

# Sliders

## The History and Classic Recipe for an American Food Icon



**A** “Slider” is, in its simplest form, a miniature hamburger, prepared by a cooking method known as “grill steaming”. The originator of this square, greasy, culinary icon is generally credited to J. Walter “Walt” Anderson, co-founder along with Edgar W. “Billy” Ingram of White Castle Hamburger Chain. It was Walt, who came up with the thin, onion-smothered patty that would eventually become White Castle's signature product.

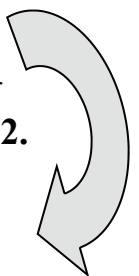
Founded in 1921 in Wichita, Kansas, White Castle is now the oldest operating hamburger fast food restaurant chain in America. Their “hamburger” officially spelled and trademarked as “Sliders” by White Castle, were initially priced at five cents until the 1940s, and remained at ten cents for years thereafter while the meat patty grew ever smaller in size. In fact, when the original burgers sold for only five cents, White Castle periodically ran promotional ads in local newspapers which contained coupons offering five burgers for ten cents, (“takeout only please”.)

The White Castle restaurants themselves took their design cues from the classic Chicago Water Tower building which stands on Michigan Avenue's Magnificent Mile with its octagonal buttresses, towers, and parapet walls. The original White Castle’s buildings however were somewhat “less grand” measuring only 28 feet by 28 feet in size.

Inside these small but bustling restaurants Anderson developed an efficient method for cooking hamburgers, using fresh ground beef and fresh onions. The ground beef was formed into balls by machine, eighteen to a pound. The balls were placed upon a hot grill and topped with a handful of fresh thinly shredded onion. Then they were flipped so that the onion was under the ball. The ball was then squashed down, turning the ball into a very thin patty. The bottom of the bun was then placed atop the cooking patty with the other half of the bun on top of that so that the juices and steam from the beef and the onion would permeate the bun. After grilling, a slice of dill pickle was inserted before serving. Management decreed that any additives, such as ketchup or mustard, were to be added by the customer. Anderson's method is not in use by the chain today, having changed when the company switched from using fresh beef and fresh onion to small, frozen square patties which are cooked atop a bed of re-hydrated onions laid out on a grill. The heat and steam rises up from the grill, through the onions. In 1949, five holes in the patty were added to facilitate quick and thorough cooking. The very thin patties are not flipped throughout this process. This patented “steam grilled” method is completely unique among major fast food restaurants.

These “by the Sack” delicacies are indeed an American food original and enjoyed by millions of Slider Aficionados around the globe.

**Now enjoy them at home with our easy recipe on page 2.**



# Doin' the "Slider"

BUT FIRST, A FEW WORDS ABOUT AUTHENTICITY...

Nowadays, most commercially made Sliders use re-hydrated onions which have been soaked in water and drained. These onions however, lack the sweetness and pungency of "fresh" and as fresh onions are truly the original recipe, we'll defer to them instead. Another modification is that some methods actually start with BOTH the onions and burger patties on a cold grill **then** bringing the grill up to temperature, this method creates more "onion steam" (and juices) under the burgers. It's a bit tricky, you need a very flat griddle and, well, the results don't necessarily justify the effort and time. Lastly, like all classic recipes, ingredients are EVERYTHING! Nino's juicy Slider Burger Patties, paired with our Sweet Onions, Fresh Buns and Crisp Dill Pickle Chips make an unbeatable slider combination!

## STEP BY STEP DIRECTIONS:

1. First of all, you'll need a flat sauté pan or skillet (preferably a non-stick one) with a lid or cover.
2. Brush or spray a small amount of oil on your pan then add a bed of finely shaved (sliced) sweet onions just enough to coat the bottom of the pan.
3. Turn the heat to medium and sauté the onions *just enough* to make them soft and glossy.
4. Before the onions develop **any** color, add the **thawed burger patties** to the pan, one next to another, until the entire surface of the onions is covered with burgers.
5. Cook the burgers about 5 to 7 minutes or until you begin to see juices rising up from the burger meat itself.
6. Next, carefully turn each burger over being careful to capture each burgers own underlying onions (which are now on top).
7. After flipping over all the burgers, place one or more thin dill pickle chips on top of each burger (if you want a "Cheesy Slider", now is the time to add your cheese... before adding the pickle chip/s). And forget about using that fancy, aged cheddar stuff, this is after all a Slider! A Processed American Cheese slice will do nicely.
8. Separate the upper and lower half of each slider bun and place the top half of the bun on each burger followed by the bottom half.
9. Repeat this process with each burger then quickly cover the entire pan of burgers for 2 to 3 minutes to allow the burgers and buns to grill and steam together.
10. Remove the lid and assemble each burger by picking up the bottom side half bun (which is on top), and placing on it the remaining burger patty with onions, pickle and top side of bun. Congratulations!! You've just mastered the art of the perfect slider!!

