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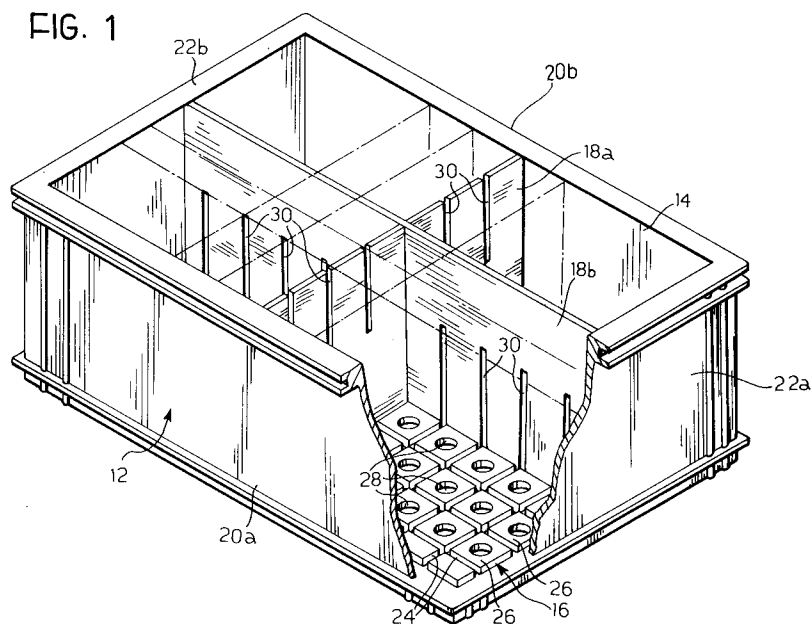
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(54) **Container with removable partitions.**

(57) A container comprises a base (10) and a peripheral wall (12) which define an upwardly-open containing space (14) and at least one partition (18) for dividing the containing space (14) adapted to be inserted in and removed from the containing space (14). The container further includes a base panel

(16) adapted to be located removably on the base (10) and having a plurality of seats, preferably grooves (24), in its face opposite the base (10), it being possible to insert the lower edge of the at least one partition (18) in the seats.

FIG. 1



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The present invention relates to a container of the type comprising a base and a peripheral wall which define an upwardly-open containing space, and at least one partition for dividing the containing space adapted to be inserted in and removed from the containing space.

Known containers of the type mentioned above usually include a plurality of partitions which may be located within the containing space in several predetermined arrangements so as to allow the subdivision of the space to be varied according to the type of object to be contained therein.

The object of the present invention is to provide a container of the type indicated above in which the positioning of the partitions in the containing space is facilitated and made quicker.

This object is achieved by virtue of a container of the type indicated above, characterised in that it includes a base panel intended to be located removably on the base and having, on its face opposite the base, a plurality of seats, preferably grooves, in which the lower edge of the at least one partition can be inserted.

The grooves formed in the base panel of the container of the invention constitute reference guides for the lower edges of the partitions, facilitating their quick location in the space in the desired configuration.

The presence of the base panel has the further advantage of stiffening the structure of the container so as to extend its use to containing heavier objects.

The panel, which is the part of the container most likely to be soiled, being removable, may also facilitate washing, disinfection and the like. The container is thus more versatile in use and may be used to contain dirty objects without compromising its subsequent use for containing clean objects.

Further advantages and characteristics of the present invention will become clear from the detailed description which follows, provided purely by way of non-limitative example, with reference to the appended drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the container of the invention in an assembled configuration, and

Figure 2 is an exploded perspective view of the container of Figure 1.

A container comprises a base 10 and a peripheral wall 12 which define an upwardly-open containing space 14, a base panel 16 and a plurality of partitions 18a, 18b for dividing the containing space 14 and which can be inserted in and removed from the latter.

The base 10 is rectangular while the peripheral wall 12 is formed by four rectangular elements 20a, 20b; 22a, 22b, in two facing pairs, which project upwardly from respective edges of the base 10.

The base panel 16, which is intended to be located removably on the base 10, is rectangular and has dimensions corresponding to those of the latter. On its face opposite the base 10, it has a grid of intersecting grooves 24 oriented in two principle directions perpendicular to each other and parallel to respective edges of the panel 16.

These grooves 24 divide the face of the panel 16 opposite the base 10 into a plurality of square compartments 26 in each of which there is formed a respective hole 28 for facilitating the positioning of objects in the space 14.

The holes 28 also allow any liquids associated with the objects contained in the space 14 to drain onto the base 10.

The partitions 18a, 18b are rectangular and divided into two sets of different dimensions corresponding to those of the pairs of elements 20a, 20b; 22a, 22b respectively constituting the peripheral wall 12.

The partitions 18a, 18b of each set have a plurality of equispaced slots 13 extending from that edge intended to face the partitions 18b, 18a of the other set so as to allow their mutual interpenetration once the partitions 18a, 18b have been positioned in the space 14 with each lower edge inserted in one of the grooves 24 and their edges contiguous with their lower edges in contact with the elements 20a, 20b; 22a, 22b forming the peripheral wall 12.

The base 10, the peripheral wall 12, the partitions 18a, 18b and the base panel 16 may, for example, be made of plastics material, a container thus being formed which is both very light and has good mechanical strength at the same time.

Clearly, according to the type of objects to be introduced into the space 14, the partitions 18a, 18b may be arranged in correspondence with respective grooves 24 in such a manner as to optimise the subdivision of the space 14.

It is, for example, possible to insert the lower edge of a partition 18a, 18b in each groove 24 so as to divide the space into elongate parallelepipeds, each having one of the compartments 26 as its base, or to use a smaller number of partitions 18a, 18b, as illustrated in the drawings, so as to subdivide the space 14 into portions of dimensions which may differ from each other.

To select the optimum arrangement of partitions 18a, 18b within the space 14, a computer program may be used.

Naturally it is understood that, the principle of the invention remaining the same, the constructional details and forms of embodiment may be varied widely with respect to that described and illustrated in the drawings, without thereby departing from the scope of the present invention. For example polygonal, even irregular polygonal, con-

ainers may be used with base panels having grooves which are inclined to each other and/or curved. Moreover, holes or apertures of a desired shape, formed in the base panel, may constitute alternative seats for the insertion of lower portions of the partitions having profiles corresponding to those of the holes or apertures.

Still further, a second panel similar to the base panel may be used as a lid of the container, allowing to obtain a closed package.

Claims

1. A container comprising a base (10) and a peripheral wall (12) which define an upwardly-open containing space (14), and at least one partition (18) for dividing the containing space (14) and adapted to be inserted in and removed from the containing space (14), the container being characterised in that it includes a base panel (16) intended to be located removably on the base (10) and having, on its face opposite the base (10), a plurality of seats, preferably grooves (24), in which the lower edge of the at least one partition (18) can be inserted.
2. A container according to Claim 1, characterised in that a plurality of holes (28) is formed in the base panel (16) for facilitating the positioning of objects in the containing space (14).
3. A container according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the base (10) is rectangular and the peripheral wall (12) is formed by four rectangular elements arranged in facing pairs (20a, 20b; 22a, 22b) which project upwardly each from a respective edge of the base (10), and in that the base panel (16) is rectangular and, on its face opposite the base (10), has a grid of intersecting grooves (24) oriented in two principle mutually-perpendicular directions parallel to respective edges of the panel (16).
4. A container according to Claim 3, characterised in that the intersecting grooves (24) divide the face of the panel (16) opposite the base (10) into a plurality of square compartments (26) in each of which there is a respective hole (28).
5. A container according to any one of the preceding Claims 3 or 4, characterised in that it includes two sets of rectangular partitions (18a, 18b) of different dimensions corresponding respectively to those of the pairs of elements (20a, 20b; 22a, 22b) constituting the side walls

(12) and intended to be positioned parallel to the elements (20a, 20b; 22a, 22b) of the side wall (12) of the corresponding dimension, the partitions (18a, 18b) of each set having a plurality of equispaced slots (30) extending from the edge intended to face the partitions (18b, 18a) of the other set so as to allow the interpenetration of the partitions (18a, 18b) of the two sets.

6. A container according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that the base (10), the peripheral wall (12), the partitions (18a, 18b) and the base panel (16) are made of plastics material.
7. A container according to any one of the preceding claims, characterised in that it comprises a second panel used as a lid of the container.

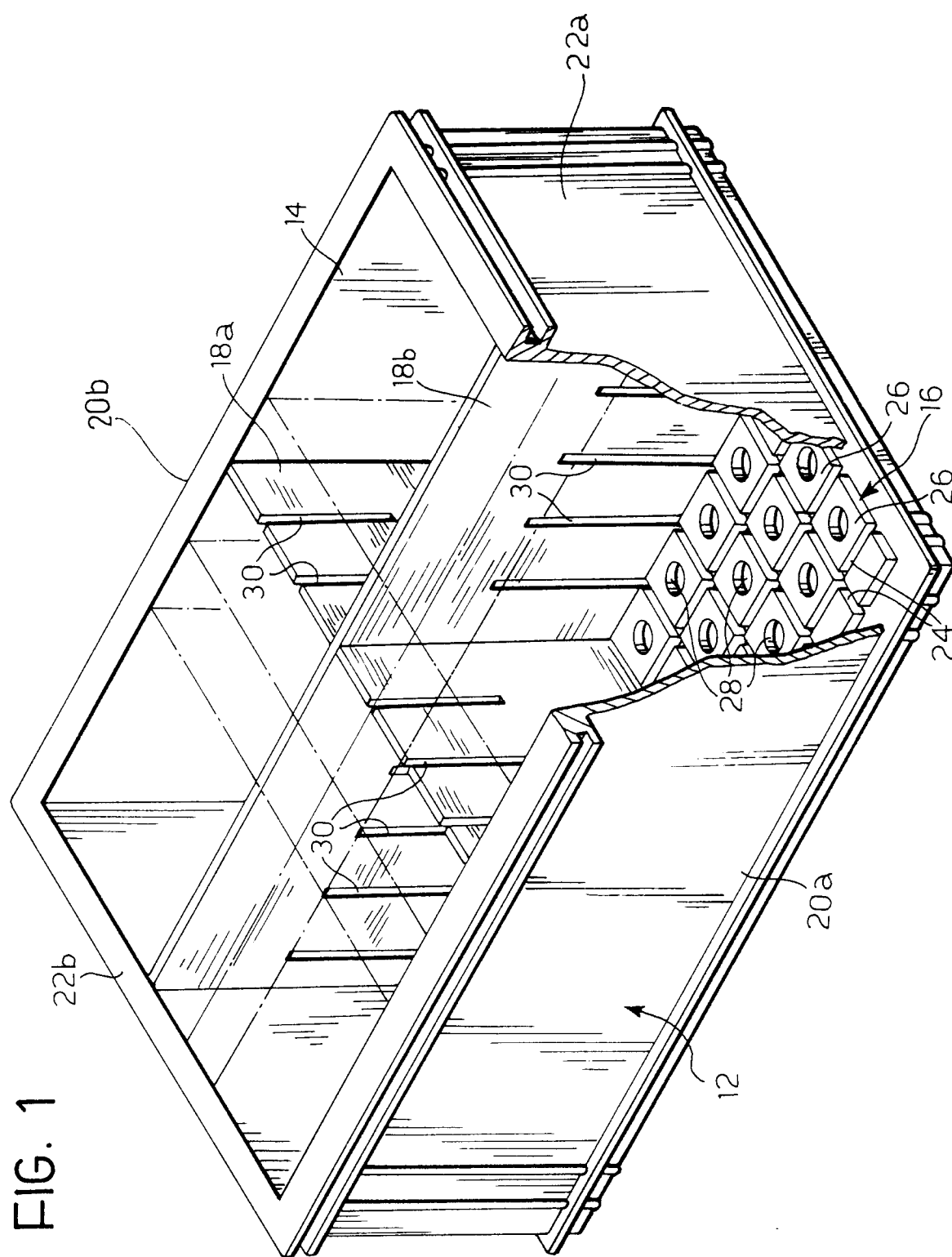
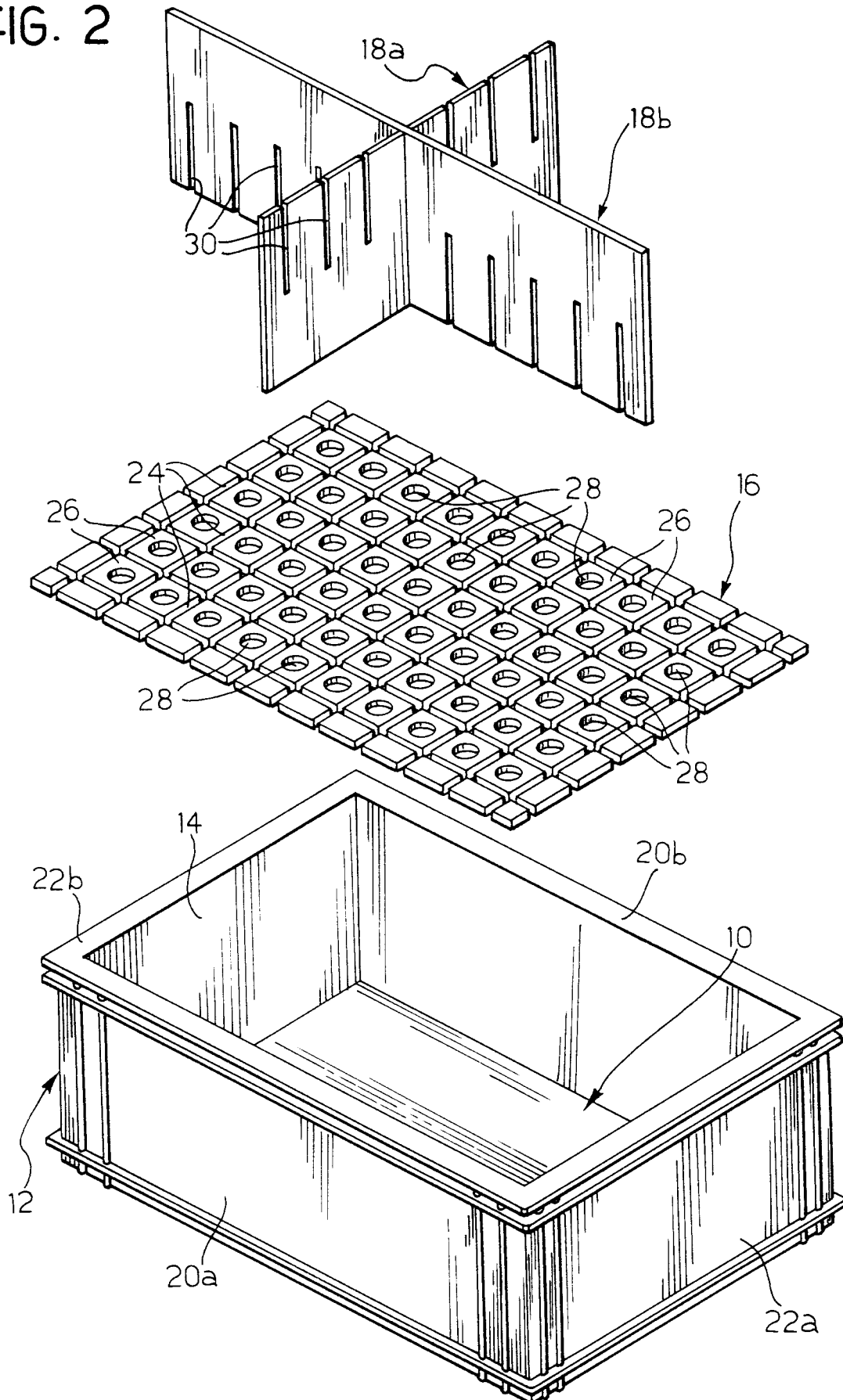


FIG. 2





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 94 11 7065

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
X	FR-A-1 223 596 (SKIN-PACK) * the whole document * ---	1,3	B65D25/06
X	US-A-4 779 752 (VALLEE ET AL.) * abstract; figures * ---	1	
X	FR-A-2 619 360 (ABOUT) * abstract; figures * ---	1	
A	WO-A-84 03268 (MENASHA CORP.) * the whole document * ---	1,3,5-7	
A	DE-A-40 14 734 (MTU GMBH) * column 5, line 1 - line 6; figures 1,9 * -----	1,3	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			B65D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 7 February 1995	Examiner Gino, C
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			