



Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11)

EP 0 791 312 A2

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
27.08.1997 Bulletin 1997/35

(51) Int Cl.⁶: **A47B 88/00, A47B 87/02,
B42F 7/12, A47B 67/04**

(21) Application number: **97301129.9**

(22) Date of filing: **21.02.1997**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
BE DE ES FR IE IT NL

(72) Inventor: **Griffiths, Roger Steven**
Wick, Vale of Glamorgan CF7 7QM (GB)

(30) Priority: **23.02.1996 GB 9603864**

(74) Representative: **Cooke, William Douglas**
Hughes Clark & Co.
P.O. Box 22
114/118 Southampton Row
London WC1B 5AA (GB)

(71) Applicant: **Diaplastics (UK) Limited**
Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan CF31 3YN (GB)

(54) Modular drawer units

(57) A modular drawer unit is described comprising a housing (1) with a removable upper wall (2). Sliding within the housing is a drawer (3) supported on separate rollers (4) located in recesses (5). Grooves (6) are moulded in the base of drawer to guide the rollers (4) on opening and closing of the drawer (3). The unit may be mounted on removable castors (7) with spigots (8)

located in sockets in the base of the housing. An inner wall (9) of the housing has a catch formed from a resilient prong (10) engaging the upper rear wall (11) of the drawer. The sides and rear wall have integral handles (12). The front of drawer has a fascia plate (14) with apertures (15) through which handle (16) passes. The plate (14) has a hole (18) for a pivot pin (19) of a latch (20) to lock the drawer in the housing.

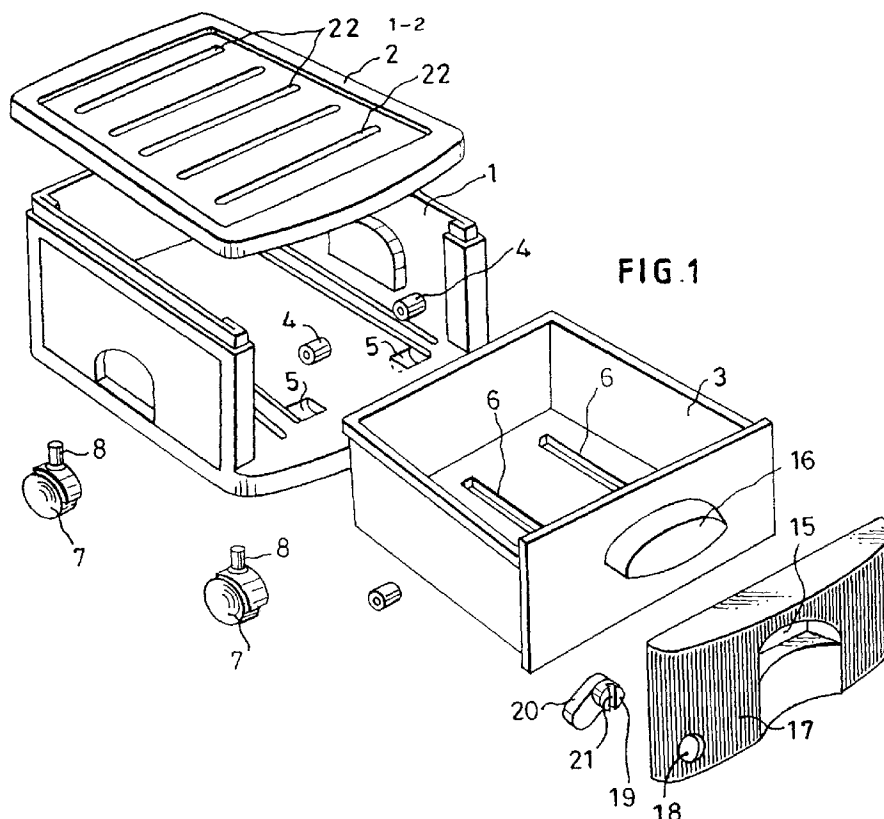


FIG. 1

EP 0 791 312 A2

Description

This invention relates to a drawer unit and more particularly to a modular drawer unit which can be assembled to form a stack.

Various types of stackable drawer units are available, many of which are held together by a frame or are permanently mounted in a fixed arrangement.

An aim of the present invention is to provide a modular drawer unit which can be used individually or can be readily assembled or dismantled with other units to produce an attractive assembly.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided at least one modular drawer unit comprising a generally rectangular housing with a removable upper wall and a drawer slidable in the housing, wherein the drawer has friction reducing means to facilitate the sliding movement of the drawer relative to the housing the drawer front having a replaceable fascia.

Conveniently the upper housing wall and the drawer fascia clip onto the housing and drawer with a frictional fit.

Preferably, the friction means are separate roller or rollers located in recesses in the housing or drawer unit respectively.

The drawer in a preferred construction has releasable means to hold the drawer in its closed position.

Preferably, the removable upper wall of the housing has a plurality of recesses to facilitate location and assembly of a modular unit stacked above a lower modular unit.

The or each modular unit has sockets to receive removable castors to support a single or lower modular unit in an assembly, or stack to allow for the transportation of the single unit or stack.

The sides and fascia for the drawer may include ornamental surface decoration.

In a preferred construction of the or each modular drawer unit the sides and rear walls of the housing have recesses for form handles to lift and carry the or each unit.

The lower wall of the housing conveniently has integrally moulded projections when extend below the lower wall of the housing to locate in the recesses in the upper wall of the housing.

In a preferred construction the drawer fascia has an aperture through which projects a handle moulded in the front of the drawer.

Embodiments of the modular drawer unit and assembled units will now be described by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is an exploded perspective view of the modular drawer unit, according to the invention;

Fig. 2 is a front elevation of the drawer unit shown in Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a side elevation of the drawer unit shown

in Figs. 1 and 2; and

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of an assembly of modular drawer units of three different sizes.

5 The modular drawer unit comprises a generally rectangular housing 1 with a removable upper wall 2. Sliding within the housing is a drawer 3 which is supported on separate rollers 4 located within arcuate recesses 5. Grooves 6 are moulded in the base of the drawer 3 to guide the rollers 4 on opening and closing of the drawer 3.

10 The modular drawer unit may be mounted on removable castors 7 having spigots 8 which locate in sockets (not shown) moulded in the base of the housing 1. The inner rear wall 9 of the housing has a moulded catch in the form of a resilient prong 10 which engages the upper edge of the rear wall 11 of the drawer 3. The drawer 3 rests in the closed position by location of recesses (not shown) in the base of the housing 1.

20 The housing 1 and drawer 3 are moulded from ABS plastics material providing rigid and robust mouldings which can be manufactured to close tolerances. The sides and, in larger drawer units, the rear wall have integrally moulded handles 12. The area surrounding the handles 12 is moulded with a surface pattern of vertical ribs 13. The front of the drawer 3 is fitted with a fascia plate 14 with an aperture 15 through which a handle 16, moulded with the front wall of the drawer, passes. The area of the fascia surrounding the handle is moulded with the same surface ornamentation in the form of ribs 17 as the side and rear walls of the housing.

25 The fascia plate 14 has a circular hole 18 passing therethrough in which is located a pivot pin 19 of a latch 20. The end of the pin having a slot 21 to pivot the latch 20 into engagement with the housing 1 to lock the drawer in the housing.

30 The upper wall 2 of the housing 1 has a series of lateral grooves 22 which serve as locating recesses for integrally moulded projections 23 formed in the base of an upper module stacked thereon. A number of modules can be stacked one above the other as shown in Fig. 4. The individual modules can be of different widths and heights to provide a variety of modules which can be assembled to fit a particular requirement.

35 The modular drawer units have a wide variety of uses, for example, they may be used as individual storage units on a desk in an office environment or as a stack below a desk surface. Another use would be as a stack of three modules forming a bedside cabinet. One or more wide modules can also be positioned under the bed to store *e.g.*, bed linen. A matching assembly of the modules can be located in a wardrobe to store small items of clothing or shoes.

40 It will be understood that the modular drawer unit can be moulded in different colour ABS, for example, the removable upper wall of the housing and the drawer fascia plate may be made in one colour and the housing and drawer of another colour.

Alternatively, the whole of the module can be made in one colour so that the assembly can be made up of different colour units to provide attractive and robust items for storage.

Claims

1. A modular drawer unit comprising at least one modular drawer unit, a generally rectangular housing (1) with a removable upper wall (2) and a drawer (3) slidable in the housing (1), characterised in that the drawer (3) has friction reducing means (4) to facilitate the sliding movement of the drawer (3) relative to the housing (1), the drawer front having a replaceable fascia (14). 10
2. A modular drawer unit as claimed in Claim 1, characterised in that the upper housing wall (2) and the drawer fascia (14) clip onto the housing (1) and drawer (3) with a frictional fit. 20
3. A modular drawer unit as claimed in Claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the friction means (4) is or are separate roller or rollers (4) located in recesses (5) in the housing (1) or drawer unit respectively. 25
4. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the drawer (3) has releasable means (10) to hold the drawer (3) in its closed position. 30
5. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the removable upper wall (2) of the housing (1) has a plurality of recesses (22) to facilitate location and assembly of a modular unit stacked above a lower modular unit. 35
6. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the or each modular unit has sockets to receive removable castors (7) to support a single or lower modular unit in an assembly, or stack to allow for the transportation of the single unit or stack. 40
7. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the sides and fascia (14) for the drawer (3). 45
8. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the or each modular drawer unit, the sides and rear walls (9) of the housing (1) have recesses (15) for handles (12) to lift and carry the or each unit. 50
9. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the lower wall of the housing (1) has integrally moulded projections (23) 55

which extend below the lower wall of the housing (1) to locate in the recesses (22) in the upper wall of the housing (1).

10. A modular drawer unit as claimed in any preceding claim, characterised in that the drawer fascia (14) has an aperture (15) through which projects a handle (16) moulded in the front of the drawer.

