KitchenAid mixer care guide

A KitchenAid stand mixer will last decades if it is used within its limits and serviced on time. This is everything that matters, on one page.

THE NUMBER ONE RULE

Dough hook: speed 2 only. Never higher.

Kneading above speed 2 is the most common way these mixers get damaged. It overloads the gearbox and strips the worm gear.

Maintenance schedule

After every use	Wipe the body with a damp cloth, wash the attachments and dry them fully before storing.
After sitting unused for a while	Before using it, run it empty on speed 10 for 2 minutes, then wipe away any oil around the beater shaft. Oil separates from the grease when a mixer sits.
Every 6 months	Check the beater clearance with the dime test, snug up the tilt-head hinge pin screw, and look over the cord for cuts or kinks.
Every 3 to 5 years	Re-grease and new gasket. Make it every 2 years if you knead heavy dough most weeks, and sooner if it starts leaking oil or getting noisy.

Do

- Start on Stir and step the speed up gradually.
- Lock the tilt-head, or raise the bowl fully, before switching on.
- Stop the mixer before scraping the bowl or changing attachments.
- Let butter soften, or cut it into small cubes, before mixing.
- Rest the mixer for 30 to 45 minutes if the head is too hot to touch.
- Stay with it while kneading. A loaded mixer can walk across the counter.

Do not

- Do not overfill. Check the flour limit in your manual, and make smaller batches of stiff doughs like bagel or whole wheat.
- Do not keep kneading once the dough is smooth and elastic. Extra time only adds heat and wear.
- Do not put uncoated aluminium attachments in the dishwasher. They turn grey and leave residue in your food.
- Never immerse the mixer or spray it with water.
- Do not keep using it if it is grinding, smells hot or is dripping steadily. A light trace of oil can be wiped away.

The dime test

Put a dime in the empty stainless steel bowl, fit the flat beater and run on Stir. The beater should nudge the dime a quarter to half an inch each pass. If the dime does not move, the beater is too high. If it is pushed around constantly, the beater is too low. Unplug the mixer and turn the adjustment screw (in the neck on tilt-head mixers, on the column on bowl-lift mixers) no more than a quarter turn at a time, then test again.

Stop and get it looked at if

- A steady drip of oil, thick dark grease, or specks in your food
- Grinding, or the beater stops while the motor runs
- Runs at one speed or will not switch off
- Dead, or anything else that seems off