

The History of the

Sinky[®]

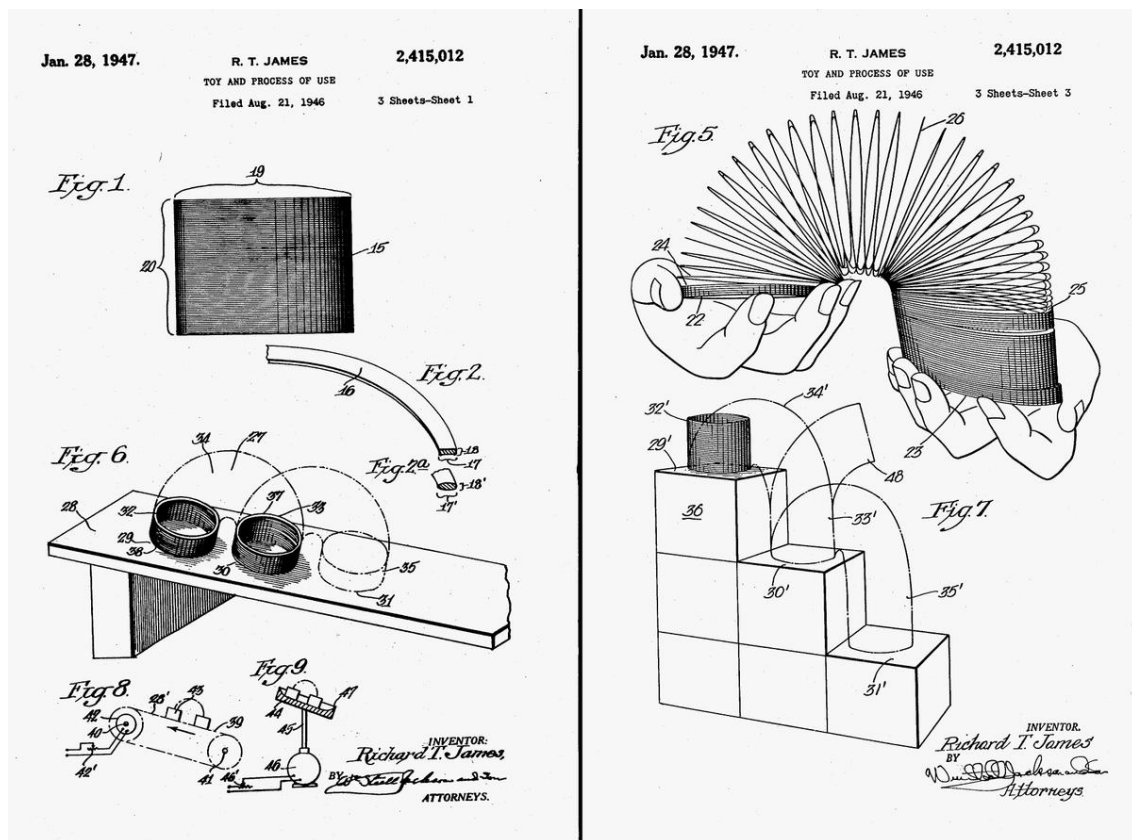


By Kelsey Armstrong

In 1943, there was a mechanical engineer named Richard “Dick” Jones. Richard was working to invent a spring to keep sensitive equipment steady while on a boat in the ocean. He accidentally knocked the spring off of his work table and, to his amazement, the spring walked down a stack of books to the ground.



Richard was intrigued! He wanted to know how this worked and why it walked down to the ground. He tinkered with this idea for over a year by using different metals, wires, spiral sizes, and wire flatness. He finally perfected it in 1945.



Richard and his wife, Betty, decided to show off their new invention. When showing the spring to the Betty realized that the spring had real potential as a children's toy.



Once Richard and Betty knew their toy was going to be a hit, they decided to pursue the idea of selling a toy! First, Betty searched the dictionary thoroughly to invent a name. She chose to name their spring toy, **The Slinky**.



Next, Richard and Betty set off to sell their new invention. They visited dozens of toy stores and none of them were interested in their toy, saying it was boring and that it would not catch a customer's eye. After months of determination, a toy store named *Gimbels* gave them a small display area in November of 1945.



The 400 Slinkys sat on the shelf untouched for weeks. Discouraged but determined, Roger called his wife and asked her to meet him at the toy store because he had received permission to give a demonstration to the kids about how the Slinky worked.



By the time Betty reached *Gimbels* an hour and a half later, Richard had sold all 400 Slinkys for \$1 apiece, and had a line waiting for more! They had done it! People wanted their invention!



Richard and Betty immediately began to produce more Slinkys for the rising demand. By Christmas of that year, the couple had sold over 20,000 Slinkys!



Ever since then, the Slinky's popularity has continued to rise and has remained one of the most commonly purchased toys for over

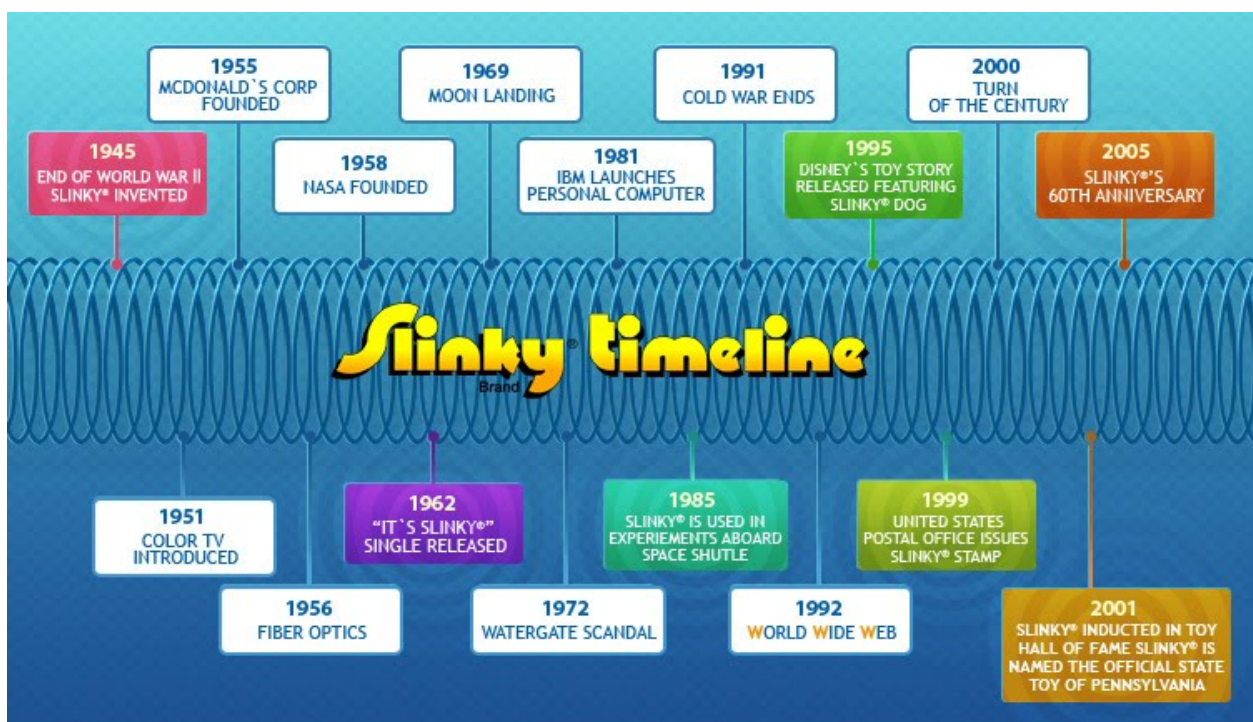
70 years, including the addition of the Slinky Dog in 1952.



The Slinky is mentioned on the list of 100 Greatest Toys of All Time alongside Legos, the Magic 8 Ball, and tons of other great toys. It was also inducted into the Toy Hall of Fame in 2000.



The Slinky has been one of the most successful toys in U.S. history. Here is a timeline documenting the most important or cool moments during the Slinky's existence.



Glossary:

Mechanical Engineer – The branch of engineering dealing with the design and production of machinery.

Intrigued – To achieve or earn by appealing to another's curiosity, fancy, or interest.

Potential – Capable of being or becoming.

Thoroughly – Complete, perfect

Slinky – Made of soft, often clinging material that follows the figure closely and flows with movement.

Determination – Fixing or settling a purpose.

Discouraged – To deprive of courage, hope, or confidence.

Demonstration – A description or explanation, illustrated by examples, or acted out.

Demand – To ask for urgent permission.

Inducted – To bring in as a member.

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Common Core Standards

RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RI.3.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to grade 3 topic or subject area.

RI.3.8 Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).

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