fairly smooth on their own, the Akko CS Rose Red switches feel a bit more towards the ‘overlubed’ side than not when compared directly next to a stock Obsidian Pro switch.
- In terms of stem wobble, in both the N/S and E/W directions, the CS Rose Reds edge out the Obsidian Pro switches.

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.

Obsidian Pro		
<i>Switch Type: Linear</i>		<i>Durock/JWK</i>
30	<i>/35</i>	Push Feel
16	<i>/25</i>	Wobble
7	<i>/10</i>	Sound
14	<i>/20</i>	Context
7	<i>/10</i>	Other
74	<i>/100</i>	Total

Push Feel

These 62g. bottom out, dustproof linear switches from 43Studio are a real case study in how much housing material matters in switches matters. While just a tiny bit scratchy and pointedly thin at bottoming out, these overall fairly smooth, factory unlubed switches have housing collisions reminiscent of the thinness of polycarbonate housings with none of the sharpness, harshness, nor plasticky feeling driven by a new ‘mystery housing material’.

Wobble

For all of the strong points that the Obsidian Pros do have, the stem wobble in both the N/S and E/W directions is unfortunately just a tiny bit lacking. While certainly not an overwhelming amount of stem wobble, it doesn't stand out far from the 'average' Durock/JWK switch.

Sound

Again, following with the push feel notes above, the Obsidian Pros are distinctively high pitched and thin sounding but without any of the harshness, plasticky tones, or sharp and grating noises that turn people away from thin top housings. With only a slight bit of inconsistencies across a batch and subtle scratch sound with them, these are overall impressively unique sounding.

Context

The latest in a long line of switches from 43Studio, a brand working exclusively out of Durock/JWK over their first two years of switch making, these switches definitely are a bold move by the company. Stepping a bit outside of their traditional design palette and with a slightly higher than normal price point, the Obsidian Pros have a strong chance at being one of their better-known switches, even if only narrowly available in the west, currently.

Other

From the dustproof stems, to the strangely light feeling spring weight, and especially the new mysteriously feeling housing material, these are definitely one of the more unique and likely historically impactful switches that 43Studio will ever release, that is if they catch on...

Statistics

Average Score			Obsidian Pro		
26.4	/35	Push Feel	30	/35	Push Feel
16.6	/25	Wobble	16	/25	Wobble
5.6	/10	Sound	7	/10	Sound
12.8	/20	Context	14	/20	Context
6.0	/10	Other	7	/10	Other
67.4	/100	Total	74	/100	Total
Obsidian Pro Overall Rank			T-#35/151 (74/100)		
Obsidian Pro 'Hard' Rank			T-#32/151 (53/70)		
Obsidian Pro 'Soft' Rank			T-#38/151 (21/30)		

Final Conclusions

As a pretty big fan, personally, of the original Obsidian switches that were released what feels like eons ago now by 43Studio, I can say that I had a pretty strong set of initial expectations based on the name of these switches in 'Obsidian Pros'. Based on the reactions of the more switch-oriented people around me as well, I would say I wasn't alone in that set of expectations either. Much like I pointed out in the review above, though, these definitely are not anywhere near what I had expected nor initially hoped for from these switches. Instead of an all-black, brand new Durock/JWK dustproof-stemmed, heavy hitting nylon-style linear switch, what the Obsidian Pros are is a distinctively light feeling, polycarbonate-but-better linear experience. In fact, the subtle differences in the topping and bottoming out on this new material versus traditional housing materials, alone, has left me feeling as if these switches are a pretty solid case study on just how important housing material is in linear switches - you know, the type of switches that 'are all just the same as each other.' That isn't these.

Beyond the switch, itself, the design choices and general expansion in presence of 43Studio leading up to the Obsidian Pro's release also has me relatively excited for what their future holds as a company. While I don't exactly think that they've struck gold with every single switch release they've ever had, I also don't think they're out here just handing out misses either. Especially considering this is now their second switch with a 'mystery housing material', I can broadly applaud them for their willingness to step outside of conventional bounds and to try new stuff from a factory like Durock/JWK that people (yet again) claim makes copies of the same switch over and over. As well, I have some subtle suspicion that we may see this material used again in other, various 43Studio releases throughout 2022 if the usage of the mystery material in Opblacks and Popus is indicative of anything. The Obsidian Pro switches are by far the most exciting switch that 43Studio has released to date, and even though they may not be technically perfect, they are certainly subtly unique standouts among all of the linear switches released over the past few months.

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!**

Further Reading

Obsidian Pro ZFrontier Announcement Page

Link: <https://www.zfrontier.com/app/flow/2wkWlnpO0Mlp>

Divinikey Obsidian Pro Sales Page

Link: <https://divinikey.com/products/43-studio-obsidian-pro-linear-switches>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220219092830/https://divinikey.com/products/43-studio-obsidian-pro-linear-switches>

Qwertyqop Obsidian Pro Sales Page

Link: <https://qwertyqop.com/products/43studio-obsidian-pro-switch>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220219092901/https://qwertyqop.com/products/43studio-obsidian-pro-switch>

"The Switch with No Good Name" ZFrontier Announcement Page

Link: <https://www.zfrontier.com/app/flow/4Xx1dj76JGqJ>

43Studio's Opblack Zfrontier Announcement Page

Link: <https://www.zfrontier.com/app/flow/eN1vGjGvAo5L>

Qwertyqop Rara V2 Sales Page

Link: <https://qwertyqop.com/products/v2-rara-switches>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220219092936/https://qwertyqop.com/products/v2-rara-switches>

KeebCats' Popu Switch Sales Page

Link: <https://keebcats.com/products/43-studio-popu>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220219093014/https://keebcats.com/products/43-studio-popu>

Illumkb 43Studio's Toy Switch Sales Page

Link: <https://illumkb.com/products/toy-switch>

Wayback: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220219093041/https://illumkb.com/products/toy-switch>