



A 1961 ad markets the Slip 'N Slide to retailers.

“The Accidental Invention of the Slip ‘N Slide”

Adapted from: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/accidental-invention-slip-n-slide-180975236/>

The invention of the Slip ‘N Slide is, perhaps unsurprisingly, the result of some childhood shenanigans. It was the summer of 1960, and Robert Carrier had returned home from work to find his 10-year-old son, Mike, and his friends careening down their driveway in Lakewood, California. To escape the heat, the boys had turned the hose on the painted concrete, creating a cool, slippery surface to play on.

The next day, Carrier, who worked as an upholsterer with a boat-manufacturing company, brought home a 50-foot roll of Naugahyde, which he unraveled on the driveway. The vinyl-coated, waterproof fabric was a vast improvement—slicker and safer—over the perilous

concrete. But Carrier's son had given him an idea. According to Carrier's 1961 patent, the "aquatic play equipment" was a portable surface for the "sport" of body planing. From his original strip of Naugahyde, Carrier took a ream of the plastic material and sewed a tube into the side, forming an "irrigating duct" to which a hose could attach. The duct had punctures along the length of it, from which water could be released via pressure from the hose. Seams stitched across the length of the fabric at regular intervals also carried water laterally, wetting the repellant surface but not making it soggy.

"But if you look at the patent, I mean it is really genius. You attach the hose to one end and then sew the other end shut so that there's pressure, and then you put spaces in between the stitches so that water literally shoots out every inch and lubricates the entire surface of the slide," says Walsh.

"I think it is telling that the Slip 'N Slide comes from Wham-O, a company who brought you the Frisbee, the Hula Hoop and the SuperBall," says Chris Bensch, Vice President for Collections at The Strong National Museum of Play. Wham-O's early TV advertisements made the Slip 'N Slide a summer must-have. Commercials featuring kids flying across their lawns brought the toy—an ordinary package on the shelf—to life. Even in the blurred black and white of a commercial from the 1960s, the footage of happy kids hydroplaning while friends lined up for a turn made a sure sell. "It makes you go like a jet," said the voice over. "It's cool, summer splashing fun...the famous Slip 'N Slide by Wham-O!"

At \$9.95, Slip 'N Slide was much cheaper than day passes for the family to the neighborhood pool. Today, a Slip 'N Slide costs about \$35, depending on the model. The original has been modified to include options like double sliding lanes for racing and various inflatable add-ons to slide through, such as a shark jaw, touchdown goal post, "splash dunk" ball net and a palm tree oasis. As of 2011, more than 30 million Slip 'N Slides had been sold.

Daniel Package labeling now includes an age limit of 12, and explicitly states that the toy is not for adult use. The design also now features an inflatable pool-like reservoir at the end of the slide, intended to prevent hard stops and flips that could cause injury.

1) The picture at the beginning of this article helps readers understand the information written in which paragraph? [CCSS5]

a. Paragraph 4

b. Paragraph 1

c. Paragraph 3

d. Paragraph 2

2) According to this article, the Slip 'N Slide has been modified many ways since it was invented. Which modification was not listed in the article? [CCSS2]

a. A Shark jaw

b. A Touchdown goal post

c. A Palm tree oasis

d. A Book