



Bizarre shapes and strange connections make math interesting and nothing is more strangely fascinating than the simplicity and topology of the Möbius strip. The nineteenth-century German mathematician A. F. Möbius discovered that it was possible to make a surface that has only one side and one edge.

Although such an object seems impossible to imagine, making a Möbius strip is very simple: take a strip of ordinary paper and give one end a twist, then glue the two ends together. And there it is. If you begin drawing a line lengthwise down the strip, after one full revolution you will be at the point where you started – but on the opposite side of the strip! Drawing the line through another full revolution will find you back at the beginning.

Möbius strips are fun to play with, but industrial engineers have made good use of the shape as well. Conveyor belts are often designed as Möbius strips so that the surface wears out half as fast.