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Remarks:

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 137(2)
EPC.

(54) **Collapsible cabinet**

(57) A collapsible cabinet includes a rectangular cabinet body made out of a soft fabric sheet material and having a top panel, a bottom panel, a left side panel, a right side panel, a back panel and a front opening, hook and loop pads fixedly provided on the outside of the cabinet body such that multiple collapsible cabinets can be

fastened together to form a combination cabinet unit, a hard support plate hinged to one side edge of the back panel inside the cabinet body for supporting the cabinet body in shape, and a partition member detachably mounted in the cabinet body to divide the holding space of the cabinet body into multiple small storage spaces.

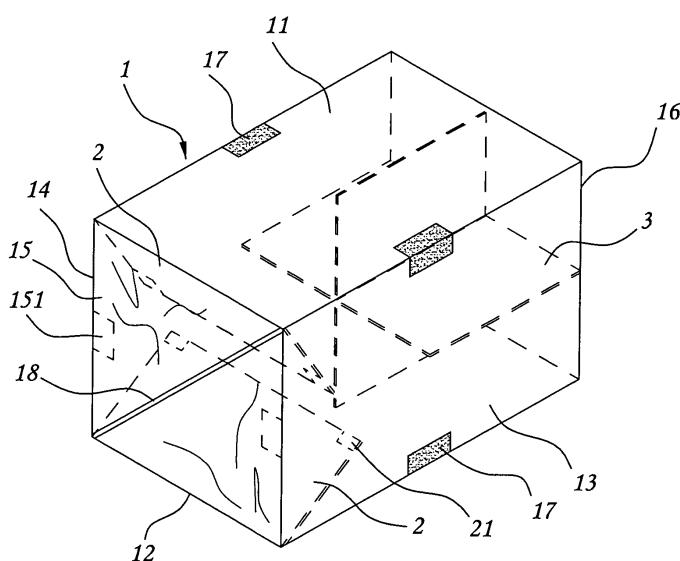


FIG. 1

Description**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****1. Field of the Invention:**

[0001] The present invention relates to cabinets and more particularly, to a collapsible cabinet.

2. Description of the Related Art:

[0002] Cabinets are commonly used in a limited home space for keeping things in good order. Conventional cabinets are made of a hard material, such as plastics, wood, or metal. These cabinets are not collapsible to reduce the size when not in use or for delivery. There are combination cabinets comprised of a number of hard component parts subject to a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) design. However, it is complicated to collapse or to build up these combination cabinets. Further, the hard component parts of these combination cabinets use a big amount of packing materials.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention has been accomplished under the circumstances in view. It is one object of the present invention to provide a cabinet, which is collapsible. It is another object of the present invention to provide a cabinet, which can conveniently be collapsed or set up into the operative form.

[0004] To achieve these and other objects of the present invention, the collapsible cabinet comprises a rectangular cabinet body, hook and loop pads, and at least one hard support plate. The cabinet body is made out of a soft fabric sheet material, having a top panel, a bottom panel opposite to the top panel, a left side panel and a right side panel stitched to and connected between the top panel and the bottom panel at two opposite lateral sides, a back panel peripherally stitched to a respective rear side edge of the top panel, the bottom panel, the left side panel and the right side panel, and a front opening through which storage items are inserted into the inside space of the cabinet body surrounded by the top panel, the bottom panel, the left side panel, the right side panel and the back panel. Further, the back panel has a narrow elongated diagonal slot. The hook and loop pads are fixedly provided at the top panel, the bottom panel, the left side panel and the right side panel such for enabling multiple collapsible cabinets to be fastened together to form a combination cabinet unit. The at least one hard support plate is respectively hinged to the inside wall of the cabinet body at the border of the back panel for supporting the cabinet body in shape.

[0005] Further, a partition member may be fixedly provided inside the cabinet body or detachably fastened to the inside of the cabinet body to divide the inside space of the cabinet body into multiple small storage spaces

for keeping different things in good order. The partition member can be a crossed member fastened to the inside of the cabinet body to divide the inside space of the cabinet body into four small storage spaces. Alternatively, the partition member can be a flat member horizontally or vertically fastened to the inside of the cabinet body to divide the inside space of the cabinet body into two vertically or horizontally spaced small storage spaces.

10 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**[0006]**

FIG. 1 is schematic perspective view of a collapsible cabinet according to one embodiment of the present invention, showing a crossed partition member fastened to the inside of the cabinet body.

FIG. 2 is schematic perspective view of an alternate form of the collapsible cabinet according to the present invention, showing a flat partition member horizontally fastened to the inside of the cabinet body.

FIG. 3 is schematic perspective view of another alternate form of the collapsible cabinet according to the present invention, showing the cabinet body provided with one single hard support plate.

FIG. 4 is schematic perspective view of still another alternate form of the collapsible cabinet according to the present invention, showing a flat partition member vertically fastened to the inside of the cabinet body.

FIG. 5 is schematic perspective view of still another alternate form of the collapsible cabinet according to the present invention, showing cabinet body provided with one single hard support plate without a partition member.

FIG. 6 illustrates the collapsed flat condition of the collapsible cabinet according to the present invention.

FIG. 7 shows one application example of the present invention.

FIG. 8 shows another application example of the present invention.

FIG. 9 shows still another application example of the present invention.

FIG. 10 shows still another application example of the present invention.

50 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0007] Referring to FIG. 1, a collapsible cabinet in accordance with the present invention is shown comprised of a rectangular cabinet body 1 made out of a soft fabric sheet material. The cabinet body 1 has a top panel 11, a bottom panel 12 opposite to the top panel 11, a left side panel 13 and a right side panel 14 stitched to and connected between the top panel 11 and the bottom panel

12 at two opposite lateral sides, a back panel 15 peripherally stitched to a respective rear side edge of the top panel 11, the bottom panel 12, the left side panel 13 and the right side panel 14, and a front opening 16 through which storage items are inserted into the inside space of the cabinet body 1 surrounded by the top panel 11, the bottom panel 12, the left side panel 13, the right side panel 14 and the back panel 15. Further, the back panel 15 has a narrow elongated diagonal slot 18, which is peripherally reinforced with stitches. Further, hook and loop pads 17 are fixedly provided at the top panel 11, the bottom panel 12, the left side panel 13 and the right side panel 14 around the respective opposite lateral sides.

[0008] Because the cabinet body 1 is made out of a soft fabric sheet material, hard support means must be used to support the cabinet body 1 in shape. Therefore, two hard support plates 2 are respectively stitched to the rear side of the top panel 11 and the rear side of the bottom panel 12. The size of the hard support plates 2 is approximately equal to one half of the size of the back panel 15. The two hard support plates 2 can be turned relative to the cabinet body 1 to a vertical position and abutted against each other to support the cabinet body 1 in shape. Further, a hook pad (or loop pad) 21 is respectively fixedly provided at the back side of each hard support plate 2 for fastening to a loop pad (or hook pad) 151 at the inner surface of the back panel 15 to hold the hard support plates 2 in vertical. When not in use, the hook pads (or loop pads) 21 are disengaged from the loop pad (or hook pad) hook pad (or loop pad) 151, and then the hard support plates 2 are respectively turned to a horizontal position and respectively closely attached to the top panel 11 and the bottom panel 12 for enabling the cabinet body 1 to be folded into a flat collapsed condition (see FIG. 6).

[0009] Further, a partition member 3 may be inserted into the cabinet body 1 to divide the inside space of the cabinet body 1 into many separated small spaces for keeping different items. The partition member 3 can be directly stitched to the inside wall of the cabinet body 1. Alternatively, hook and loop materials (not shown) may be used to detachably fasten the partition member 3 to the inside wall of the cabinet body 1. The partition member 3 may be variously embodied. For example, the partition member 3 shown in FIG. 1 is a crossed member that divides the inside space of the cabinet body 1 into four separated small spaces; the partition member 3 shown in FIG. 2 is a flat board horizontally fastened to the inside wall of the cabinet body 1 to divide the inside space of the cabinet body 1 into two vertically spaced small spaces; the partition member 3 shown in FIG. 4 is a flat board vertically fastened to the inside wall of the cabinet body 1 to divide the inside space of the cabinet body 1 into a left small space and a right small space. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 5, the collapsible cabinet does not use a partition member.

[0010] Further, in the embodiment shown in FIG. 3, only one single hard support plate 2A is used and stitched

to the rear side of the top panel of the cabinet body, and can be turned between a horizontal position and a vertical position. The hard support plate 2A has a size approximately equal to the size of the back panel of the cabinet body. When the hard support plate 2A is turned to vertical to support the cabinet body in shape, the hook pad (or loop pad) 21 at the back side of the hard support plate 2A is fastened to the loop pad (or hook pad) 151 at the inner surface of the back panel 15.

5 [0011] Referring to FIGS. 7~10, a number of the collapsible cabinets may be horizontally and vertically abutted against one another and fastened to one another by means of the respective hook and loop pads 17, forming a combination cabinet unit. Further, each collapsible cabinet may be provided with a drawer 4, or covered with a hinged door panel 5 (see FIG. 7).

10 [0012] A prototype of collapsible cabinet has been constructed with the features of FIGS. 1~10. The collapsible cabinet functions smoothly to provide all of the features disclosed earlier.

15 [0013] Although particular embodiment of the invention have been described in detail for purposes of illustration, various modifications and enhancements may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, the invention is not to be limited except as by the appended claims.

Claims

30 1. A collapsible cabinet comprising:
35 a rectangular cabinet body made out of a soft fabric sheet material, said cabinet body having a top panel, a bottom panel opposite to said top panel, a left side panel and a right side panel stitched to and connected between said top panel and said bottom panel at two opposite lateral sides, a back panel peripherally stitched to a respective rear side edge of said top panel, said bottom panel, said left side panel and said right side panel, and a front opening through which storage items are inserted into the inside space of said cabinet body surrounded by said top panel, said bottom panel, said left side panel, said right side panel and said back panel, said back panel having a narrow elongated diagonal slot; hook and loop pads fixedly provided at said top panel, said bottom panel, said left side panel and said right side panel such for enabling multiple collapsible cabinets to be fastened together to form a combination cabinet unit; and at least one hard support plate respectively hinged to an inside wall of said cabinet body at the border of said back panel for supporting said cabinet body in shape.

40 2. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, where-

in the number of said at least one hard support plate is 2, and the two hard support plates are respectively hinged to two opposite side edges of said back panel inside said cabinet body, and the size of the hard support plates is approximately equal to one half of the size of said back panel.

3. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of said at least one hard support plate is 1, and this single hard support plate is hinged to one side edge of said back panel inside said cabinet body, and the size of this single hard support plate is approximately equal to the size of said back panel. 5

4. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a partition member fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into multiple small storage spaces. 10

5. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein in said partition member is a crossed member fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into four small storage spaces. 15

6. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein in said partition member is a flat member horizontally fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into two vertically spaced small storage spaces. 20

7. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein in said partition member is a flat member vertically fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into a left storage space and a right storage space. 25

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 137(2) EPC.

1. A collapsible cabinet comprising:

a rectangular cabinet body (1) made out of a soft fabric sheet material, said cabinet body having a top panel (11), a bottom panel (12) opposite to said top panel, a left side panel (13) and a right side panel (14) stitched to and connected between said top panel (11) and said bottom panel (12) at two opposite lateral sides, a back panel (15) peripherally stitched to a respective rear side edge of said top panel (11), said bottom panel (12), said left side panel (13) and said right side panel (14), and a front opening (16) through which storage items are inserted into the inside space of said cabinet body (1) surrounded by said top panel (11), said bottom panel (12), said left side panel (13), said right side panel (14)

5 and said back panel (15), hook and loop pads (17) fixedly provided at said top panel (11), said bottom panel (12), said left side panel (13) and said right side panel (14) such for enabling multiple collapsible cabinets to be fastened together to form a combination cabinet unit; **characterized by:**

10 at least one hard support plate (2, 2A) respectively hinged to an inside wall of said cabinet body at the border of said back panel (15) for supporting said cabinet body (1) in shape, wherein said back panel (15) having a narrow elongated diagonal slot (18)

2. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of said at least one hard support plate (2, 2A) is 2, and the two hard support plates are respectively hinged to two opposite side edges of said back panel (15) inside said cabinet body (1), and the size of the hard support plates (2) is approximately equal to one half of the size of said back panel (15). 15

3. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, wherein the number of said at least one hard support plate (2, 2A) is 1, and this single hard support plate (2, 2A) is hinged to one side edge of said back panel (15) inside said cabinet body, and the size of this single hard support plate (2, 2A) is approximately equal to the size of said back panel (15). 20

4. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a partition member (3) fastened to the inside of said cabinet body (1) to divide the inside space of said cabinet body (1) into multiple small storage spaces. 25

5. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein said partition member (3) is a crossed member fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into four small storage spaces. 30

6. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein said partition member (3) is a flat member horizontally fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into two vertically spaced small storage spaces. 35

7. The collapsible cabinet as claimed in claim 4, wherein said partition member (3) is a flat member vertically fastened to the inside of said cabinet body to divide the inside space of said cabinet body into a left storage space and a right storage space. 40

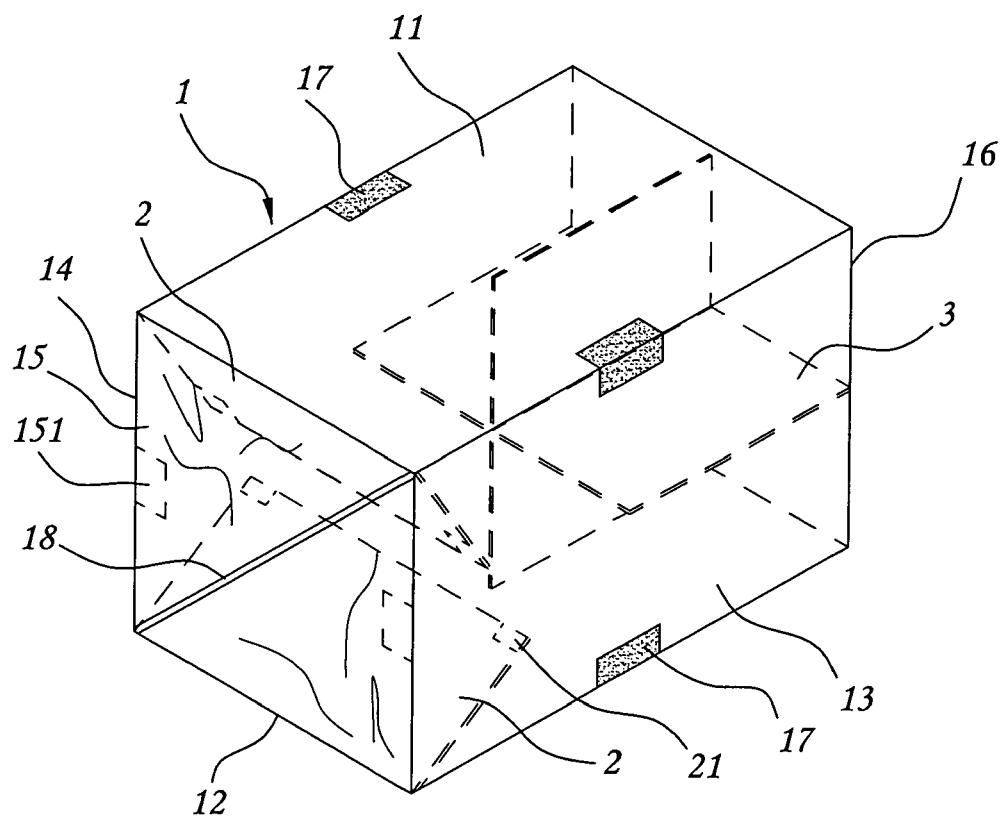


FIG. 1

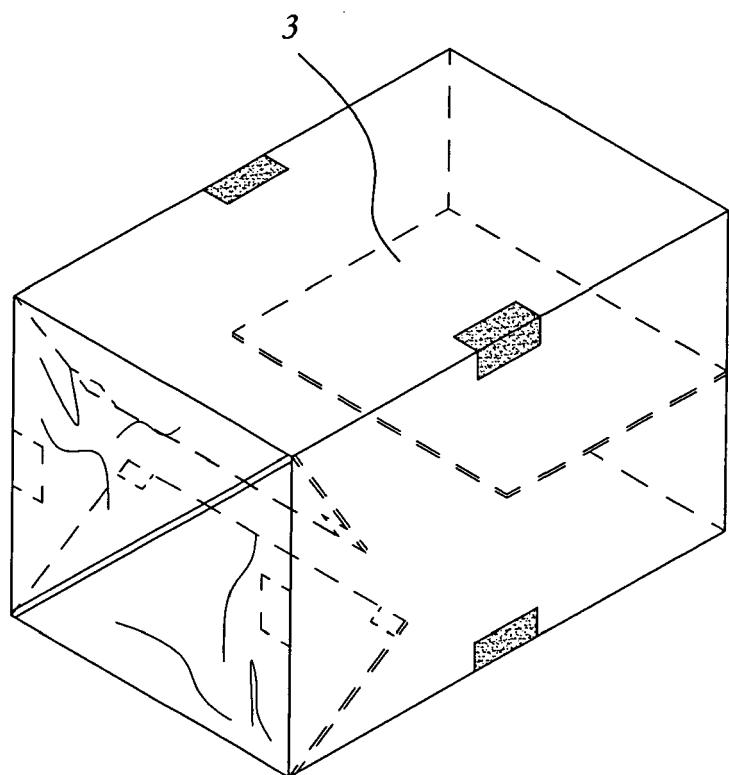


FIG. 2

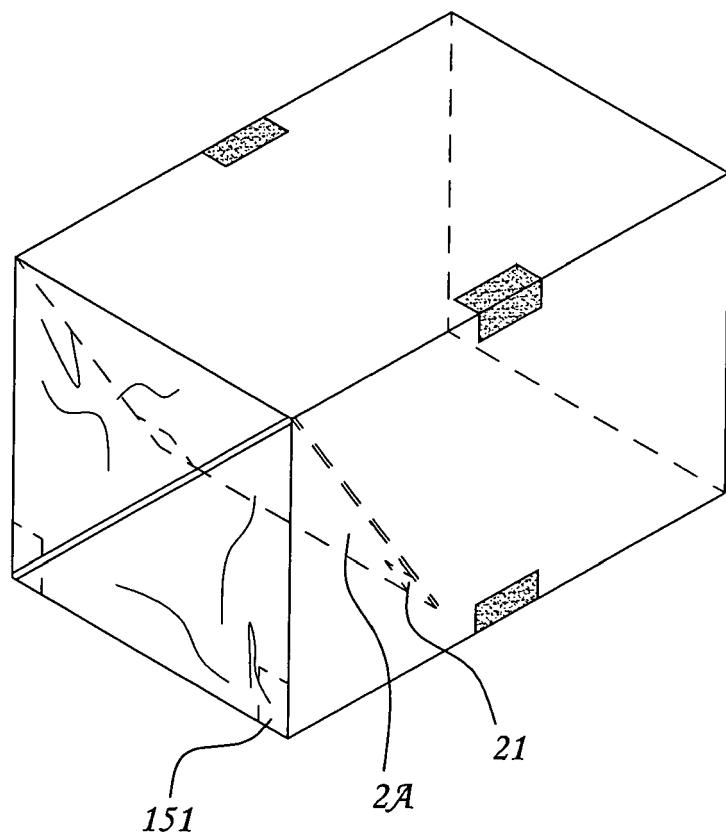


FIG. 3

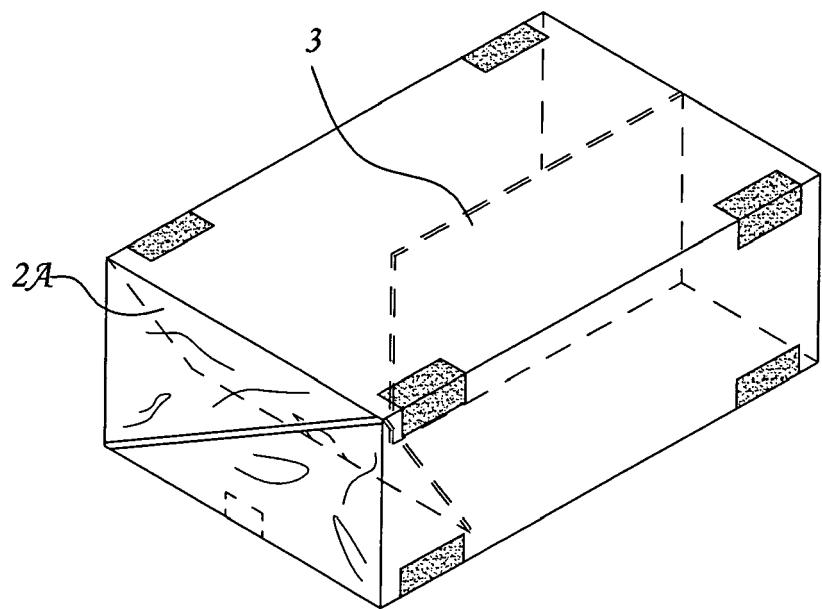


FIG. 4

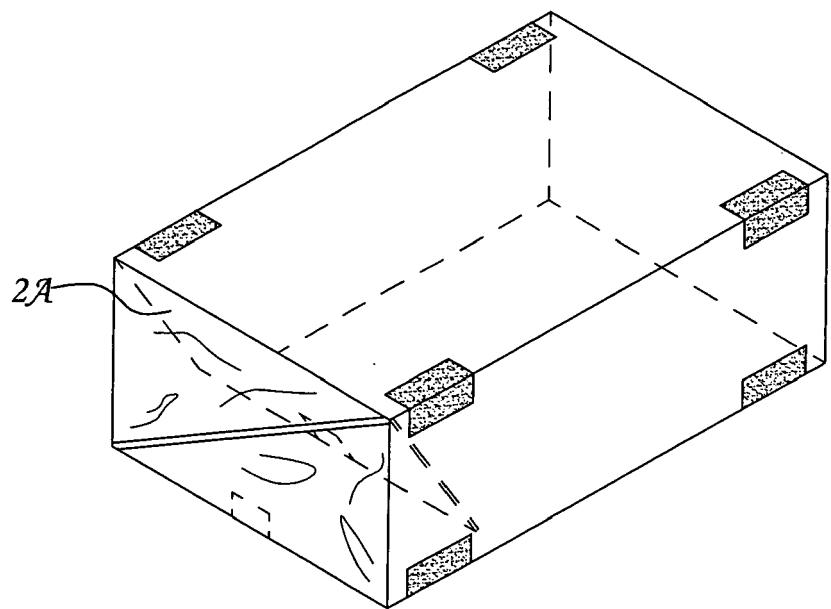


FIG. 5

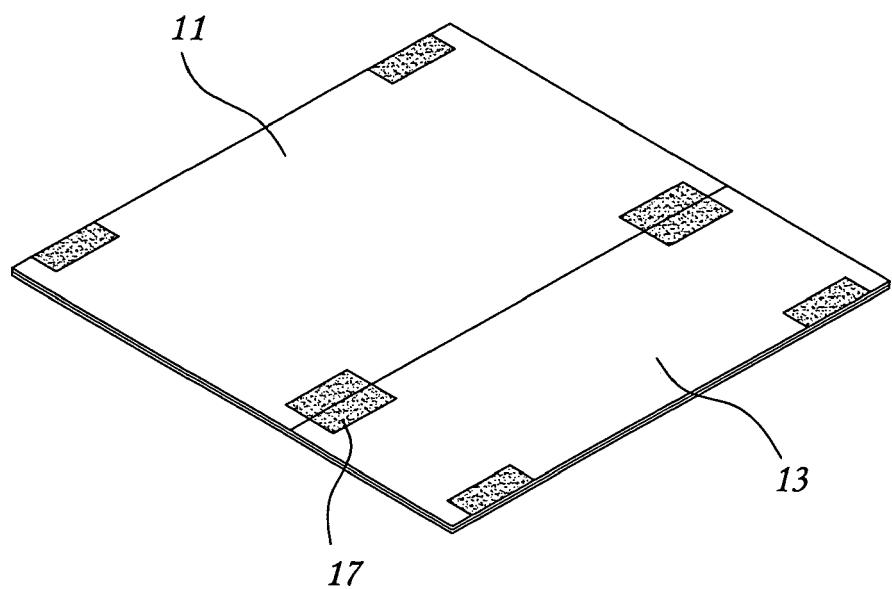


FIG. 6

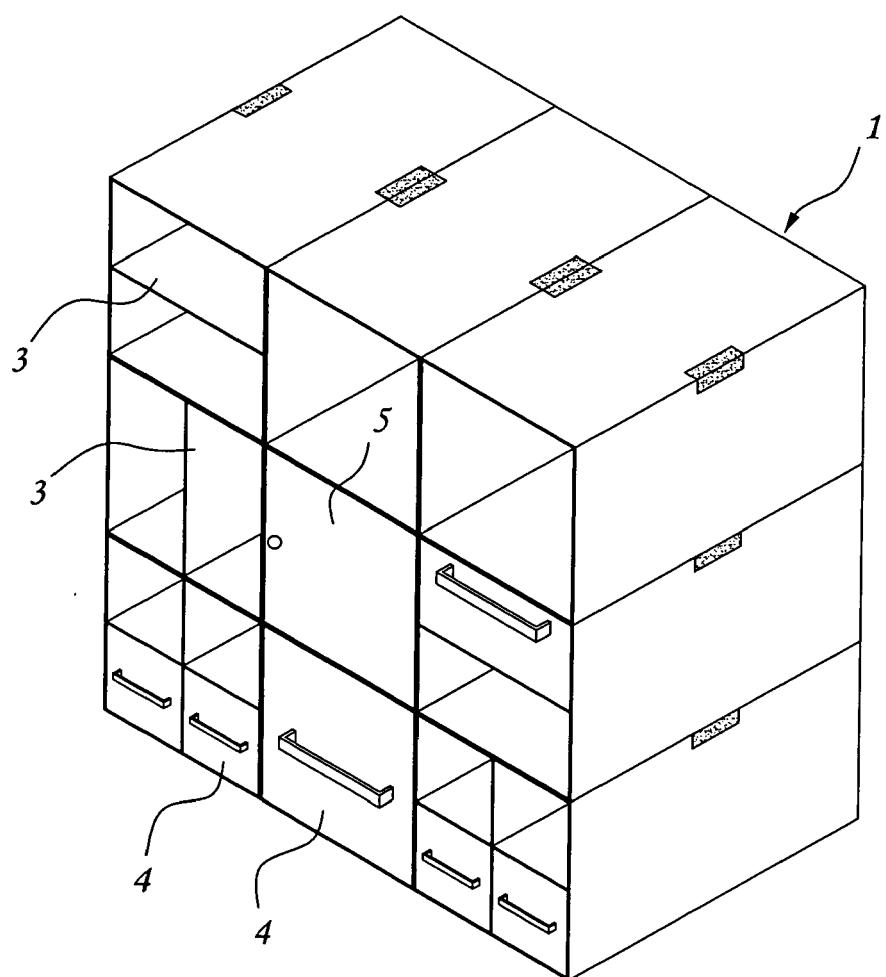


FIG. 7

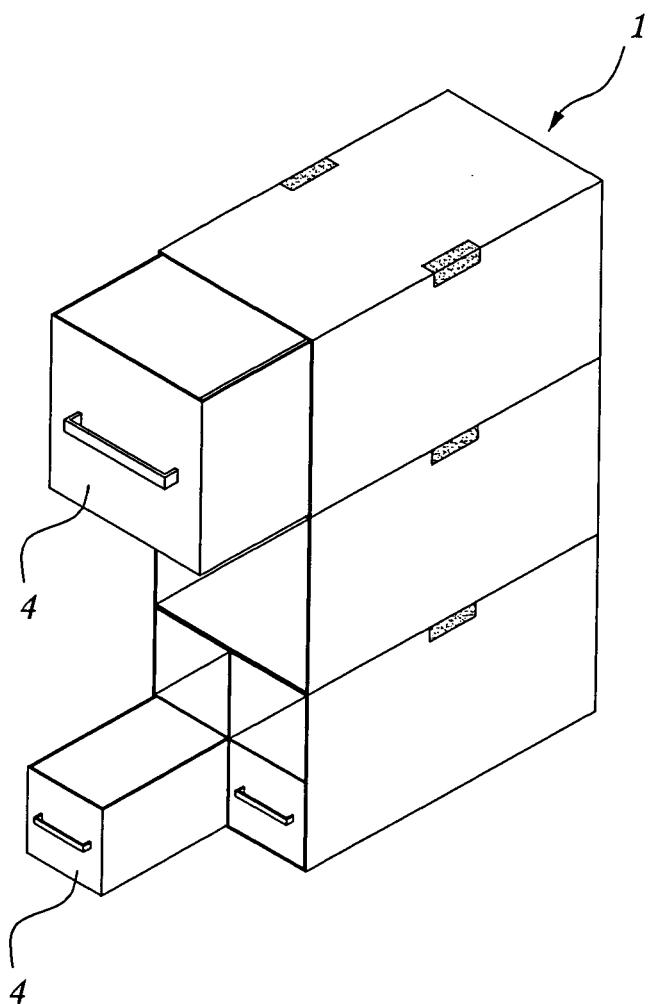


FIG. 8

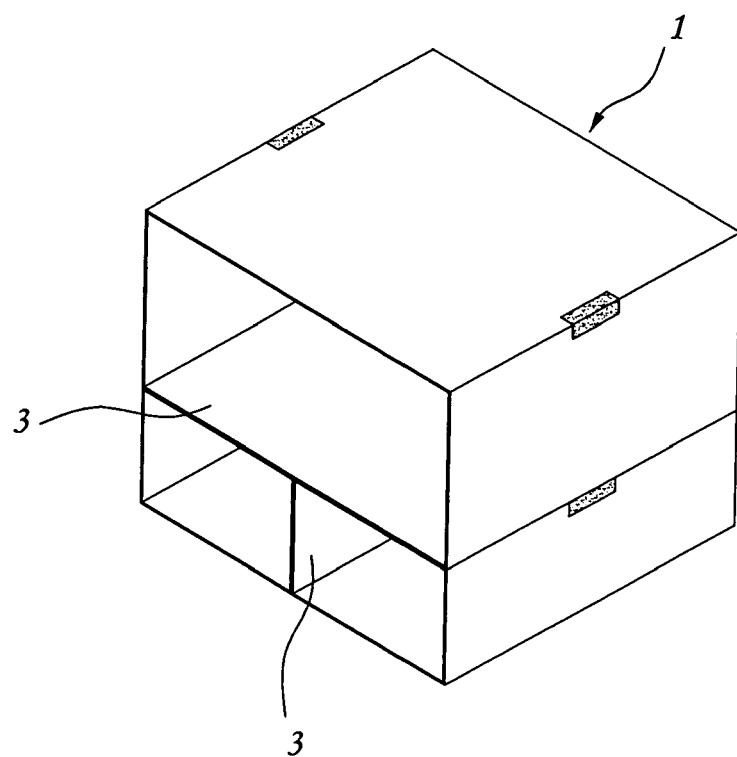


FIG. 9

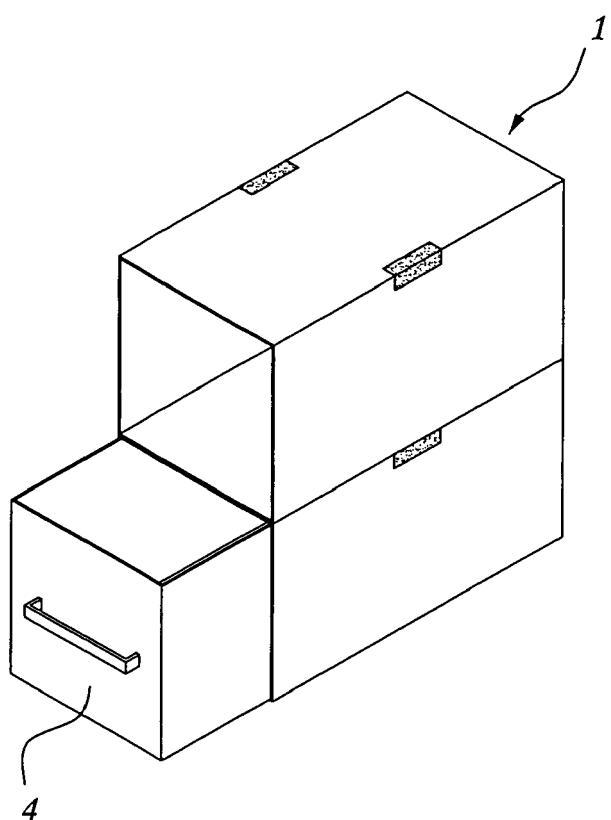


FIG. 10



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
A	CH 444 409 A (DUFNER & CO [CH]) 30 September 1967 (1967-09-30) * the whole document *	1-7	INV. A47B43/02
A	DE 299 16 074 U1 (WANG WEN TSAN [TW]) 9 December 1999 (1999-12-09) * the whole document *	1-7	
A	US 5 680 744 A (KRAMEDJIAN ARMAND J [US] ET AL) 28 October 1997 (1997-10-28) * figures 21-23 *	1	
A	US 6 238 091 B1 (MOGIL MELVIN S [CA]) 29 May 2001 (2001-05-29) * figure 1 *	1,4-7	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			A47B B65D
<p>1 The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p>			
1	Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
	The Hague	16 April 2007	Ottesen, Rune
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		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	
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			

ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.

EP 06 02 0623

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on. The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

16-04-2007

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US 6238091	B1	29-05-2001	NONE		