Classifying Types of Friction

Friction is a force that opposes the motions of an object. Remember...

- Friction produces heat.
- Friction can slow motion down and cause objects to wear down.
- Friction can be unwanted.
- Friction can be useful.
- Without friction there would be no stopping or changing direction of any motion. We have to have friction – but there are ways to overcome it.

Types of Friction

Static Friction: Friction that acts on an object not in motion – anything at rest.

Rolling Friction: Friction that occurs when an object rolls across a surface on rollers, wheels, or ball bearing.

Fluid Friction: Friction that occurs when objects move through fluids.

Sliding Friction – Friction that occurs when an object slides across a smooth or slick surface.

Try to identify what type of friction is represented by each scenario below.

A book sitting on a table

Pushing a book across the table

A toy car rolling across the floor

Roller skating across a sidewalk

Canoeing down a river



Kayaking across a lake



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