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(54) **Water color painting kit**

(57) A water color painting kit is disclosed having a central body (12), a palette (14) detachably engagable with the central body and a variety of brushes. The central body defines a plurality of water supply chambers (22) therein. The palette (14) includes a color supply portion that carries a variety of color blocks (30). The color blocks (30) are secured to a base member (50) that snap fits into openings in the palette (14). The base

member (50) has a extension to facilitate the removal and insertion of the base member. In a working configuration, guides located on the palette (14) engage slits on the central body to connect the palette with the central body (12). In a storage configuration, the palette is disengaged from the central body and stored on the water supply chamber (22). In a multiple-user embodiment, the kit includes a plurality of palettes engaged with the central body.

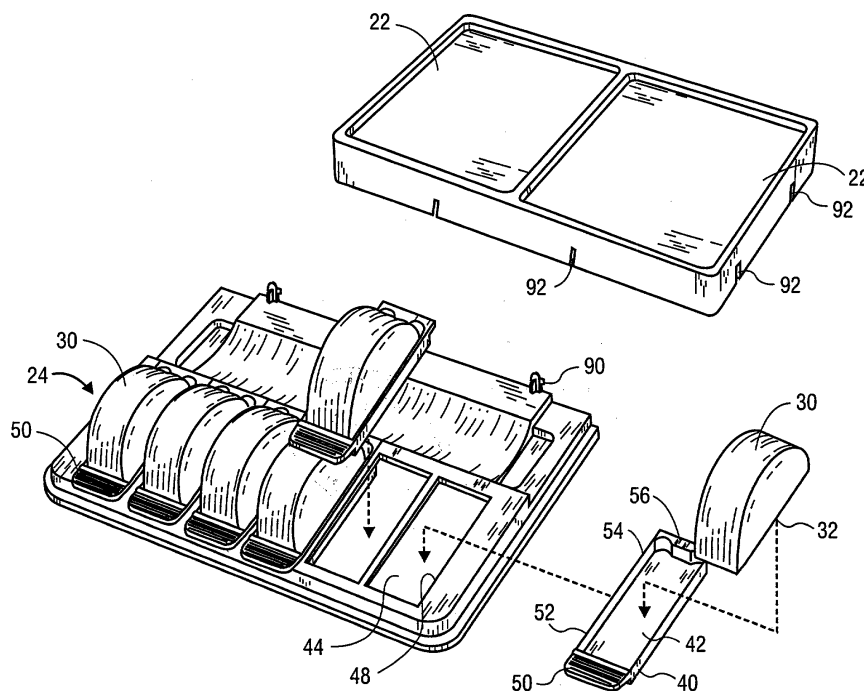


FIG. 2

Description

BACKGROUND

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to painting kits, and more particularly to a water color painting kit for children.

Background of the Invention

[0002] Painting with water colors generally involves the use of a water bath, a paint brush having a bristle end, and a palette having a variety of water color paints provided therein. Typically, the water bath and palette are separate units that need to be collected in preparation for painting. If there are multiple painters, each painter has a water bath a palette, and at least one paint brush. To prevent the separation or loss of the painting equipment, it is desirable to provide a water color painting kit that maintains the equipment for multiple painters in an organized fashion in one location.

[0003] In a typical palette, the water color paints are provided in round containers that are spaced from each other and integral with the palette. Each water color paint generally has the same shape as the container and is flush with the sides of the container. To paint, the paint brush is wetted by dipping it in a water bath, then brushed onto a selected water color paint where the paint is transferred to the brush, and then brushed onto the painting surface where the paint is transferred from the brush to the painting surface. A standard set of paints are provided from which the painter may select. Typically, it is not possible to replace individual paints in the palette. Painters generally have a preference for certain colors of paints on the palette. If a painter does not like a particular color, he or she cannot replace it with a more desirable one. As a result, the preferred colors are utilized more often and depleted faster. To replenish the preferred colors, it will be necessary to replace the entire palette because the paints are integrally attached to the palette making it impossible to replace individual paints. To avoid having to replace the entire palette, it would be desirable to have a palette with replaceable paints, each of which can be individually replenished when finished. Furthermore, the replaceable paints would allow the painters to include only preferred colors in the palette.

[0004] When the painter is finished, the painting equipment is stored for future use. To facilitate storage, it is desirable to provide a water color painting kit having a storage configuration for storing the various painting equipment in an organized manner.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] A water color painting kit is disclosed having a central body, a palette detachably engagable with the

central body, and a plurality of brushes. The central body defines a plurality of water supply chambers therein. The palette includes a color supply portion that carries a variety of color blocks. The color blocks are secured to a base member that engageably fits into openings in the palette. In one embodiment of the invention, the base member has a lip about the periphery thereof to align the base member in the opening of the palette when the base member is engaged therein.

[0006] The base member has an extension to facilitate the removal and insertion of the base member. To remove the base member from the opening, an upward force is applied to the extension causing the base member to be removed from the opening. To insert the base member into the opening, a downward force is applied to the extension until the base member is inserted in the opening. A detent may be provided on the base member to secure the base member in the opening in a snap-fit fashion.

[0007] In a working configuration, guides located on the palette engage slits on the central body to connect the palette with the central body. In a storage configuration, the palette is disengaged from the central body and stored on the water supply chamber.

[0008] In another embodiment of the invention, a water supply kit is provided for use by multiple users. In this configuration, the water supply kit includes a central body having a plurality of water supply chambers and a plurality of palettes detachably engaged with the central body. The number of water supply chambers preferably corresponds with the number of palettes. Each palette has a guide located thereon to engage corresponding slits on the central body. In a storage configuration, each palette disengages from the central body and is stored in a respective water supply chamber.

[0009] Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from the following detailed description. It is to be understood, however, that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the present invention, are given by way of illustration and not limitation. Many changes and modifications within the scope of the present invention may be made without departing from the spirit thereof, and the invention includes all such modifications.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The invention may be more readily understood by referring to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the water color painting kit of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the water color painting kit of FIG. 1 shown with the color palette separated from the central body of the present invention; FIG. 3 depicts a preferred embodiment of the stor-

age configuration of the water color painting kit of the present invention;

FIG. 4 depicts a side view of a preferred embodiment of the base member of the present invention having detents thereon;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of the multiple-user water color painting kit of the present invention;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the water color painting kit of FIG. 5 shown with the color palette separated from the central body of the present invention; FIG. 7 depicts a preferred embodiment of the water color painting kit of the present invention in a storage configuration.

[0011] Like numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0012] A preferred embodiment 10 of the water color painting kit of the present invention is shown in Figure 1. The kit 10 preferably includes a central body 12, a palette 14 detachably engagable with the central body 12, and a plurality of brushes 16, 18, and 20. The central body 12 is preferably formed of molded plastic and includes a water supply chamber 22 formed therein. In the embodiments shown in Figures 1 through 3, the kit 10 is adapted for a single-user and includes one palette 14. The central body 12 has two water supply chambers 22 divided by a partition 21. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the single-user kit includes a single palette 14 and a single water chamber 22. In the embodiment shown in Figures 5 through 7, the kit 10 is adapted for use by multiple users. Specifically, Figures 5 through 7 show a water color painting kit adapted for four painters and includes four palettes 14 and four water supply chambers 22. It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments depicted and can be modified to accommodate any number of palettes and water supply chambers. 26. The tray

[0013] Each palette 14 includes a color supply portion 24 and a tray 26. The tray can be used as a resting place for brushes when not in use. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the tray 26 has a concave upper surface 28 to retain any excess liquid from the brushes when the wet brushes are placed thereon. The color supply portion 24 of the palette includes a plurality of color blocks 30. Each color block 30 is preferably a solid mass of water color paint material having a semi-circular cross-section and the bottom 32 of the color block, as best shown in Figures 2 and 6, is preferably rectangular in shape. The color blocks 30 are available in a variety of colors such as red, blue, yellow, green, and purple. The color blocks may be provided in any desired color and are not limited to those listed here. The selected colors are preferably coordinated with adjacent color

blocks and, for children particularly, include relatively bright colors to attract and maintain the interest of younger painters.

[0014] As best shown in Figures 2 and 6, the individual color blocks 30 are secured to a base member 40. The base member 40 preferably includes a recess 42 dimensioned to receive the bottom 32 of the color block 30. To ensure that the color block 30 is secured in the recess 42 of the base member 40, a securement element, such as an adhesive or other suitable element, is provided. The color block 30 is preferably releasably secured to the base member 40 to allow removal of the color block from the base member, when desired.

[0015] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, as shown in Figures 2 and 6, the color supply portion 24 of the palette 14 preferably includes a plurality of rectangular openings 44, each opening 44 dimensioned to receive a base member 40. The dimensions of the opening 44 are preferably substantially the same as the base member 40 to allow the base member 40 to be snap fit or press fit into the opening 44. The color supply portion 24 and the base member 40 are made of a compliant material to facilitate the snap fit of the base member 40 into the opening 44 of the color supply portion 24. In one embodiment of the invention, the color supply portion 24 and the base member 40 are constructed of molded plastic.

[0016] The base member 40 preferably includes an extension 50 to facilitate the removal of the base member 40 from the opening 44 of the color supply portion 24. In Figure 2, extension 50 is shown extending outward from the palette, away from tray 26. In a preferred embodiment, extension 50 extends inward (not shown), toward tray 26. To remove the base member 40, the user exerts an upward force on the extension 50, causing the base member 40 to pop out of the opening 44. The extension 50 can also be used to facilitate insertion of the base member 40 into the opening 44. To install the base member 40 in the color supply portion 24 of the palette 14, the base member 40 is aligned with the opening 44 and a downward force is placed on extension 50, such that the base member 40 is snap fit into the opening 44.

[0017] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the base member 40 includes a lip 56 that rests against the edge 48 of the opening 44 to limit the downward motion of the base member. In one embodiment of the invention, the lip 56 extends along the perimeter of the base member 40. In another embodiment of the invention, the lip 56 is positioned at the back end 54 of the base member 50 and the extension is positioned at the front end 52 of the base member 50.

[0018] To ensure that the base member 40 is securely retained in the opening 44, the base member 40 is preferably provided with detents 46 (as shown in Figure 4). Detents 46 engage with the edge 48 of opening 44 to provide a friction fit on press fit and to limit the movement of the base member 40 relative to the opening. Specifically, when the base member 40 is snap fit into opening

44, the detents 46 move past the opening edge 48, such that the edge 48 is positioned between the detents 46 and the extension 50. The position of the edge 48 between the detents 46 and the extension 50 restricts the movement of the base member in the vertical direction. In Figure 4, the detents 46 are shown on the front end 52 of the base member. In another preferred embodiment of the invention, the detents 46 are also provided in the back end 54 of the base member 50.

[0019] The removable base members 50 enable a user to change the order of the color blocks 30 on the palette 14. Moreover, an individual color block 30 may be replaced without the need to replace the entire palette 14. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the base member 50 is reusable and when the color block therein is depleted, a new color block 30 can be provided in the base member 50. In an alternative embodiment, the base member is disposable. Upon depletion of a color block, the base member is disposed and replaced with a new color block adhered to a new base member.

[0020] As shown in Figure 1, the brushes 16, 18, and 20 in the kit 10 are width preferably of substantially the same construction and differ only in the width of the painting edge. The small brush 16 preferably has a head 60 that has a width which matches the width of a single color block 30; the medium brush 18 preferably has a head 62 with a width matching that of two color blocks; and the large brush 20 preferably has a head 64 dimensioned to match three color blocks. The present invention is not intended to be limited to the number of brushes and the precise width of brushes described herein. It is envisioned that the kit 10 may be provided with any number of brushes in various widths depending on the preference of the user.

[0021] Each brush preferably includes a blade 68 and a spindle or rod-like handle 66 secured to the blade 68. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the blade 68 and the handle 66 are formed of a suitable molded plastic. The blade 68 preferably has a slightly tapered cross-section extending downwardly from the handle 66 to a relatively thin, rounded outer painting edge 68. The blade 68 is covered by a relatively thin water absorbent cover 70. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the cover 70 is made of a sponge plastic material, such as a soft polyurethane, having a thickness of about one-half centimeter. The thickness may vary, with the particular material used. The thickness of the water absorbent cover 70 should be selected to allow the cover to retain sufficient water to pick-up dissolved color material from the color blocks 30 without leaving excessive water on the color blocks or on the article to which the color is applied. The cover 70 is preferably adhesively secured to the blade 68.

[0022] In the embodiment shown in Figures 1 through 3, central body 12 includes two water supply chambers 22. In the embodiment shown in Figures 5 through 7, central body 12 includes four water supply chambers 22. Each chamber 22 preferably includes a water control el-

ement 80. The water control elements 80 are water absorbent blocks, preferably made of the same sponge material as the cover 70 of the brushes. In a preferred embodiment, each 80 chamber 22 has a rectangular configuration and the water control element 80 has a similar rectangular configuration. The water control element 80 is preferably of a slightly greater length and width and is pressed downwardly into the chamber 22 and held therein as a result of the slight compression force on the water control element.

[0023] In use, the water supply chamber 22 is filled with sufficient water to saturate the bottom portion of the water control element 80. The upper surface 82 of the water control element is exposed and accessible to the painting edge 68 of the brush. The length of each chamber 22 and the water control element 80 is preferably greater than the widest brush head to allow the entire brush head to contact the water control element. The chambers preferably contain sufficient water to maintain the upper surface 82 of the water control element moist. The painter presses the painting edge 68 of a selected brush onto the upper surface 82 of the water control element 80 in order to absorb a controlled amount of water onto the brush. The moist brush is then applied to one or more color blocks resulting in the dissolution and absorption of the water color onto the brush cover 70. The combination of the water control element 80 and the water absorbent brush cover 70 provides a highly effective painting system that applies a single color or multiple colors to a painting surface without leaving excess water on the color blocks or on the painting surface.

[0024] As best shown in Figures 2 and 6, in a preferred embodiment of the invention, palette 14 is detachably engagable with the central body 12. When the painting kit is in use, the palettes 14 are engaged with the central body 12. In preferred embodiment of the invention, each palette 14 has an interlocking member 90 that engages a corresponding interlocking member 92 on the central body 12. In the single-user embodiment of the invention, additional interlocking members 92 are provided on each side of the central body 12, to enable a user to add additional palettes in the future. One or more of the palettes can be integrally or fixedly attached to central body 12. In a preferred embodiment of the single user unit, palette 14 is integrally attached to the central body 12 and additional interlocking members 92 are provided on each side of the central body 12 for removably attaching additional palettes.

[0025] In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the interlocking member 90 on the palette is a pair of protruding guides that engage corresponding slits in the central body. When the guides are engaged in the slit, the palette 14 is positioned adjacent the central body and cannot be moved away from the central body. To release the palette 14 from the central body 12, the palette is moved downward with respect to the central body 12 until the guide disengages from the slit. The present invention is not intended to be limited to the interlocking

members 90 and 92 described herein. Rather, other known interlocking mechanisms may be used that detachably engage the palettes 14 with the central body 12.

[0026] When the water color painting kit 10 is not in use, the kit 10 is preferably dismantled into a storage configuration as shown in Figure 3 for the single user embodiment and Figure 7 for the multiple user embodiment. In a storage configuration, the interlocking members 90 on the palette 14 are disengaged from the interlocking members 92 on the central body 12 and the palette 14 is separated from the central body 12. The storage configuration of the single-user embodiment of the invention, as shown in Figure 3, includes the palette 14 positioned above the central body 12. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the dimensions of palette 14 correspond with the dimensions of the central body 12 such that the palette fits perfectly on top of the central body.

[0027] In the multiple-user embodiment of the invention, as shown in Figure 7, the palettes 14 are each placed in a respective water supply chamber 22 of the central body. Each palette 14 is preferably dimensioned to fit in a water supply chamber 22. The paint brushes are preferably also dimensioned to fit inside the chamber 22, and in the storage configuration, are placed in the chamber 22 underneath the palette 14. The storage configuration enables the water color painting kit 10 to be stored as an organized and compact unit.

[0028] The embodiments described above are exemplary embodiments of the water color painting kit of the present invention. Those skilled in the art may now make numerous use of, and departures from, the above-described embodiments without departing from the inventive concepts disclosed herein. For example, the color block may be of any suitable shape and releasably or fixedly secured to a reusable or disposable base member. The brushes, color blocks and water control elements may be of various construction and size. Accordingly, the present invention is to be defined solely by the scope of the following claims.

Claims

1. A water color painting kit, comprising:

a central body having one or more water supply chambers comprised therein; and one or more palettes detachably engagable with the central body.

2. The water color painting kit, according to claim 1, comprising each palette having a color supply portion defining a plurality of openings therein; and a plurality of base members, each base member carrying a respective color block, each base member positioned in a respective opening in the

color supply portion of the palette.

3. The water color painting kit according to claim 2 wherein each base member is releasably engagable in its respective opening.

4. The water color painting kit according to claim 2 or 3 wherein each base member has an extension extending therefrom.

5. The water color painting kit according to any one of claims 2 to 4 wherein each base member has a front end and a back end, wherein the extension is located at the front end of the base member and wherein each base member further comprises a detent on the front end thereof.

6. The water color painting kit according to any one of claims 2 to 5 wherein each base member has a lip extending therefrom.

7. The water color painting kit according to claim 6 wherein the lip extends around a perimeter of the base member.

8. The water color painting kit according to any one of claims 2 to 7, comprising a first interlocking member positioned on the palette and a corresponding second interlocking member positioned on the central body, wherein the first and second interlocking members engage each other to detachably connect the palette to the central body.

9. The water color painting kit according to claim 8 wherein the first interlocking member is a guide, the second interlocking member is a slit, and the guide is dimensioned to slide into the slit.

10. A water color painting kit, comprising:

a palette having an opening therein;
a base member dimensioned to be removably positioned in the opening; and
a color block secured to the base member.

11. The water color painting kit of claim 10 wherein the base member snap fits into the opening in the palette.

12. The water color painting kit according to claim 10 or 11 wherein the base member comprises a lip extending therefrom.

13. The water color painting kit according to any one of claims 10 to 12 wherein the base member has a front end and an extension protruding outward from the front end.

14. The water color painting kit according to any one of claims 10 to 13 further comprising a detent on the front end of the base member.

15. A water color painting kit, comprising: 5

a palette having a plurality of openings therein;
 a plurality of base members, each base member dimensioned to removably fit into a respective one of the plurality of openings in the palette; and 10
 a plurality of color blocks, each color block secured to a respective one of the plurality of base members.

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16. A water color painting kit, comprising:

a central body having a water supply chamber therein;
 a palette having a color supply portion; 20
 a working configuration wherein the palette is attached to the central body; and
 a storage configuration wherein the palette is detached from the central body.

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17. The water color painting kit of claim 16 wherein in the storage configuration, the palette is positioned on the water supply chamber.

18. The water color painting kit, comprising: 30

a palette having an opening therein, and an opening edge surrounding the opening;
 a base member having a front end and a back end; 35
 an extension protruding outwardly at the front end of the base member;
 a lip protruding outwardly at the back end of the base member;
 a first detent positioned on the front end of the base member; 40
 a second detent positioned at the back end of the base member; and wherein the base member is snap fit into the opening such that the opening edge is positioned between the extension and the first detent, and between the lip and the second detent. 45

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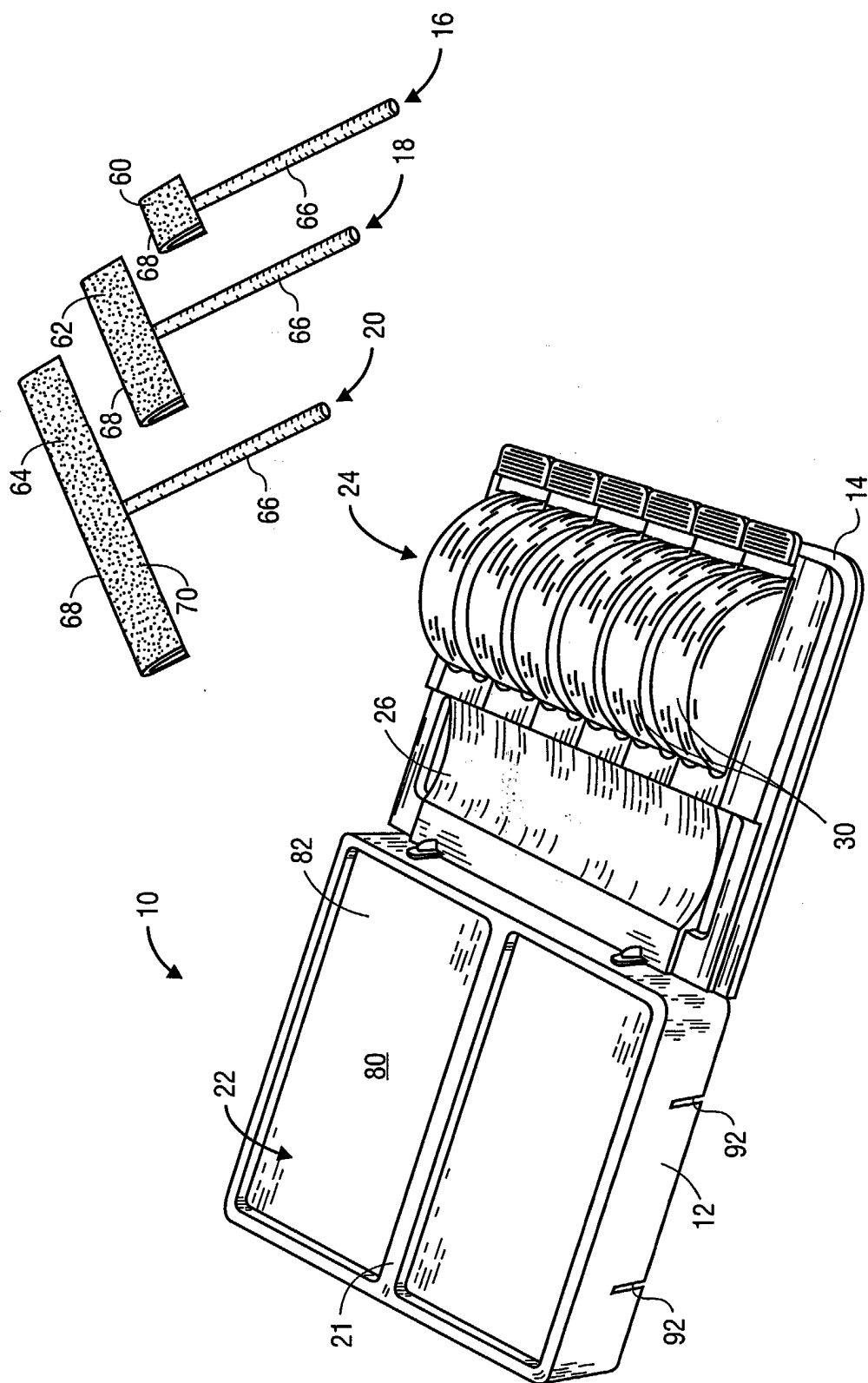


FIG. 1

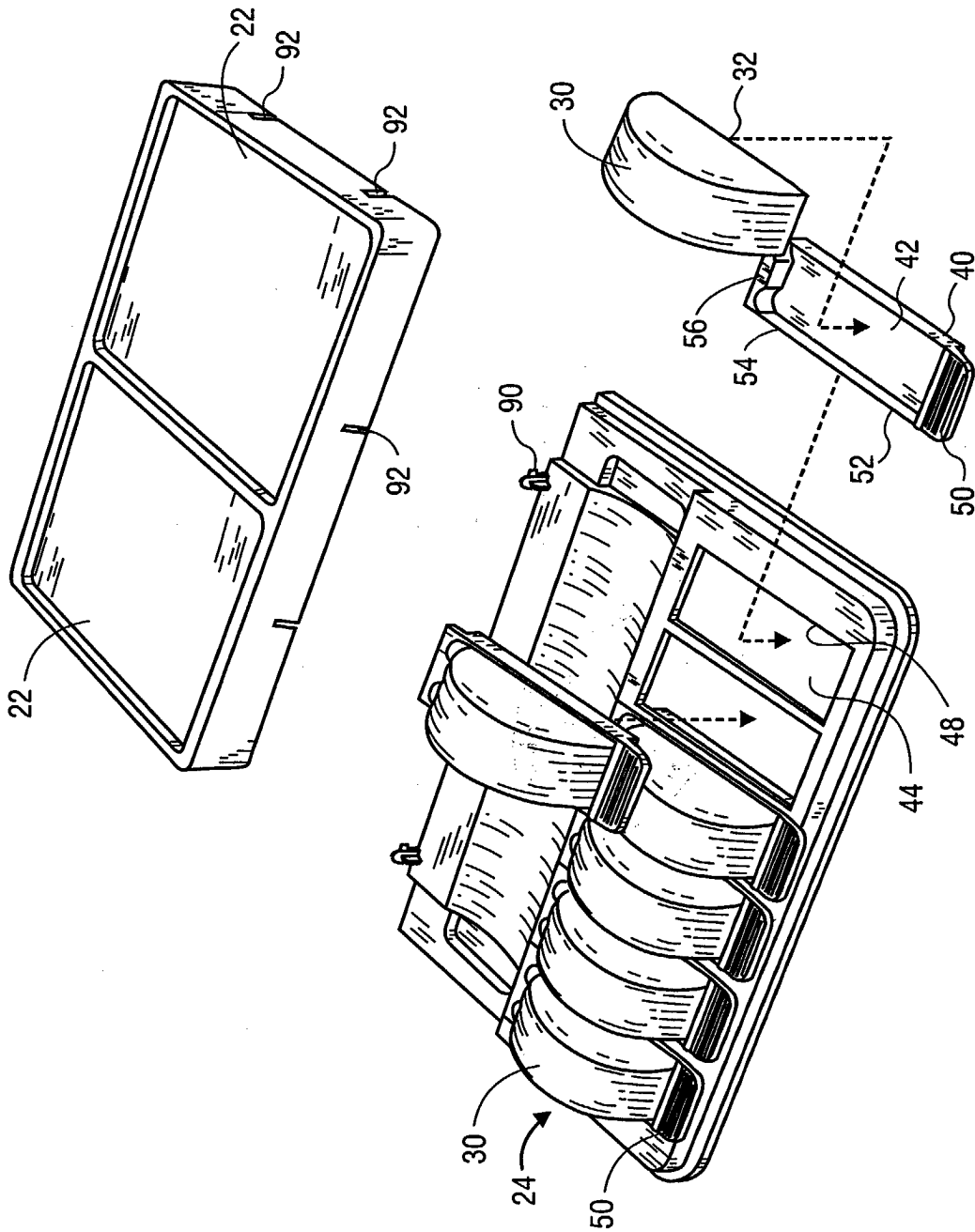


FIG. 2

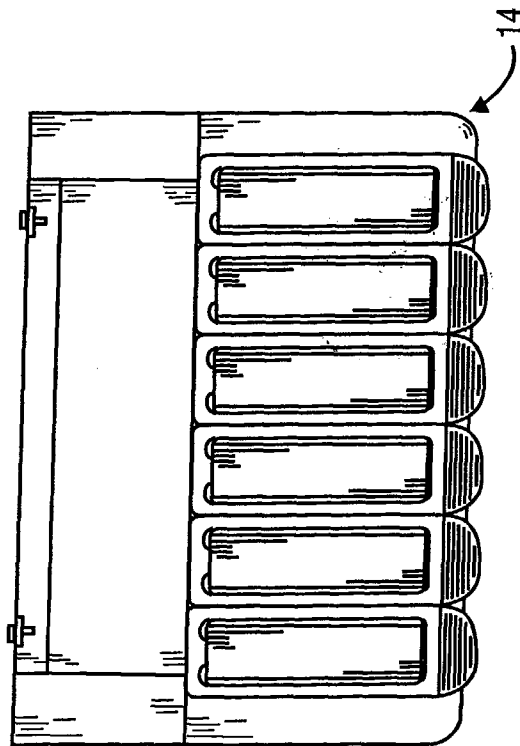


FIG. 3

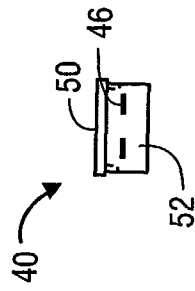


FIG. 4

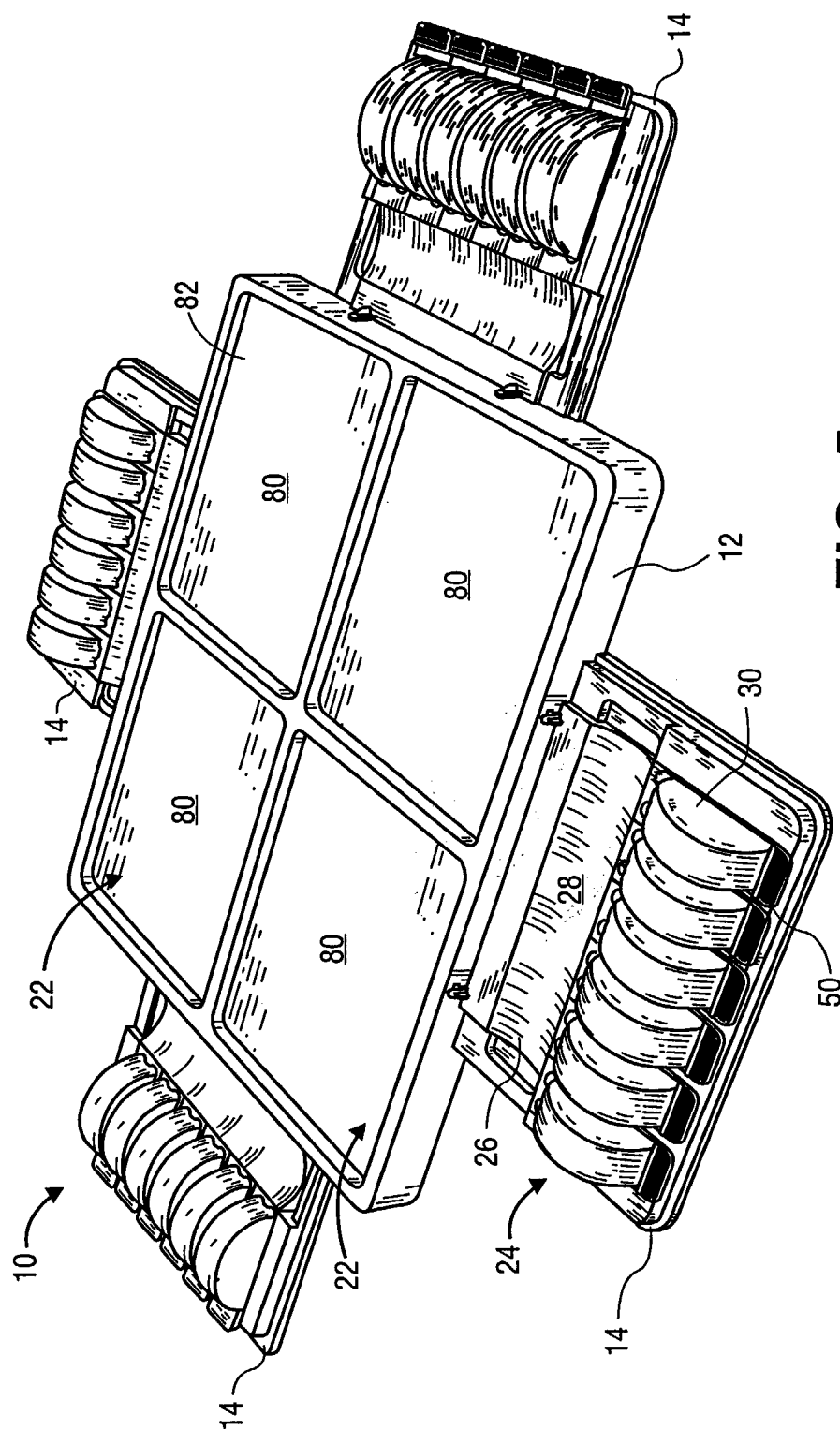


FIG. 5

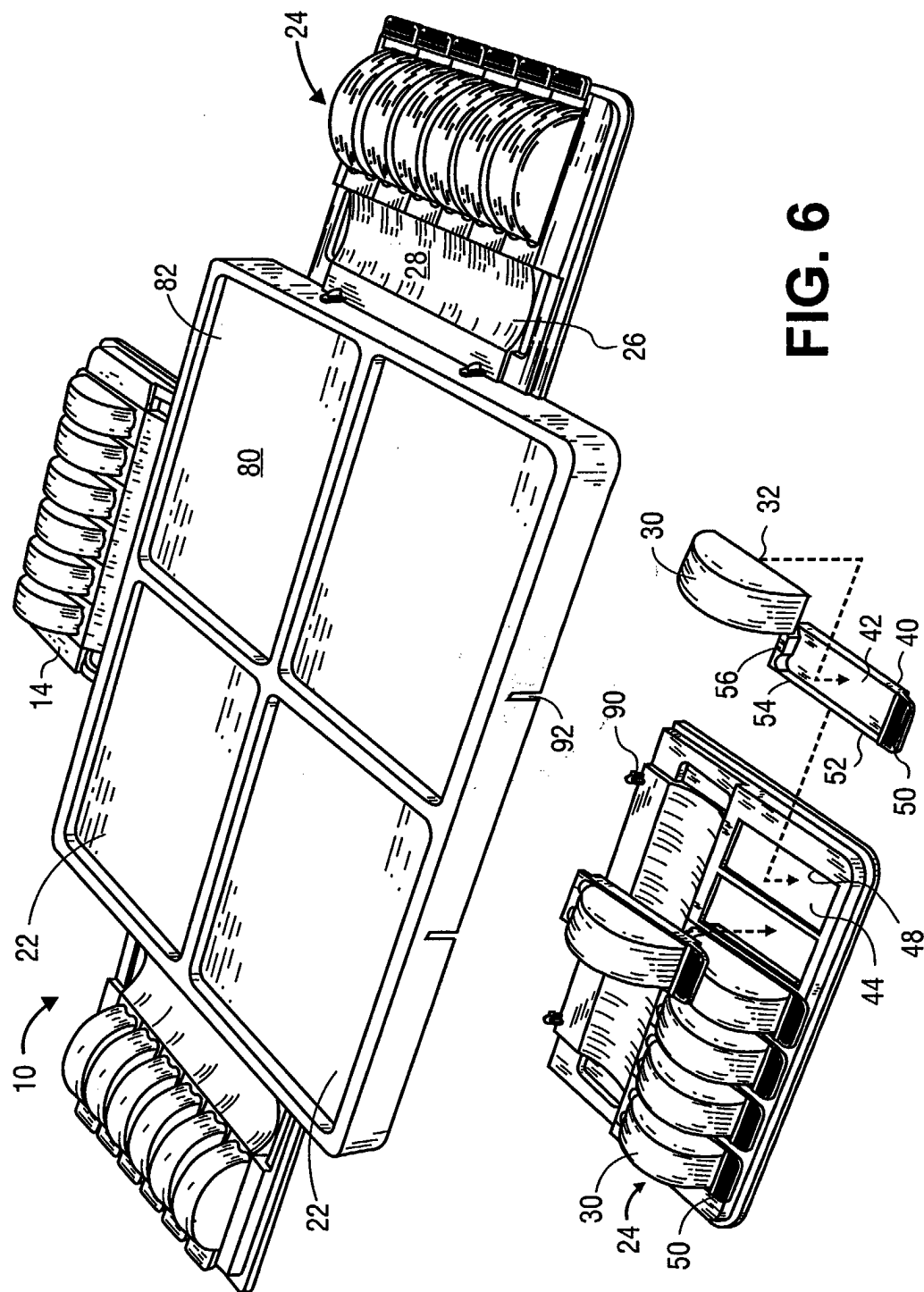


FIG. 6

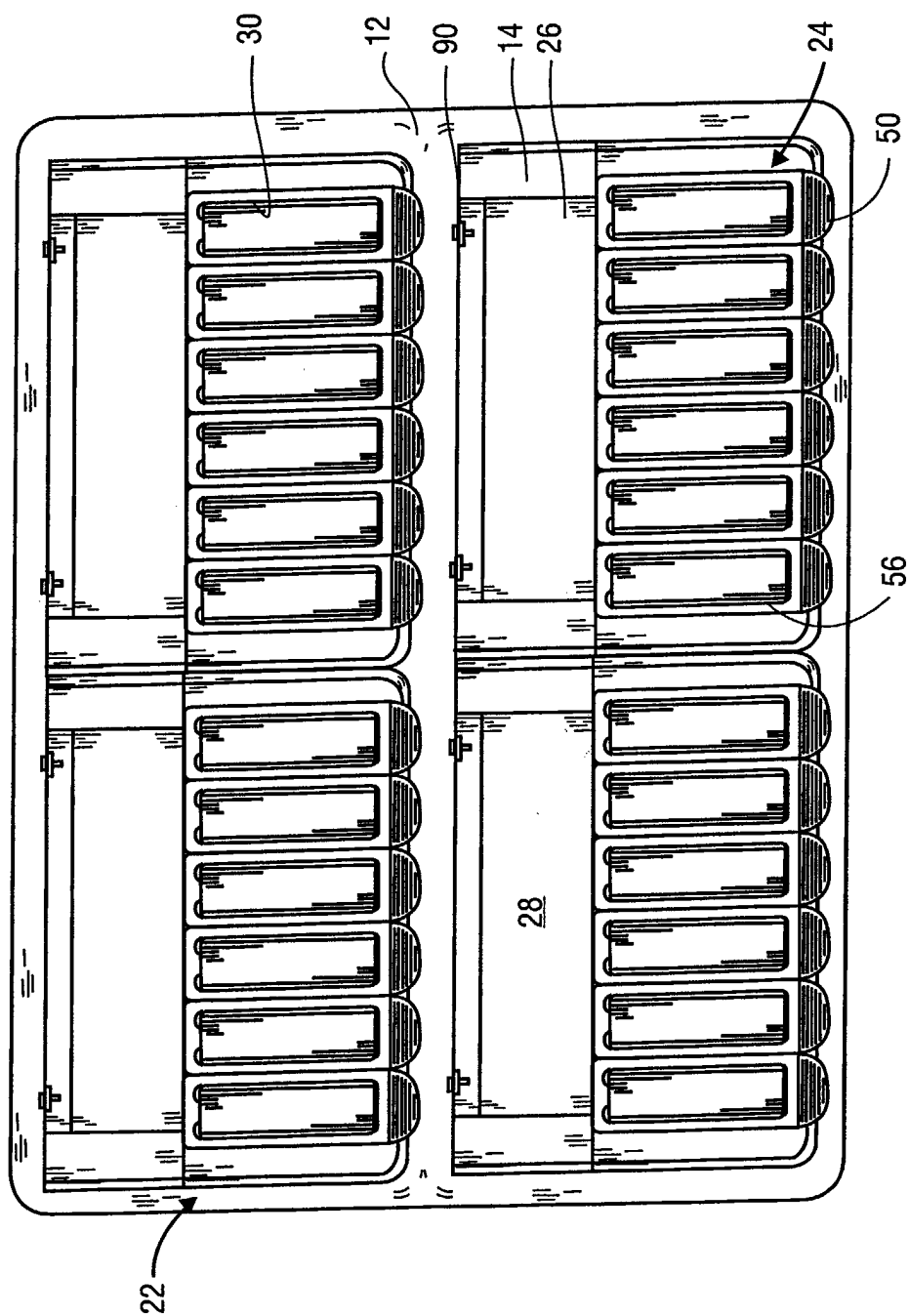


FIG. 7



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 25 2288

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 1 December 2003	Examiner Sartor, M
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EP 03 25 2288

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