

Composite Handlebar Care

Kestrel EMS Pro Road Series

Congratulations on your Kestrel purchase! The carbon fiber/aramid construction of your Kestrel EMS Pro handlebar is significantly lighter and stronger than metals and, barring accidents, will stand up to a lifetime of training and racing. This bar will not degrade over time due to fatigue as traditional metal handlebars do. However, composite handlebars require slightly different care than metal ones. Even if you've been working on bikes for years, please take a few minutes to read the following guidelines.

General

Size. Your Kestrel handlebar can be used with stems with either a 25.8 or a 26.0mm diameter clamp, or 31.8mm clamp in the case of our "OS" bars. All standard road brake levers and other accessories will work on your Kestrel handlebar. All size specifications of your Kestrel handlebar are measured using the centerline of the tube. *Clip-on aerobars or similar clamp-on extensions may be used on "EMS Pro" and "EMS Pro/OS" bars. However, our ultralight "EMS Pro/SL" and "EMS Pro SL/OS" bars are NOT approved for clip-on bars.*

Assembly

De-burr. Using a file, sandpaper, or preferably a de-burring tool, remove all sharp burrs from the inside edge of any component installed onto your handlebar such as the stem clamp, brake levers, aero-bar, or bell. Removing the burrs prior to installation will prevent the clear coat on your handlebar from being scratched during installation. This will also prevent a sharp edge from digging into the bar during use, potentially damaging the bar.

Lubrication. Apply grease or, preferably, anti-seize lubricant to all screws on your stem, shift levers, aero bars, or any other accessories attached to your handlebar. Lubrication will ensure that your parts do not become corroded or seize together. This will make any future component changes much easier, and prevent possible damage to your handlebar during un-installment. Also, lightly grease the handlebar and stem where they meet. Grease helps prevent creaking and eases the closure of the stem as the bolts are tightened.

Insertion. Do not force the fit of your Kestrel EMS Pro bar. As with any modern handlebar, twisting the bar into a stem that is too tight will gouge it. The clamp diameter of your Kestrel handlebar is 26.0mm or 31.8mm, the most common sizes for road bike handlebars and stems. Also, install brake clamps and shift lever clamps carefully, to avoid scratching the clear-coat.

Torque. Follow the manufacturer instructions that come with your stem, brake levers, aero-bars or other accessories regarding screw torque specifications. Your Kestrel EMS Pro handlebar is designed to withstand the clamping force of these components. A handlebar is susceptible to damage from the slipping of under-tightened components; such damage is not covered by warranty. *Be sure to torque all bolts evenly and gradually using a pattern so that the stem faceplate is not "pinched" into the bar's carbon surface.*

Maintenance

Tape. When removing old handlebar tape from your Kestrel composite handlebar, *do not slice it off with a razor blade.* Instead, the tape should be unwrapped. *Slicing may damage the paint or cut fibers and weaken your Kestrel EMS Pro composite handlebar.*

Inspection. As with any high performance component, a part of normal maintenance includes inspection for structural damage after an accident or heavy impact, or if you have reason to suspect your Kestrel handlebar could be damaged.

Paint

Caution: Any paint stripper that will remove the epoxy paint on your handlebar will also damage the epoxy resin matrix, which holds your EMS Pro handlebar together. Do not use any paint stripper on your EMS Pro handlebar. If you decide to have your Kestrel product repainted, we recommend hand sanding to remove the decals and scuff the topcoat. Do not bake over 150 degrees F. Do not sand away any composite material. Do not sandblast, bead-blast, or blast with any other media. Media blasting can remove structural composite material, which could make your EMS Pro handlebar unsafe.

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