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Potential New Nintendo Joystick Design Could Solve Joy-Con Drift

Nintendo may be working on a new joystick revision to fix Joy-Con drift, as revealed by a new patent that was published earlier this week.

BY ROBERT COLLINS PUBLISHED MAR 31, 2023



A newly surfaced patent for a joystick design [Link copied to clipboard](#) Joy-Con drift. The patent, which includes several drawings and an abstract description, sheds light on a revised Joy-Con thumbstick mechanism design that could spell the end of the controller issues Switch players have been suffering for years.

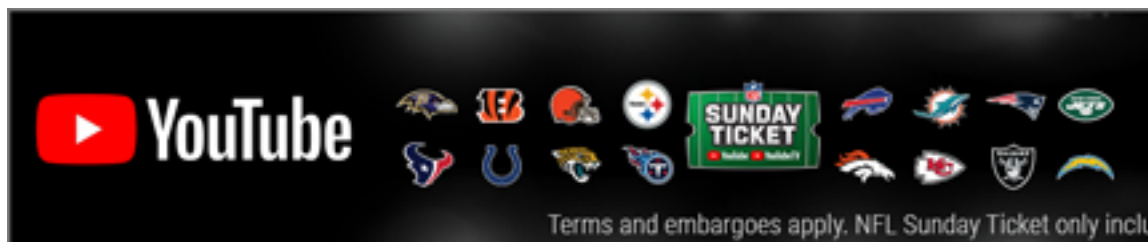


Joy-Con drift is an ongoing hardware issue that has plagued Nintendo's Switch console since its launch over six years ago. Joy-Con drift occurs when the analog control sticks move without player input, resulting in phantom inputs. These can occur when the thumbstick detects movement

[Link copied to clipboard](#) holding the controller.

Dust accumulation beneath the joystick, possibly caused by a grinding action between components, is considered the most likely culprit, though simple wear and tear of contacts has also been blamed. One U.K. consumer group has pointed to a design flaw as the cause. To be clear, the Joy-Con controller is not the only gaming controller to

have this issue, though it seems to be more prevalent in the Joy-Con.



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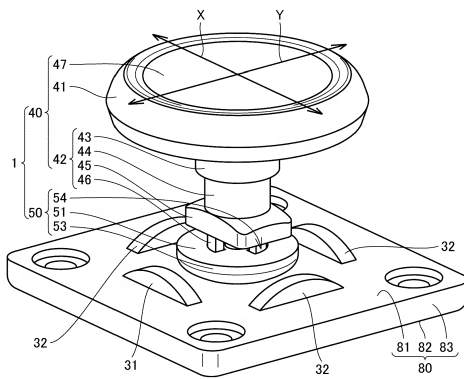
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The patent was published on March 30, and was originally filed in September 2021, suggesting that this new joystick could be in an advanced stage of development. Referred to as "Directional Input Device and Controller" in the patent documentation, the device consists of two sliding

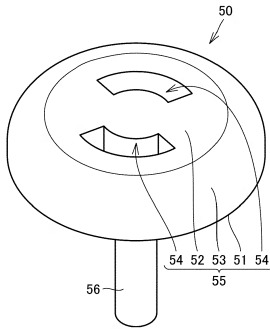
[Link copied to clipboard](#) | sliding surfaces in

addition to various other components. There is also a base and an input part (the thumbstick itself). The sliding mechanisms are intended to result in reduced friction between the components, thereby reducing the grinding between that can cause Joy-Con joystick drift.

【図4】
FIG.4



【図5】
FIG.5



Nintendo has made something of an effort to alleviate this issue for Switch owners, offering free repairs even after warranty expiration.

Nintendo has been the subject of multiple lawsuits over the Joy-Con drift issue, one of

[Link copied to clipboard](#) link in February. It has been reported that nearly half of Switch owners have experienced Joy-Con drift, some having had the problem with multiple controller sets.

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Note that nothing has been announced about this possible Joy-Con revision, although the publishing of this patent likely points to good news for frustrated Switch gamers who've experienced Joy-Con drift. Albeit if a controller drift solution does appear it will come very late in the Switch's lifespan, as the massively popular Link copied to clipboard HYDRA console just celebrated its sixth birthday back a few weeks ago. Of course, there is another intriguing bit of speculation that one might derive from the patent. And that is the possibility that the patent is not really for the Switch controller, but rather for that of its successor. This would suggest that the next Nintendo console might retain much of the same basic design—a Switch

2.0 of sorts. Rumors of a "Switch 2" have been rampant as of late, but in the end only time will tell if and when this new joystick design ultimately surfaces.

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