

Water parks began to spring up at lakes and campsites in the late 1960s. These first water parks only had a few slides. The first large-scale water park in the United States was built in Orlando, Florida. George Millay opened Wet 'n Wild in 1977. He is now known as the Father of the Water Park. Wet 'n Wild was open for almost 40 years. Visitors had lots of thrill rides to choose from. They could free fall down a water slide. They could dive into 4-foot (1-meter) waves in a large **wave pool**. Or, they could float on a tube along a lazy river.


Wet 'n Wild in
Orlando, Florida



Designers and engineers must work together to build safe rides for water parks. To build a water slide, designers will first plan and sketch a drawing of the slide. Then, engineers make a model of the slide. Lastly, they build the actual slide. The water slide must go through many test runs to make sure it is safe before people ride it.

An engineer and construction workers build a tube slide at a water park in Russia.



A photograph of a surfer riding a wave in an indoor wave pool. The surfer is shirtless, wearing dark shorts and a cap, leaning forward on a yellow and red surfboard. The wave is a vibrant blue, curling over the surfer, creating a large splash of white water. The background shows the curved, metallic structure of the indoor pool's roof and some tropical plants on the left side.

A surfer rides a wave at Seagaia OceanDome wave pool in Miyazaki, Japan.

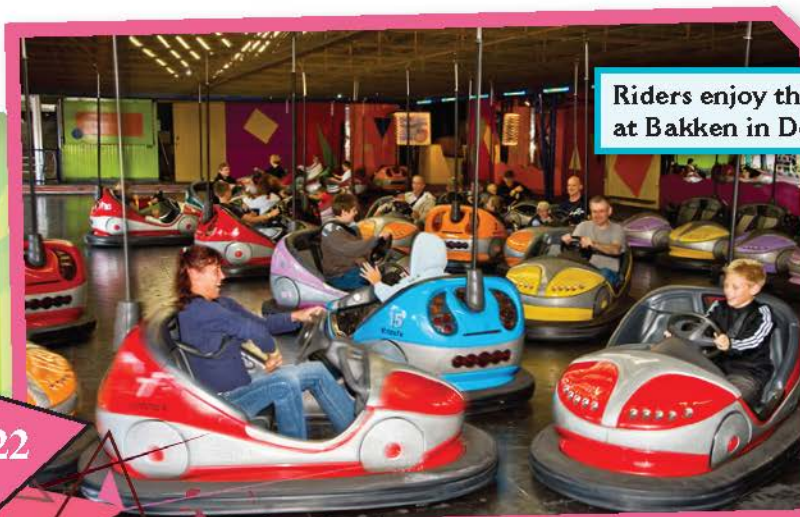
Besides water slides, designers and engineers also build wave pools. Wave pools must create constant waves, similar to how wind blows real waves in an ocean. Sometimes, **pistons** are used to make waves. Short discs within tubes move up and down, sending out blasts of air. This creates waves. The waves gradually move toward the shallow end of the pool. In a wave pool, people can splash and jump their way through waves. Or, they can ride a wave on a surfboard just like they are in the ocean!

Amusement Parks

For the extreme thrill seeker, an amusement park is the place to go. People have been going to these parks for hundreds of years. The world's oldest amusement park is in Denmark. Bakken opened in 1583. It is still running today! Over 2 million people visit the park every year.

This park is known for its setting as well as its age. Bakken means "The Hill." But, its full name means "Deer Park Hill." Bakken is found in the middle of a large forest. There are trees dating back over 400 years. More than 1,000 deer roam free. Most visitors want to enjoy the view of the forest. So, many get to Bakken by foot, bike, or horse and carriage.

Like most amusement parks, Bakken has rides, games, shows, and of course, roller coasters! Bakken's first roller coaster was built in 1932. Before being updated in 2010, this wooden coaster ran with a brakeman. The brakeman sat in the rear of the train and controlled the speed of the coaster. This is much different than the computers used today.



Riders enjoy the bumper cars at Bakken in Denmark.



Burger Bar

MALM

Annekset

kr. 39,-
Appetizers kr. 24,-
Cold cuts kr. 24,-
Sandwiches kr. 24,-
Burgers kr. 24,-

Visitors enjoy a snack underneath Bakken's wooden coaster.