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(71) Applicant: Mars Incorporated
McLean, Virginia 22101-3883 (US)

(72) Inventor: Van den Hoven, Helena, Johanna,
Raphael
5625 WT, Eindhoven (NL)

(74) Representative: Vernout, Robert et al
Arnold & Siedsma,
Sweelinckplein 1
2517 GK Den Haag (NL)

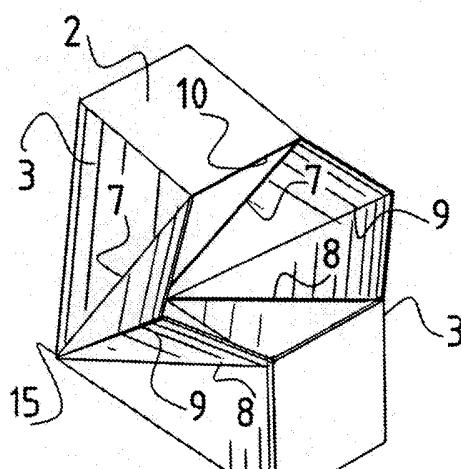
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(54) Packaging container

(57) A substantially block-shaped container made of a flexible plate-shaped material, which comprises a substantially rectangular bottom portion, and furthermore a rear wall (12), a front wall (1), two side walls (3) and a cover (4), which together form the container, wherein the side walls (3) are provided with fold lines (7, 8, 9, 17, 22, 23) for folding the side walls (3) in such a manner

that the side walls (3) can be moved outwards once the cover (4) has been removed, at least near the opening. Preferably the dimensions of the container are such that a substantially hexagonal opening is obtained after folding about the fold lines (7, 8, 9, 22, 23) has taken place, which opening forms the substantially flat upper side of the container.



EP 1 398 275 A1

Description

[0001] The invention relates to a substantially block-shaped container made of a flexible plate-shaped material, which comprises a substantially rectangular bottom portion, and furthermore a rear wall, a front wall, an upper wall and two side walls, which walls together form the container. Preferably the front edge of the bottom portion makes up the short side (width) of the bottom portion.

[0002] Such a container may be used for packaging sweets, which sweets may also be packaged individually. The container may also function to display the sweets, whereby it is important that the sweets can be readily removed from the container whilst the container is for example present on a shop counter. Furthermore the container must be easy to handle, and it must be possible to open it in such a manner that the packaging is not damaged.

[0003] The object of the invention is to provide a container whose contents are readily accessible, and by means of which products, such as sweets, can be packaged and displayed in an efficient manner.

[0004] In order to accomplish that objective the container comprises a substantially rectangular rear wall, which joins the rear edge of the bottom portion and which comprises the same width as the bottom portion, a front wall, which joins the front edge of said bottom portion and which extends less high than the rear wall, and an upper wall, which joins the upper edge of the rear wall and which extends less far to the front than the bottom portion, and two side walls, which each join the respective side edges of said bottom portion, said rear wall, said front wall and said upper wall, which container is accessible via an opening defined by the front edge of the upper wall, the upper edge of the front wall and the edges of the two side walls positioned therebetween. The flexible material of the container is preferably cardboard or plastic material.

[0005] The container is shaped in such a manner that it is easy to handle and that it can be placed on a counter in an efficient manner, whereby the products which are present inside the container are well-exposed to view and can be readily removed from the container by hand.

[0006] Preferably the edge of the opening which is formed by a side wall is longer, preferably at least one and a half times so, than the edges of the opening which are formed by the front wall and the upper wall. In one preferred embodiment the edges which are formed by the side wall are substantially twice as long as the edges which are formed by the upper wall and the front wall.

[0007] Preferably the distance from the front edge of the upper wall to the plane in which the front wall lies is larger, preferably at least more than one and a half times so, than the distance from the upper edge of the front wall to the plane in which the upper wall lies. In one preferred embodiment said distance from the front edge of the upper wall to the plane in which the front wall lies is

substantially at least twice as large. As a result of this the opening of the container is located more on the upper side than on the front side, which enhances the accessibility of the container from the upper side. In addition to that, the products which are present in the container will less readily roll out of the container.

[0008] Preferably the opening is closed by a removable cover, which is shaped in such a manner that the plate-shaped material from which the cover is formed is in line with the front wall, the upper wall and the side walls respectively, so that the combination of container and cover is block-shaped. The respective wall parts and the adjoining parts of the cover may be made from one and the same plate thereby, and be separated from each other by a tearable weakened portion in the plate material. Such a weakened portion may consist of a perforated line, whereby the plate material is provided with a plurality of aligned holes, along which the plate material can readily be torn. Furthermore it is possible to form a weakened portion, whereby material is removed or otherwise worked, but whereby no holes are formed, so that the plate material can retain its sealing action. When the products present in the container are each packaged individually already, the presence of holes in the container does not constitute a problem. Preferably the tearable weakened portions are substantially straight, so that the edge of the opening will consist of straight portions at all times. Said weakened portion preferably comprises one or more portions which surround a portion of the plate material, which portion of the plate material can be pressed out or aside with a finger. Thus a place is formed from where plate material of the cover can be taken hold of with a finger and be pulled off.

[0009] In one embodiment the side walls are provided with fold lines for folding the side walls in such a manner that the side walls are moved outwards, at least near the opening. A crease can readily be formed at a pre-determined location on the plate material by providing a fold line, that is, a linear area where the plate material

has been compressed or otherwise been locally worked.

[0010] Preferably the side walls each comprise three fold lines, which extend substantially from the corner where the bottom portion joins the rear wall to the edge of the respective side wall that bounds the opening. One fold line may extend practically to the centre of said edge, and two fold lines may extend practically to the ends of said edge, so that the side walls can be folded in such a manner that the opening substantially forms a hexagon, preferably a substantially equilateral hexagon. Such an opening provides optimum access to the contents of the container, whereby products can be removed from the container by hand or with fingers, for example, whilst the products are furthermore well-exposed to view.

[0011] In order to be able to readily see how many products are present in the container, one wall of the container, preferably the rear wall, may be transparent, at least locally, and preferably comprise an opening

which extends in vertical direction. This opening may be provided with transparent material, whilst the opening may be formed by pulling off a strip of tear-off material from the wall in question.

[0012] The embodiment wherein the side walls are provided with fold lines may be considered to constitute a separate invention. In this embodiment the height of the front wall may be the same or practically the same as the height of the rear wall, so that the opening is formed in the upper wall of the container, at least substantially so. Furthermore there are embodiments wherein the fold lines do not extend from the corner where the bottom portion joins the rear wall, but from another location near the bottom edge or the rear edge of the side wall.

[0013] In one preferred embodiment each side wall comprises two fold lines, which extend from a corner point of the side wall. One edge of said side wall, which extends from said corner point, also functions as a fold line when the wall is being folded. As a result of this the side wall comprises three fold lines, so that one portion of said side wall can be folded outwards. This will be explained in more detail yet by means of an embodiment.

[0014] In another embodiment a side wall comprises more than three fold lines, which all extend from the same location on said side wall.

[0015] One preferred embodiment, wherein the opening is present entirely or practically entirely on the upper side of the container, does not comprise an upper wall, and said opening can be formed by folding the fold lines substantially into a polygon. In a special embodiment hereof, which may be considered to constitute a separate invention, the container and its cover forms a box having the shape of a triangle, preferably an equilateral triangle, when seen in side view, so that the front wall and the rear wall adjoin each other at their upper sides. The cover thereby consists of a part of the front wall, a part of the rear wall and adjoining parts of the side walls, so that, once the cover has been removed, the opening is formed by the upper edge of the rear wall, the upper edge of the front wall and the upper edges of the side walls. The side walls preferably comprise two fold lines thereby, which preferably extend from the ends of the bottom edge of a respective side wall to the central portion of the upper edge of said side wall. The dimensions may thereby be such that a substantially hexagonal opening is obtained after said folding about the fold lines has taken place, which opening forms the substantially flat upper side of the container.

[0016] The invention furthermore relates to a method for displaying products, wherein use is made of a container as referred to above.

[0017] Hereafter a few embodiments of a container according to the invention will be described by way of illustration with reference to the drawing.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a container and a

cover;

Figure 2 shows the container of Figure 1, in which packaged products are present;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of another container and cover;

Figure 4 shows the container of Figure 3 with the cover removed;

Figure 5 shows the container of Figure 3 with folded side walls;

Figure 6 shows the rear side of the container of Figure 3;

Figure 7 is a view corresponding with Figure 5, which shows a container comprising several fold lines;

Figures 8 and 9 show a container wherein the opening forms the upper side;

Figure 10 shows another embodiment of the container and cover; and

Figure 11 shows the container of Figure 10 in folded condition.

[0018] The Figures are merely diagrammatic representations, wherein like parts are numbered alike.

[0019] Figure 1 shows a container comprising a front wall 1, an upper wall 2 and two side walls 3, one of which is visible. The combination of cover 4 and the container is block-shaped, whereby each side face of the block is a rectangle. The container may form a package for several products.

[0020] The container may be made, in a manner which is known per se, by cutting a piece of flexible plate material, for example plastic material or cardboard, to a desired plane sheet, after which the plane sheet is folded and glued to form the container.

[0021] Cover 4 is connected with the container by means of a perforated line 5, which consists of a number of aligned holes in the plate material from which the container is made. Perforation line 5 forms a weakened portion of the plate material, such that cover 4 can readily

be removed from the container. In order to facilitate said removal an annular perforated line 6 is provided both on the front side and on the upper side of the container, line surrounds a portion of the plate material which can readily be pressed aside with a finger. Due to the presence

of the two openings in the material thus formed, cover 5 can readily be taken hold of with two fingers and be pulled off. When cover 4 is pulled off, the container as shown in Figure 2 is obtained. Said Figure 2 shows a number of packaged products 14 present in the container,

which products are well-exposed to view, as a result of which the container holding the packaged products 14 can be placed on a counter, for example, so as to display the products. Furthermore the products 14 present inside the container can be taken hold of and be removed from the container without any difficulty.

[0022] Figure 3 shows another embodiment, wherein the container comprises square side walls 3. Both the height of front wall 1 and the length of upper wall 2

amount to approximately half the height of side wall 3, so that perforated line 5 on side wall 3 extends at an angle of 45°.

[0023] Figure 4 shows the container, from which cover 4 has been removed by tearing along perforated line 5. The figure also shows the removed cover 4.

[0024] Each side wall 3 comprises fold lines 7, 8, 9, which consist of a linear compression of the plate material of the container, so that said plate material can readily be folded at the fold line. The fold lines 7, 8, 9 of each side wall 3 extend from the corner 15 where the rear wall and the bottom portion of the container join each other. Fold line 7 extends from said corner to the place where the front edge 10 of upper wall 2 joins side wall 3, and fold line 8 extends to the place where the upper edge 11 of front wall 1 joins side wall 3. Fold line 9 extends to the centre of that portion of perforated line 5 which is present on side wall 3.

[0025] Figure 5 shows how the fold lines 7, 8, 9 of side walls 3 can be folded in such a manner that the opening of the container is formed substantially into an equilateral hexagon. Not only does this lead to an attractive appearance, but in addition to that efficient access to and a good view of the contents of the container are obtained.

[0026] The three fold lines 7, 8, 9 may also extend from a location near the edge of side wall 3 other than corner 15. Furthermore front wall 1 may be higher, so that the opening is present more, or entirely, on the upper side of the container.

[0027] Figure 6 shows the rear wall 12 of the container, which rear wall 12 is provided with a vertical, elongated opening 13. When the container is placed on a counter, in order to display the products present therein, it is possible to see through the opening 13 at the rear of the container to what extent the container is filled, so that the container can be replaced in time when it is empty.

[0028] In the embodiment just described each side wall 3 may comprise several fold lines 7, 8, 17, as is shown in Figure 7.

[0029] Figure 8 shows an embodiment wherein each side wall 3 comprises two fold lines 7, 9, which extend from the corner point 18 of the side wall. Edge 19 of side wall 3, which extends from said corner point 18, also functions as a fold line when folding takes place. Side wall 3 thus comprises three creases, so that a portion of side wall 3 can be folded outwards, as is shown in Figure 9.

[0030] Figure 10 shows an embodiment of a container which, together with its cover 4, forms a box in the shape of an equilateral triangle, when seen in side view. Front wall 1 extends obliquely to the rear thereby, and rear wall 12 extends obliquely to the front. Cover 4 consists of portions of the front wall and the rear wall and of adjoining parts of the side walls, so that the removal of cover 4 provides an opening defined by the upper edge 20 of rear wall 12, the upper edge 11 of front wall 1 and the

upper edges 21 of side walls 3. Side walls 3 comprise two fold lines 22, 23, which extend from the ends of bottom edge 24 of side wall 3 to the centre of the upper edge 21 of side wall 3. The dimensions may thereby be such that a substantially hexagonal opening forming the upper side of the container is obtained after folding about fold lines 22, 23 has taken place, as is shown in Figure 11.

[0031] The above-described embodiments are to be considered merely as examples, the aspects mentioned in the introduction may also be implemented in different ways.

[0032] Below are defined further preferred embodiments.

[0033] A substantially block-shaped container made of a flexible plate-shaped material, which comprises a substantially rectangular bottom portion, a substantially rectangular rear wall (12), which joins the rear edge of the bottom portion and which comprises the same width as the bottom portion, a front wall (1), which joins the front edge of said bottom portion and which extends less high than the rear wall (12), and an upper wall (2), which joins the upper edge of the rear wall and which extends less far to the front than the bottom portion, as well as two side walls (3), which each join the respective side edges of said bottom portion, said rear wall, said front wall (1) and said upper wall (2), which container is accessible via an opening defined by the front edge (10) of the upper wall (2), the upper edge (11) of the front wall and the edges of the two side walls (3) positioned therebetween.

[0034] A container wherein said flexible material is cardboard or plastic material.

[0035] A container wherein the edge of the opening which is formed by a side wall (3) is longer, preferably at least one and a half times so, than the edges of the opening which are formed by the front wall (1) and the upper wall (2).

[0036] A container wherein the distance from the front edge (10) of the upper wall (2) to the plane in which the front wall (1) lies is larger, preferably at least more than one and a half times so, than the distance from the upper edge (11) of the front wall (1) to the plane in which the upper wall (2) lies.

[0037] A container wherein the opening is closed by a removable cover (4), which is shaped in such a manner that the plate-shaped material is in line with the front wall (1), the upper wall (2) and the side walls (3) respectively, so that the combination of container and cover is block-shaped.

[0038] A container wherein the respective walls (1, 2, 3) and the adjoining parts of the cover are made from one and the same plate and are separated from each other by a tearable weakened portion (5) in the plate material, for example a perforated line.

[0039] A container wherein said tearable weakened portions (5) are substantially straight and comprise one or more portions (6) extending in a manner other than

linearly, preferably at the location of the upper wall (2) and/or the front wall (1), which portion(s) can be pressed out or aside with a finger.

[0040] A container wherein the side walls (3) are provided with fold lines (7, 8, 9) for folding the side walls (3) in such a manner that the side walls (3) are moved outwards, at least near the opening. 5

[0041] A container wherein the side walls (3) each comprise three fold lines (7, 8, 9), which extend substantially from the corner where the bottom portion joins the rear wall (12) to the edge of the respective side wall that bounds the opening, wherein one fold line (9) extends practically to the centre of said edge, and two fold lines (7, 8) extend practically to the ends of said edge, so that the side walls (3) can be folded in such a manner that the opening substantially forms a hexagon, preferably a substantially equilateral hexagon. 10

[0042] A container wherein one wall, preferably the rear wall (12), is at least locally transparent, and preferably comprises an opening (13), more preferably an opening which extends in vertical direction. 15

[0043] A container wherein said opening (13) is provided with a layer of a transparent material.

[0044] A container wherein a transparent part (13) of a wall is covered with a tear-off piece of plate material. 20

[0045] A method for displaying sweets, wherein said sweets are displayed in a container according to any one of the preceding claims. 25

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Claims

1. A substantially block-shaped container made of a flexible plate-shaped material, which comprises a substantially rectangular bottom portion, and furthermore a rear wall (12), a front wall (1), two side walls (3) and a cover (4), which together form the container, **characterized in that** the side walls (3) are provided with fold lines (7, 8, 9, 17, 22, 23) for folding the side walls (3) in such a manner that the side walls (3) can be moved outwards once the cover (4) has been removed, at least near the opening. 35

2. A container according to claim 1, wherein the dimensions of the container are such that a substantially hexagonal opening is obtained after folding about the fold lines (7, 8, 9, 22, 23) has taken place, which opening forms the substantially flat upper side of the container. 40

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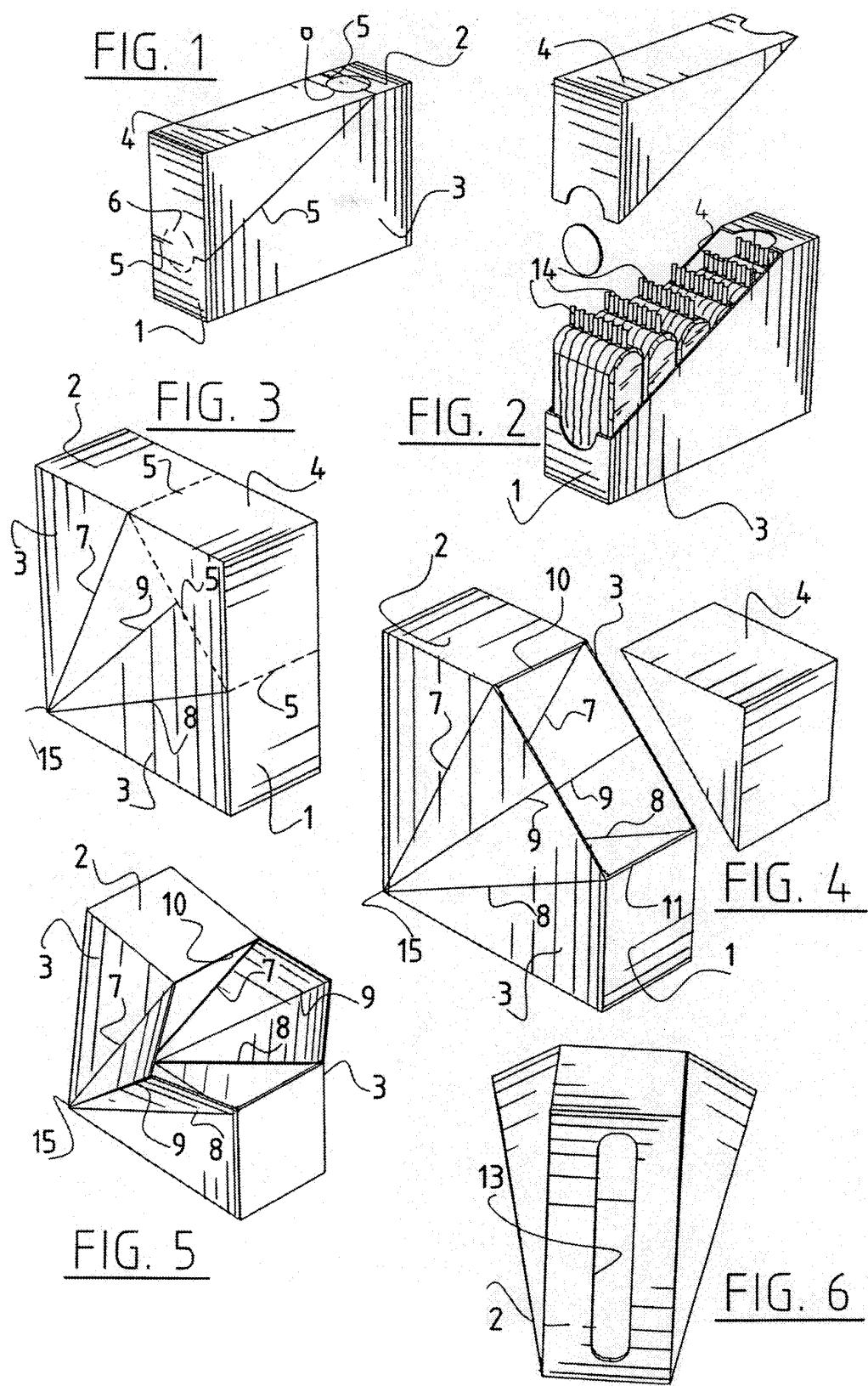
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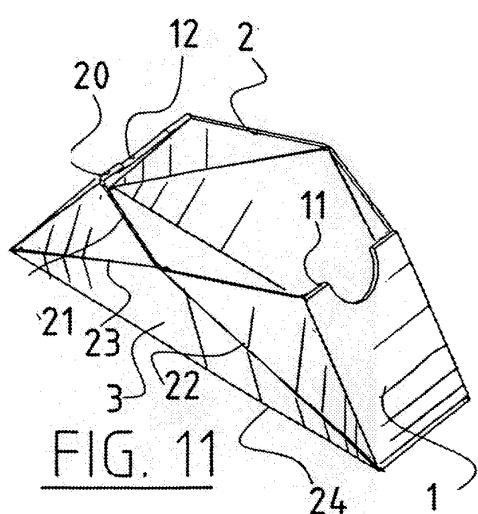
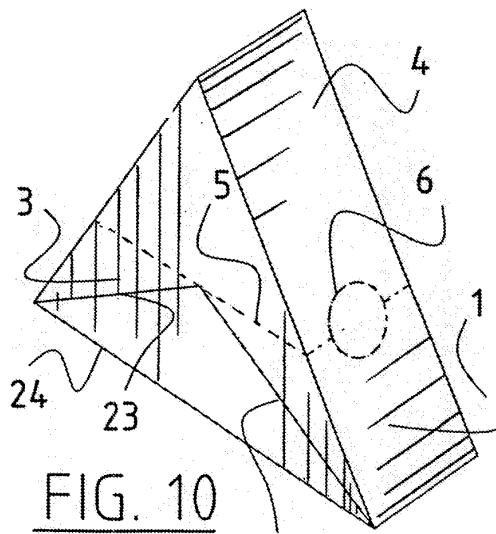
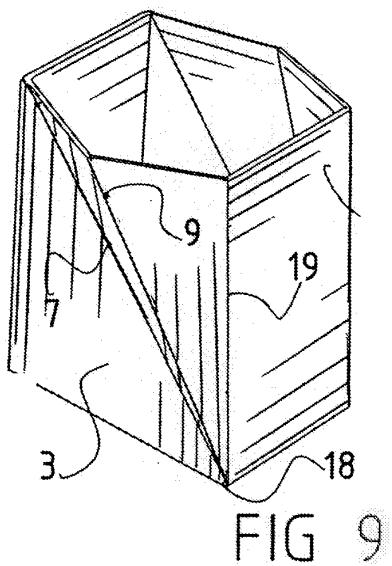
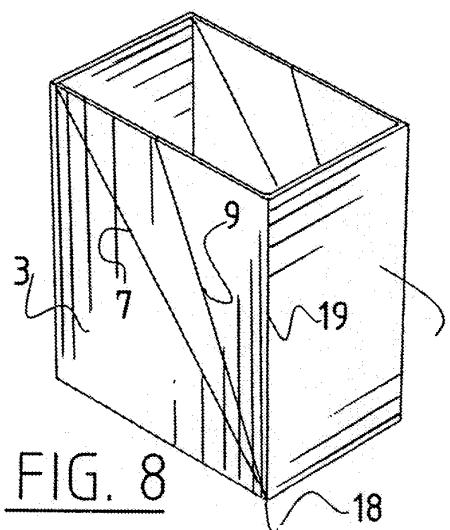
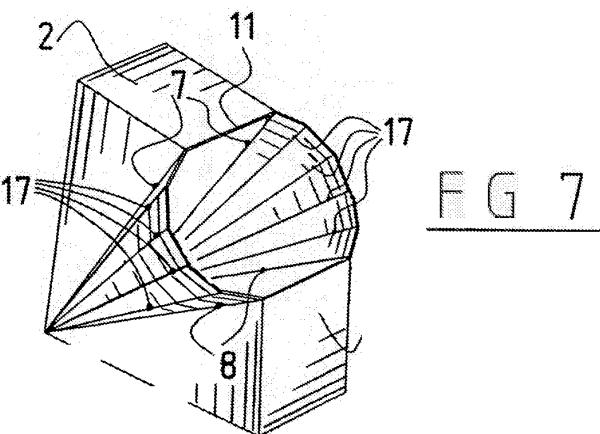
3. A container according to claim 1 or 2, wherein two fold lines (22, 23) extend from the ends of the bottom edge (24) of a respective side wall (3) to the central portion of the upper edge (21) of said side wall (3). 50

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4. A container according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the flexible material of the container is cardboard or

plastic material.







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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 10 2461

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
Y	US 2 658 664 A (HENNESSEY RUSSELL J) 10 November 1953 (1953-11-10) * figures 1-4 *	1-4	B65D5/00 B65D5/02 B65D5/74
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	
BERLIN	12 January 2004	Schultz, O	
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 03 10 2461

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