

Press Release

KRAIBURG TPE Gears Up Automotive Gear Lever Performance with TPE

Kuala Lumpur, May 2026

Page 1 of 5

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Automotive gear levers serve as a key interface between driver and vehicle, enabling precise control over gear selection. While the internal mechanism governs the actual shifting process, the outer gear lever handle plays a crucial role in driver interaction, influencing comfort, grip, and overall driving experience. A well-designed gear lever surface enhances tactile control and contributes to a more confident and enjoyable drive. The use of thermoplastic elastomers (TPEs) in gear lever handles provides an optimal balance of softness, grip, and durability. With their versatile material properties, TPEs support consistent performance under repeated use while enhancing the perceived quality of [automotive interiors](#).

KRAIBURG TPE, a global manufacturer of TPEs and customized solutions for various industries, offers THERMOLAST® K TPE solutions highly suitable for use as advanced gear lever materials that fulfill performance specifications for automotive applications.

Comfort, Grip, and Long-Term Performance

The [THERMOLAST® K series](#) delivers a soft-touch surface with dry haptics, providing enhanced grip and improved tactile feedback during gear shifting. This contributes to better control and driving comfort, particularly in frequent or prolonged use scenarios. The material maintains consistent surface properties under typical automotive interior conditions, including temperature variations and continuous human contact, ensuring long-lasting performance and user satisfaction.

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Press Release

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Kuala Lumpur, May 2026

Page 2 of 5

Design Flexibility and Process Efficiency

With excellent bonding to PP, PC, ABS and PA, THERMOLAST® K series enables efficient overmolding of soft-touch surfaces onto rigid substrates. This supports streamlined manufacturing of multi-component gear lever designs while allowing greater flexibility in shape, texture, and ergonomic styling. The material is easy to process and suitable for complex geometries, giving automotive designers more freedom to create differentiated [interior components](#).

Aesthetic Appeal and Interior Compliance

Available in natural and black, the THERMOLAST® K series supports a wide range of color customization options, enhancing the visual appeal of vehicle interiors. The materials are formulated to meet stringent automotive interior standards for low odor and [low emissions](#), making them well-suited for enclosed cabin environments. In addition, the compounds are halogen-free and support in-process recycling, contributing to more sustainable manufacturing practices.

Proven Compliance with Automotive Standards

THERMOLAST® K compounds comply with key automotive interior requirements, including fogging (DIN 75201-B), odor (VDA 270 B3), flammability (FMVSS 302), and color fastness (DIN EN ISO 105-B06). They are also approved by major OEMs, including VW 50123, BMW GS 93042, and Mercedes-Benz DBL 1262, ensuring reliability and acceptance in global automotive production.

Press Release

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Kuala Lumpur, May 2026

Page 3 of 5

Sustainability from the get-go

At KRAIBURG TPE, [sustainability](#) drives our innovation. Our portfolio includes bio-based TPEs and compounds with post-consumer (PCR) and post-industrial (PIR) recycled content. Selected TPEs are certified under GRS and ISCC PLUS. We also provide Product Carbon Footprint (PCF) data upon request to support sustainability decisions.

We proudly earned the EcoVadis Gold Medal in 2025 and are committed to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), aligning our goals with global climate action.

From reducing emissions to increasing circularity, our sustainable TPEs deliver reliable performance and are available worldwide to support your applications while advancing your sustainability goals.

Get in touch today to learn how KRAIBURG TPE can support your sustainability and product development journey.

Discover More with TPE: Equip every part of your vehicle, from [car phone holder](#) to [car folding tables](#), with superior performance and innovative design using our TPE solution.

***Disclaimer:** The applications mentioned are illustrative of material capabilities only. Final product suitability and regulatory compliance must be assessed and validated by the customer.*

Press Release

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Kuala Lumpur, May 2026

Page 4 of 5



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For high-resolution photography, please contact Bridget Ngang
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Press Release

KRAIBURG TPE Gears Up Automotive Gear Lever Performance with TPE

Kuala Lumpur, May 2026

Page 5 of 5

KRAIBURG TPE (www.kraiburg-tpe.com) is a global manufacturer of custom thermoplastic elastomers. KRAIBURG TPE was founded in 2001 as an independent business unit of the KRAIBURG Group and is now the industry's competence leader in the field of TPE compounds. The company's goal is to provide safe, reliable and sustainable products for customer applications. With more than 700 employees worldwide and production sites in Germany, the USA and Malaysia, the company offers a large product portfolio for applications in the automotive, industrial and consumer goods industries, as well as for the strictly regulated medical sector. The established THERMOLAST®, COPEC®, HIPEX® and For Tec E® product lines are processed by injection molding or extrusion and offer manufacturers numerous advantages not only in processing but also in product design. KRAIBURG TPE is characterized by its innovative strength, global customer orientation, customized product solutions and reliable service. The company is ISO 50001 certified at its headquarters in Germany and holds ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 certifications at all its sites worldwide.