

What do YOU think? - Friction

You can find out more about forces by using objects that roll or slide, and pushing them to see how far they go.

What happens if you push them with different amounts of force?

What happens when you slide them on different surfaces – a polished floor, a carpet, gravel or grass?

What do you notice about how quickly things slow down and how much they keep moving?

It is easy to think that objects need a force to keep them moving. This is not correct. Moving objects slow down because friction slows them down. If there is no friction and no other force acting, then the object will keep on moving in the same direction and at the same speed. We take friction for granted and don't really notice when it is acting. The skateboard slows down because of friction. There is no force to keep the skateboard moving, except when she pushes herself along with her foot.

Can you think of situations where friction is helpful or unhelpful?