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Remarks:

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(54) **Laundry assistant**

(57) A laundry conveying device (30) comprising a base (31) forming a support for the device (30), a rearpart (32) arranged on said base (31) to be foldable, a first side part (33) and a second side part (34), arranged foldably along the sides of the base (30) and having textile por-

tions (35,36) connecting each of said side parts (33,34) with the rear part (32) in a manner enabling said side parts (33,34) to be unfolded when the rear part (32) is unfolded, and an attachment part (37) arranged for attaching to a front-loaded laundry machine (44).

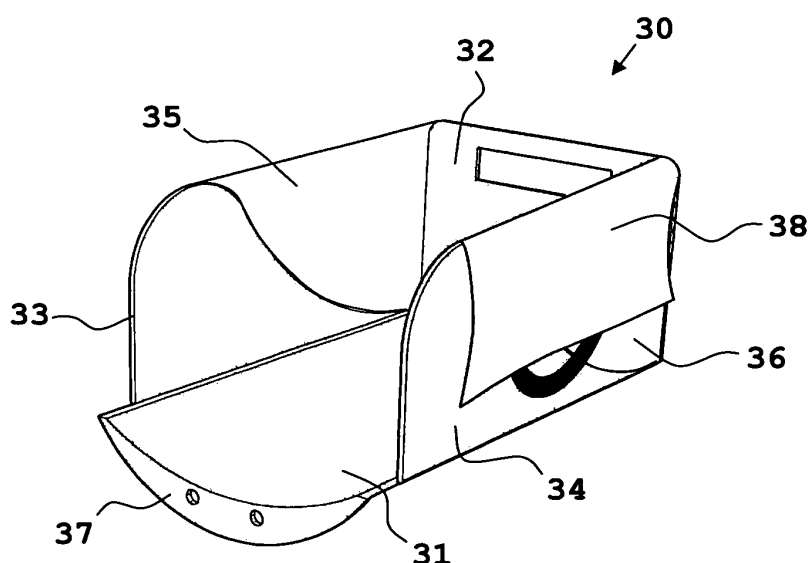


Fig. 4b

Description

Field of the invention

[0001] The present invention relates to the field of laundry. More specifically, the present invention relates to a conveying device for laundry. According to a more general aspect, the present invention relates to the field of carrying devices, more specifically bags.

Background to the invention

[0002] Washing of clothes requires transfer of substantial amounts of material of considerable weight from the laundry collection site to the washing site, from the washing site to the drying site, and from the drying site back to the wardrobe. During these operations, the clothes are frequently in wet condition and therefore even heavier.

[0003] Moreover, washing the laundry typically requires transfer of the laundry (again, frequently in wet condition and therefore of considerable weight) from a laundry bag into a machine, such as a washing machine or a tumble-dryer, or from one machine to the next of a number of successive machines. This typically requires that the materials to be transferred are lifted by hand from floor level and inserted into each machine.

[0004] Thus, both the transport of the laundry and the feeding of laundry into various machines are laborious tasks, which may prove difficult for anyone. These tasks may be especially difficult and even impossible for individuals suffering from mild to severe conditions, such as lumbago, limping, senescence, rheumatism, obesity etc.

[0005] GB 679,159 discloses a conveying equipment for laundries.

[0006] FR 2 171 084 discloses a washing machine provided with a pedestal in which a collapsible laundry basket can be stored. The basket comprises two pairs of opposing lateral walls, connected to allow the basket to open up from a collapsed position by unfolding one of the lateral walls.

Summary of the invention

[0007] It is an object of the present invention to provide a laundry conveying device that facilitates at least some of the above-mentioned laundry conveying and lifting operations.

[0008] It is a further object of the present invention to provide a laundry conveying device that facilitates at least some of the above-mentioned laundry transporting operations.

[0009] Another object of the present invention to provide a bag, suitable for transporting laundry and other material that facilitates transporting operations.

[0010] Yet another object of the invention is to provide a pedestal for laundry machines such as washing machines and tumble dryers that can facilitate at least some

of the above mentioned laundry transporting/conveying operations.

[0011] For these and other objects that will be evident from the following description and the accompanying drawings, the present invention provides a laundry conveying device according to any one of claims 1-5.

Brief description of the drawings

[0012]

Fig 1 shows a side view (a) and top plan view (b) of a laundry conveying device and a bag according to the invention,

Fig 2 shows a side view of a laundry conveying device according to the invention during laundry conveying operation,

Fig 3 shows side views and top plan views of a laundry conveying device and a bag according to the invention, illustrating transporting operation in regular bag (a), shoulder bag (b) and back-pack (c) modes,

Fig 4 shows a perspective view of an alternative, collapsible, laundry conveying device in collapsed (a) and unfolded (b) positions,

Fig 5 shows the laundry conveying device from Fig 4 placed in a pedestal according to the invention, illustrating the device stored in collapsed form in the pedestal (a), the device being unfolded to an open position (b), the device in an open position, ready for use (c) and the device closed for transport (d), and Fig 6 shows the laundry conveying device of Fig 4 and 5 prepared for loading a tumble dryer with laundry.

Detailed description of the invention

[0013] The present invention provides a carrying device, such as a bag, which is useful for conveying laundry and for general transportation purposes.

[0014] According to a first aspect, the invention provides a laundry conveying device, such as a laundry bag, trolley, basket etc. The laundry conveying device may be used both as a laundry collecting device and as a laundry transporting device.

[0015] The laundry conveying device comprises a container, which has an opening that can be closed when desired, e.g. when not being loaded with laundry and during transportation. The container may be made of any suitable material or combination of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc.

[0016] In one embodiment the laundry conveying device is fully collapsible (or foldable), allowing it to be easily stored away when not in use.

[0017] The laundry conveying device furthermore comprises one or more carrying straps, which are attached to the exterior of the container. The carrying strap (s) may be made of any suitable material or combination

of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc. The carrying strap(s) can include one or more clips for personal adjustment of strap length. In a preferred embodiment, the laundry conveying device has a single carrying strap. As will be evident from the following disclosure, a single carrying strap increases the transportation mode versatility of the laundry conveying device, allowing for improved usability as a shoulder bag.

[0018] The laundry conveying device comprises a projecting feeding rail, which is connected to the container. The feeding rail is arranged so that it is adjoining the container opening. This allows for conveying laundry from the container to the front opening of a front-loaded machine, such as a washing machine or a tumble-dryer, by simply sliding the laundry through the container opening via the feeding rail and into the front opening of a front-loaded machine. Obviously, the same procedure can be employed when collecting laundry from the machine following treatment thereof. This is particularly advantageous for heavy, wet laundry, e.g. when collecting wet laundry from the washing machine or loading wet laundry into a tumble dryer.

[0019] For these laundry conveying purposes, the feeding rail has a slide part, which allows for feeding laundry via the container opening. The slide part may have any suitable form or be made of any suitable material or combination of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc, as long as the laundry sliding capability with respect to laundry is maintained. In a preferred embodiment, the slide part is flat or slightly rounded upwards and made of plastics.

[0020] Furthermore, the feeding rail has an attachment part, which allows for attaching to the front opening of a front-loaded machine, such as a washing machine or a tumble-dryer. Thereby, the user can employ both hands to the operation of sliding laundry to or from the machine without need for maintaining the container opening at the level of the front opening of the front-loaded machine. The attachment part may have any suitable form or be made of any suitable material or combination of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc, as long as the attachment capability with respect to the front opening of the front-loaded machine is maintained. In a preferred embodiment, the attachment part is flat or slightly rounded upwards, fitting a standard front opening of a front-loaded machine, and made of plastics.

[0021] In a preferred embodiment, the feeding rail consists of a single part, which is made of a single material, such as plastics. The opposite faces of this feeding rail, which may be flat or slightly rounded, constitute the slide and attachment parts, respectively. To this end, it shall be noted that front openings of front-loaded machine are generally lined with a rubber material, which provides sufficient friction against many materials, thereby allowing temporary attachment of the feeding rail.

[0022] As outlined above, the attachment between the attachment part of the feeding rail and the front opening of a front-loaded machine typically occurs simply by lean-

ing the feeding rail against the rubber lining of the front opening of the front-loaded machine, allowing the friction to maintain attachment until the feeding rail is lifted away from this position. In a preferred embodiment, the feeding rail further comprises a hook element, such as a flange. The hook element improves the attachment to the front opening of a front-loaded machine. The hook element may be made of the same material(s) as the rest of the feeding rail or of a different material. Typically, the hook element is arranged on and extending away from the attachment part of the feeding rail. The hook element can conveniently be used as a handle for pulling the laundry conveying device when it is equipped with wheels.

[0023] In a preferred embodiment, the feeding rail is rigid. As used throughout this description, the term rigid implies that the structure has sufficient rigidity to maintain its desired shape when exposed to moderate strain. In particular, the structure should have sufficient rigidity to maintain its desired shape when used for its intended purpose, for instance conveying clothes.

[0024] In one embodiment, the laundry conveying device comprises one or more, such as two, three or four, wheels. Typically, the wheels are attached to the container and are employed by pulling the laundry conveying device in a handle, such as the carrying strap or another suitable handle arranged on the exterior of the laundry conveying device. The presence of one or more wheels further improves the transportation mode versatility of the laundry conveying device. The presence of wheels also facilitates the operation of leaning the feeding rail against the front opening of a front-loaded machine without lifting the laundry conveying device.

[0025] According to an embodiment, the laundry conveying device according to the invention comprises one or more legs. The legs are externally attached to said container. The legs can be switched between two positions, a first retracted position and a second extended position. While the external legs are on the outside of the container, they may still be internalised in the laundry conveying device when retracted, for instance in a separate space. The legs are typically extended simply by using gravity, but they may also be extended by manual unfolding or by a spring element.

[0026] In an embodiment, the container consists of a base and a top body, which extends from the base. The closable opening is located in the top body, immediately adjacent to the base. The base extends in essentially the same plane as the feeding rail, so that efficient laundry transferring can be performed through the opening.

[0027] In a preferred embodiment, the base is rigid. In a preferred embodiment, the top body is rigid. That is, the structure(s) should have sufficient rigidity to maintain its desired shape when used for its intended purpose.

[0028] In one embodiment, the top body contains one or more folds. The presence of one or more folds facilitates folding of the top body in a predetermined way. Using this directed folding, a part of said top body is folded away from the opening. Thereby, the surface area of the

opening is increased, which improves efficient laundry transferring through the opening. Although not being limited thereto, the presence of folds is particularly advantageous when the top body is rigid.

[0029] In one embodiment, the top body consists of oppositely arranged front and rear sides, oppositely arranged lateral sides, and an upper side. The closable opening is arranged in the front side and optionally extends into the upper side. The feeding rail projects from a portion of the base that adjoins the front side.

[0030] In an embodiment, at least the following five strap attachment means are arranged on the exterior of the container:

- * one strap attachment means on the front part the base,
- * two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.
- * two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

Optionally, there is also:

- * one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

[0031] In a further embodiment, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base.

The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.

The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.

Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

[0032] Regardless of which strap attachment means that are permanently attaching the carrying strap(s) to

the exterior of the container, the carrying strap(s) can also be temporarily attached to those strap attachment means that are not employed for permanent attachment of the carrying strap(s) to the exterior of the container.

[0033] The presence of strap attachments means for temporary strap attachment, e.g. hook elements, ring elements or grooves, strongly improves the transportation mode versatility of the laundry conveying device. These temporary strap attachments means allow for release of the carrying strap and allow the carrying strap to run freely through the strap attachments means without being released. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap from the temporary strap attachments, the available length and position of the carrying strap can be varied.

[0034] In a particularly preferred embodiment, the above setup of strap attachment means is combined with the use of a single carrying strap, which is permanently attached to the strap attachment means on the front part of the base or on the upper rear part of each lateral side. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap from the temporary strap attachments, the user can readily switch between regular bag, shoulder bag and back-pack modes.

[0035] A pedestal for laundry machines such as washing machines and tumble dryers comprises a storage space for a collapsible laundry conveying device and is arranged to provide a support at a convenient height for placing the device during loading and unloading of laundry.

[0036] Fig 1 shows a laundry conveying device 1 according to the invention, comprising a container 2 with a closable opening 3. The container 2 consists of a base 10 and a top body 11 extending from the base 10. The top body 11 consists of oppositely arranged front and rear sides 15,16, oppositely arranged lateral sides 17,18, and an upper side 19. The base 10, the rear side 16 and the lateral sides are made in one piece from cardboard coated with plastic foil and cloth, while the front side 15 and upper side 19 are made in a net fabric. The rear side 16 is strengthened with acrylic glass or similar material. The dimensions of the container 2 are 600x300x200 mm. The opening 3 extends over the entire front side 15 and upper side 19. It is closable using a handle 27 with two pairs of zippers, which are sewn in parallel with the net fabric in between.

[0037] The laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1 further comprises one carrying strap 4, which is permanently attached to the exterior of the container 2 at a position 20 on the front part of the base 10. The carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via two detachable hooks 21,22 arranged on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18, two detachable hooks 23,24 arranged on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17,18, and a groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. The carrying strap 4 runs freely in all temporary attachment means 21-25.

[0038] The laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1 further comprises a projecting feeding rail 5 made in a hard plas-

tic material, which extends in the same plane as the base 10. The feeding rail 5 is connected to the container 2 and is adjoining the closable opening 3. The feeding rail 5 has an upper slide face 6 and a lower attachment face 7 and ends with a flange 8.

[0039] The laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1 further comprises two wheels 9 attached to the container 2, and folds 12 in the lateral sides of the container. The laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1 further comprises legs 14 attached to said container 2, said legs 14 being movable between a first retracted position in a separate space, and a second extended position.

[0040] Fig 2 illustrates use of a laundry conveying device 1 according to the invention for transferring laundry to the front opening 26 of a front-loaded washing machine. The laundry conveying device 1 is tipped such that the feeding rail 5 is resting in the front opening 26, see fig 2a.

[0041] The feeding rail 5 remains in the front opening 26 due to friction between the attachment part 7 and the rubber material of the front opening 26 and due to the presence of a flange 8 at the end of the feeding rail 5. The rear part of the laundry conveying device 1 is lifted in a handle (not shown) and the legs 14 are extended from the rear part of the laundry conveying device 1 by pushing a button (not shown), whereby the legs extend downwards due to gravity. As seen in fig 2b, the laundry conveying device 1 is thereby oriented with its front side 15 facing the machine opening 26, and with its base 10 in a horizontal position.

[0042] The container 2, which has an opening 3 extending over the entire front side 15 and upper side 19, is opened. Parts 13 of the lateral sides 17, 18 are folded away from the opening 3 using the folds 12, thereby further extending the opening 3, see fig 2c. The laundry can now readily be transferred into the machine using both hands and without any simultaneous lifting by simply sliding the laundry on the slide part 6 of the feeding rail 5.

[0043] Fig 3 illustrates various attachment modes of the carrying strap 4 of the laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap 4 at the temporary strap attachment positions 21-25, the laundry conveying device 1 can be carried in different ways. The laundry conveying device 1 in fig 1 has a single carrying strap 4, which is permanently attached to the exterior of the container 2 at a position 20 on the front part of the base 10. The carrying strap 4 runs freely in all temporary attachment means 21-25 when attached thereto.

[0044] In fig 3a, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 21, 22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17, 18, the two detachable hooks 23, 24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17, 18, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. This provides a laundry conveying device 1 in regular bag mode, where the user carries the laundry conveying device 1 by gripping the carrying strap 4 between the detachable hooks 21, 22 on the upper front part of each lateral side

17, 18 and the detachable hooks 23, 24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17, 18.

[0045] In fig 3b, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 21, 22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17, 18, and the detachable hook 24 on the upper rear part of one of the lateral sides 18. The other detachable hook 23 on the upper rear part of the other lateral side 17, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16 are not utilized. This provides a laundry conveying device 1 in shoulder bag mode, where the user carries the laundry conveying device 1 by placing on the shoulder the carrying strap 4 between the utilized detachable hook 24 on the upper rear part of one of the lateral sides 18 and the detachable hook 21 on the upper front part of the opposite lateral side 17. The carrying strap 4 adjusts itself in the employed strap attachment means, providing a well-balanced shoulder bag.

[0046] In fig 3c, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 23, 24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17, 18, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. The two detachable hooks 21, 22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17, 18 are not utilized.

This provides a laundry conveying device 1 in back-pack mode, where the user carries the laundry conveying device 1 by placing on each shoulder the carrying strap 4 between the utilized detachable hooks 23, 24 on the upper rear part of the lateral sides 17, 18 and the permanent attachment position 20 on the front part of the base 10.

[0047] According to a second aspect, the invention provides a bag. The bag may be used for any traditional purpose, for instance as a laundry bag.

[0048] The bag comprises a container, which has an opening that can be closed when desired, e.g. when not being loaded with material and during transportation. The container may be made of any suitable material or combination of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc.

[0049] The bag furthermore comprises one or more carrying straps, which are attached to the exterior of the container. The carrying strap(s) may be made of any suitable material or combination of materials, such as plastics, fabrics etc. The carrying strap(s) can include one or more clips for personal adjustment of strap length. In a preferred embodiment, the bag has a single carrying strap. As will be evident from the following disclosure, a single carrying strap increases the transportation mode versatility of the bag, allowing for improved usability as a shoulder bag.

[0050] The container consists of a base and a top body, which extends from the base. In a preferred embodiment, the base is rigid. In a preferred embodiment, the top body is rigid. That is, the structure should have sufficient rigidity to maintain its desired shape when used for its intended purpose.

[0051] The top body consists of oppositely arranged front and rear sides, oppositely arranged lateral sides, and an upper side. The closable opening is arranged in

the front side and optionally extends into the upper side.

[0052] At least the following five strap attachment means are arranged on the exterior of the container:

- * one strap attachment means on the front part the base,
- * two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.
- * two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

[0053] Optionally, there is also:

- * one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

[0054] In one embodiment, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base.

[0055] The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.

[0056] The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

[0057] The one or more carrying straps may also be permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

[0058] Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the two strap attachment means on the upper front part of each lateral side.

Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the two strap attachment means on the upper rear part of each lateral side.

[0059] Alternatively, the one or more carrying straps are permanently attached to the exterior of the container via the one strap attachment means on the front part of the base and the one strap attachment means on the upper part of the rear side.

[0060] Regardless of which strap attachment means that are permanently attaching the carrying strap(s) to the exterior of the container, the carrying strap(s) can also be temporarily attached to those strap attachment means that are not employed for permanent attachment of the carrying strap(s) to the exterior of the container.

[0061] The presence of strap attachments means for temporary strap attachment, e.g. hook elements, ring elements or grooves, strongly improves the transportation mode versatility of the bag. These temporary strap attachments means allow for release of the carrying strap

and allow the carrying strap to run freely through the strap attachments means without being released. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap from the temporary strap attachments, the available length and position of the carrying strap can be varied.

[0062] In a particularly preferred embodiment, the above setup of strap attachment means is combined with the use of a single carrying strap, which is permanently attached to the strap attachment means on the front part of the base or on the upper rear part of each lateral side. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap from the temporary strap attachments, the user can readily switch between regular bag, shoulder bag and back-pack modes.

[0063] In certain embodiments of the bag according to the invention, the bag may also contain the features discussed hereinabove for the laundry conveying device, in particular the features disclosed in claims 1-8 and Fig 1-3.

[0064] In one embodiment, the bag according to the invention further comprises a projecting feeding rail connected to the container and adjoining the closable opening. The feeding rail has a slide part arranged for feeding material, such as laundry, via the opening. The feeding rail also has an attachment part, which is arranged for attaching to an object, such as a front-loaded machine, for loading/unloading the material. Optionally, the feeding rail comprises a hook element as defined hereinabove.

[0065] In an embodiment, the bag according to the invention further comprises one or more wheels attached to the container as defined hereinabove.

[0066] In an embodiment, the bag according to the invention further comprises legs attached to the container as defined hereinabove. Again, the legs are movable between a first retracted position and a second extended position.

[0067] According to this aspect of the invention, fig 1 shows a bag 1 according to the invention, comprising a container 2 with a closable opening 3. The container 2 consists of a base 10 and a top body 11 extending from the base 10. The top body 11 consists of oppositely arranged front and rear sides 15,16, oppositely arranged lateral sides 17,18, and an upper side 19.

[0068] The bag 1 in fig 1 further comprises one carrying strap 4, which is permanently attached to the exterior of the container 2 at a position 20 on the front part of the base 10. The carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via two detachable hooks 21,22 arranged on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18, two detachable hooks 23,24 arranged on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17,18, and a groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. The carrying strap 4 runs freely in all temporary attachment means 21-25.

[0069] Also according to this aspect of the invention, fig 3 illustrates various attachment modes of the carrying strap 4 of the bag 1 in fig 1. By attaching and detaching the carrying strap 4 at the temporary strap attachment positions 21-25, the bag 1 can be carried in different

ways. The bag 1 in fig 1 has a single carrying strap 4, which is permanently attached to the exterior of the container 2 at a position 20 on the front part of the base 10. The carrying strap 4 runs freely in all temporary attachment means 21-25 when attached thereto.

[0070] In fig 3a, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 21,22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18, the two detachable hooks 23,24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17,18, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. This provides a bag 1 in regular bag mode, where the user carries the bag 1 by gripping the carrying strap 4 between the detachable hooks 21,22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18 and the detachable hooks 23,24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17,18.

[0071] In fig 3b, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 21,22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18, and the detachable hook 24 on the upper rear part of one of the lateral sides 18. The other detachable hook 23 on the upper rear part of the other lateral side 17, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16 are not utilized. This provides a bag 1 in shoulder bag mode, where the user carries the bag 1 by placing on the shoulder the carrying strap 4 between the utilized detachable hook 24 on the upper rear part of one of the lateral sides 18 and the detachable hook 21 on the upper front part of the opposite lateral side 17. The carrying strap 4 adjusts itself in the employed strap attachment means, providing a well-balanced shoulder bag.

[0072] In fig 3c, the carrying strap 4 is temporarily attached to the exterior of the container 2 via the two detachable hooks 23,24 on the upper rear part of each lateral side 17,18, and the groove 25 in the upper part of the rear side 16. The two detachable hooks 21,22 on the upper front part of each lateral side 17,18 are not utilized. This provides a bag 1 in back-pack mode, where the user carries the bag 1 by placing on each shoulder the carrying strap 4 between the utilized detachable hooks 23,24 on the upper rear part of the lateral sides 17,18 and the permanent attachment position 20 on the front part of the base 10.

[0073] Another embodiment of the laundry conveying device is shown in figures 4-6 in form of a collapsible conveying device 30.

[0074] In fig 4a the collapsible conveying device 30 is shown in a collapsed, or folded, state.

[0075] The collapsible conveying device 30 comprises a base 31, a rear part 32, a first side part 33 and a second side part 34. The base 31 and rear part 32 are made of a sturdy material, providing stability to the collapsible conveying device 30. Plastic materials and in particular anti-bacterial plastic materials are preferable.

[0076] The rear part 32 is attached to the base 31 to be bendable, or foldable. The rear part 32 and base 31 could also be manufactured as a single piece, adapted to allow for the rear part 32 to be bent, or folded in relation

to the base 31.

[0077] The side parts 33,34 can be made in a similar fashion as the rear part 32. However, by forming a portion 35 of the first side part 33 and a corresponding portion 36 of the second side part 34 (the portions 35,36 being closest to the rear part 32) in textile (or similar material), the side parts 33,34 will be easier to fold towards each other and can also be attached to the rear part 32 so the side parts 33,34 are lifted by the rear part 32 as when this is lifted, or unfolded, towards a raised position as shown in fig 4b.

[0078] The collapsible conveying device 30 further comprises a flange 37 for facilitating connection to an opening of a front loaded laundry machine (see fig 6 for further details). Similar to the above embodiments, the flange 37 could be provided at the end of a feeding rail or slide face formed on the base 31.

[0079] In case of longer transports of the laundry, or to minimise the risk of laundry falling out of the collapsible conveying device 30, a closable covering is provided. Only a first section 38 of the covering is shown in fig 4 (see fig 5d for more detail).

[0080] In addition to this it can also be mentioned that the collapsible conveying device 30 can further comprise other features shown in the embodiment of figures 1-3, in particular straps for carrying the device and an additional front part for completely enclosing the laundry in the device.

[0081] In fig 5a-d the collapsible conveying device 30 in fig 4 is shown during use. Fig 5a hereby displays a laundry machine 39 placed on a pedestal 40 having a main support structure 47 and a front drawer 41. The collapsible conveying device 30 can be stored inside the pedestal 40 when it is not used. This can be made by arranging a dedicated storage room inside the pedestal. In the alternative, the pedestal can be made so that a storage space is created on top of the pedestal to accommodate the collapsible conveying device 30 immediately under the laundry machine 39.

[0082] When using the pedestal and collapsible conveying device 30 the front drawer 41 is pulled out and the collapsible conveying device 30 withdrawn from its storing place inside the pedestal 40.

[0083] The collapsible conveying device 30 can preferably comprise a lip 42, adapted to fit in a (not shown) recess or groove in the back of the front drawer 41 thus enabling the collapsible conveying device 30 to rest on top of the pedestal 40 in a height convenient for loading and unloading of the laundry machine 39. Of course, in

stead of a recess or groove, the front drawer 41 can be made to support the lip 42 on the edge of the front drawer. **[0084]** As an alternative, when using the collapsible conveying device 30 in a situation where there is no pedestal 40 or with a pedestal lacking a front drawer, a set of attachable legs, similar to the ones shown in the embodiments of figures 1-3 could be utilised. Such legs could also be made as a part of the collapsible conveying device 30.

[0085] In fig 5b it shown that as the rear part 32 of the collapsible conveying device 30 is raised or unfolded, the side parts 33,34 will also be raised or unfolded due to the attachment of the textile parts of the side parts 33,34.

[0086] Fig 5c shows the collapsible conveying device 30 in fully raised or unfolded position, whereby it may receive laundry from the laundry machine 39.

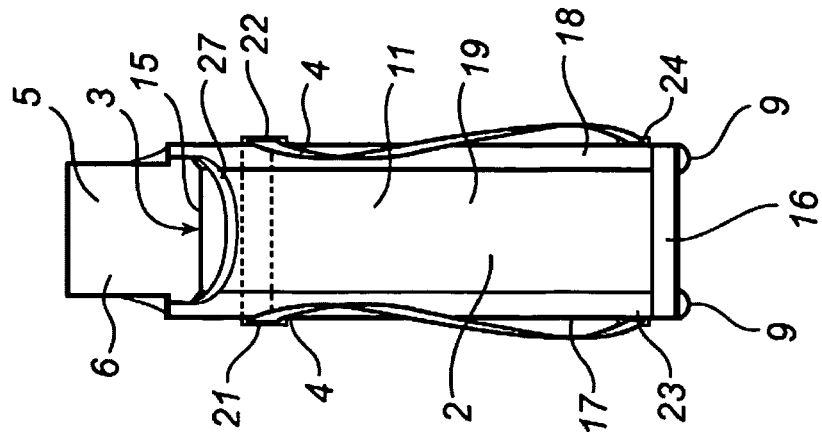
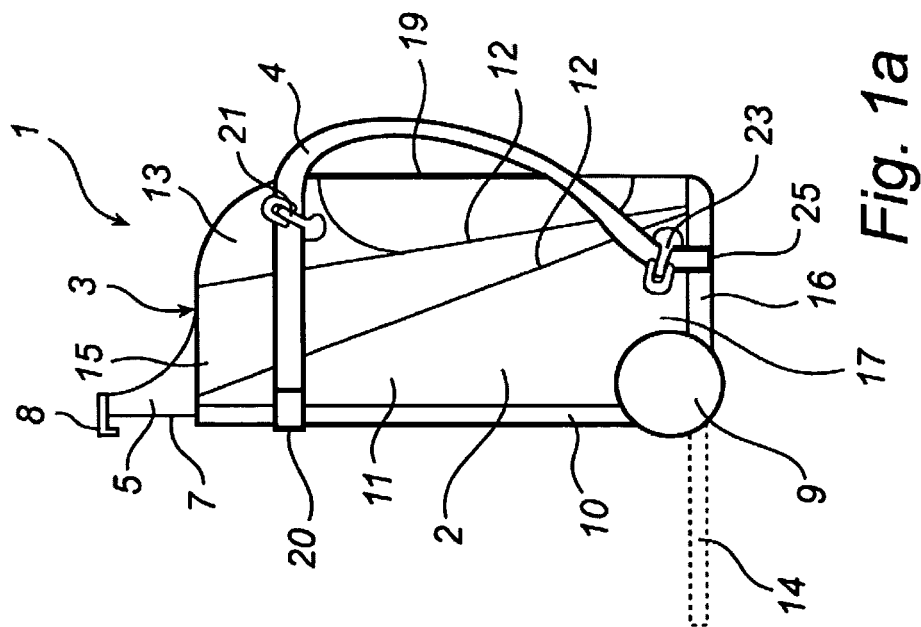
[0087] If the laundry taken from the laundry machine 39 need to be transported a longer distance, or if the risk of any laundry falling out need to be reduced, a closable cover including the first section 38 and a second section 43 can be used as shown in Fig 5d to enclose the laundry inside the collapsible conveying device 30. The sections 38,43 are preferably made of textile or similar soft material and are attached to the side parts 33,34. The sections 38,43 can be attached to each other by some known means such as Velcro or a zipper.

[0088] In fig 6 the collapsible conveying device 30 is shown during a loading operation of laundry into a tumble dryer 44 placed on pedestal 40, whereby the flange indicated in fig 4 is placed and supported in the opening 45 of the tumble dryer whereupon laundry can be moved from the collapsible conveying device 30 into the tumble dryer 44 by pushing the laundry by hand or by tilting the collapsible conveying device 30 as indicated by arrow 46.

rying straps on the outside.

Claims

1. A laundry conveying device (30) comprising
 - a base (31) forming a support for the device (30);
 - a rear part 32 arranged on the base (31) to be foldable;
 - a first side part (33) and a second side part (34), arranged foldably along the sides of the base (30) and having textile portions (35,36) connecting each side part (33,34) with the rear part (30) in a manner enabling the side parts (33,34) to be unfolded when the rear part (30) is unfolded; and
 - an attachment part (37) arranged for attaching to a front-loaded laundry machine (44).
2. Laundry conveying device (30) according to claim 1, further comprising a lip (42) arranged to extrude from the rear part (32) and adapted to provide support for the rear part (32) end of the base (31) in a horizontal position on a support means (41) during use.
3. Laundry conveying device (30) according to claim 2, wherein the support means is a removable leg attachment for the base (32).
4. Laundry conveying device (30) according to claim 2, wherein the support means is a front drawer (41) of a pedestal adapted to carry the laundry machine.
5. Laundry conveying device (30) according to any of the claims 1-4, further comprising one or more car-



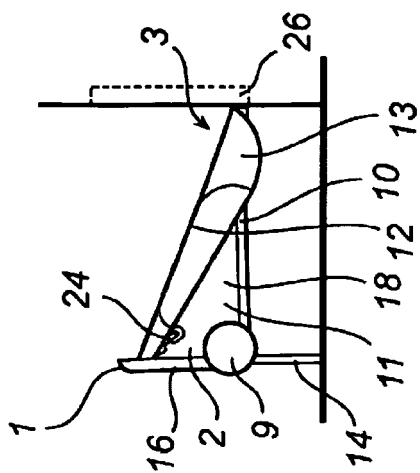


Fig. 2a

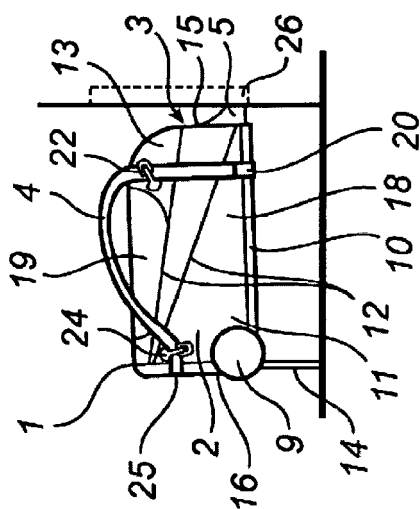


Fig. 2b

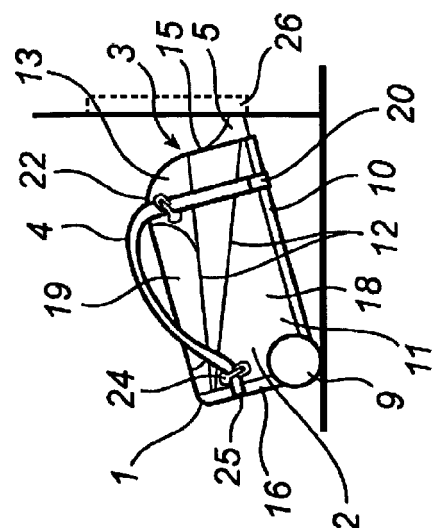


Fig. 2c

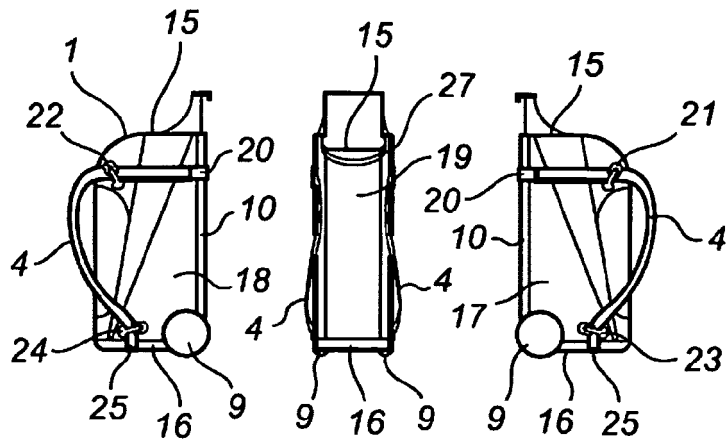
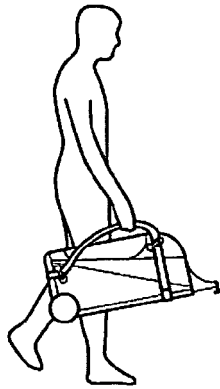


Fig. 3a

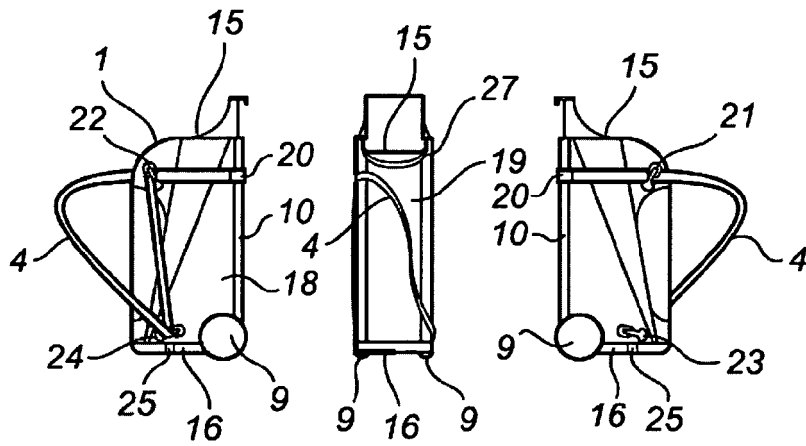
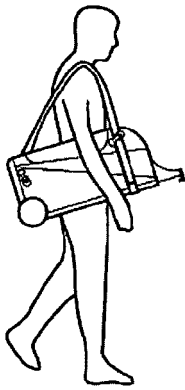


Fig. 3b

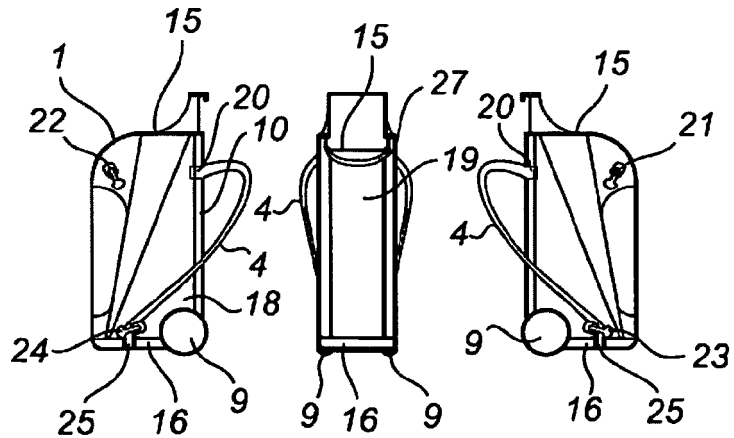
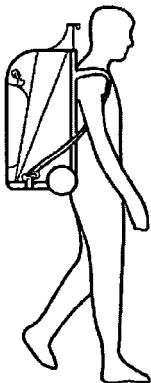


Fig. 3c

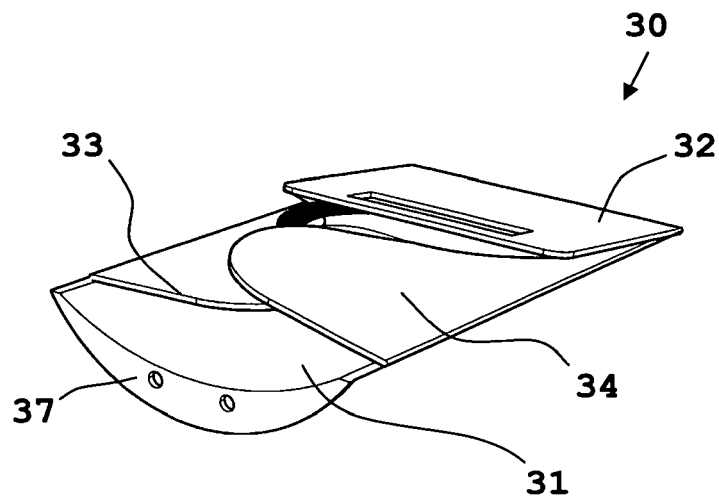


Fig. 4a

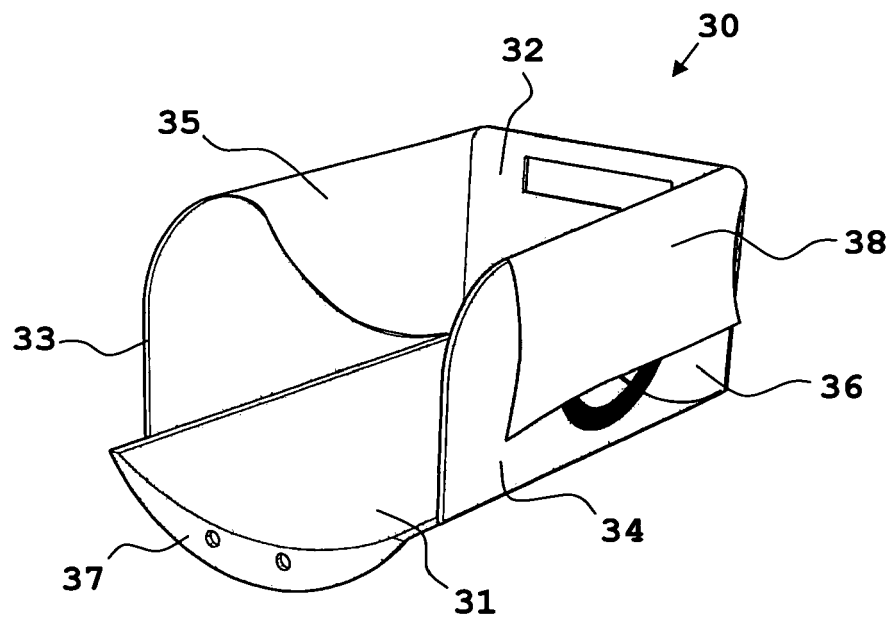


Fig. 4b

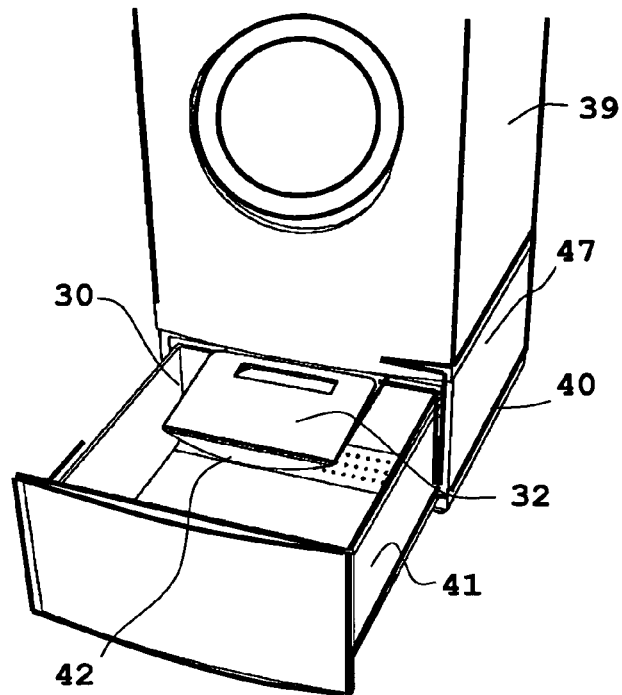


FIG. 5a

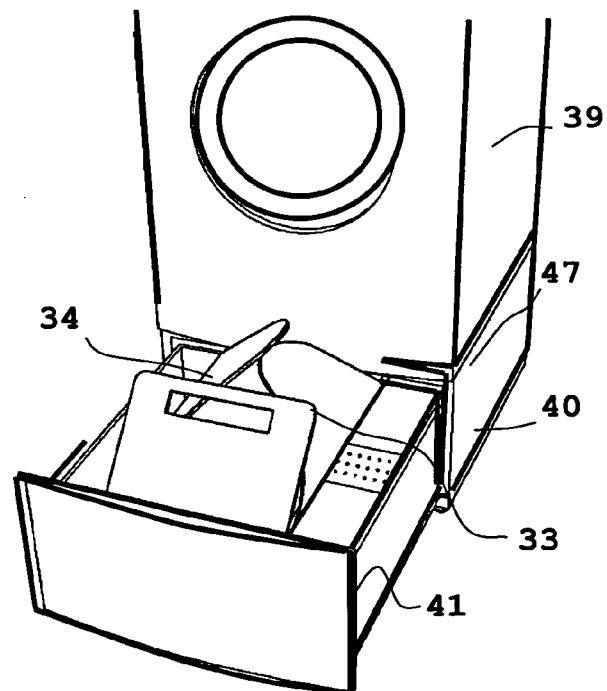


Fig. 5b

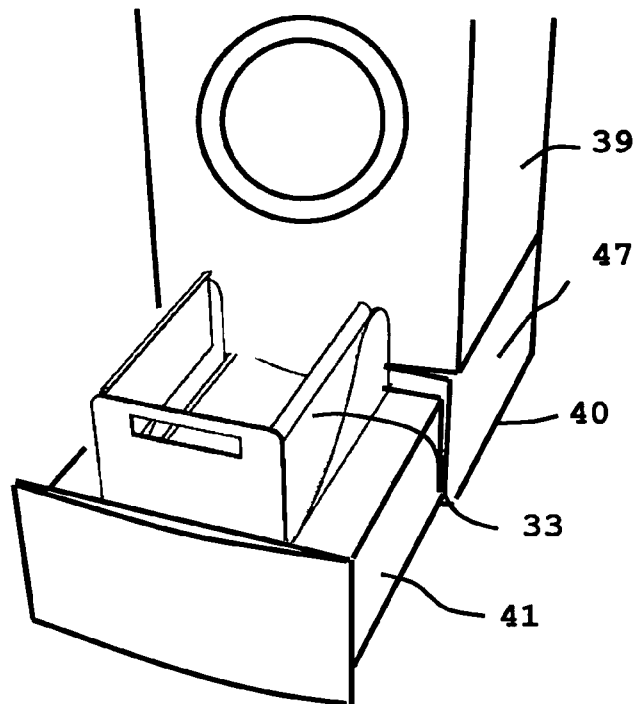


Fig. 5c

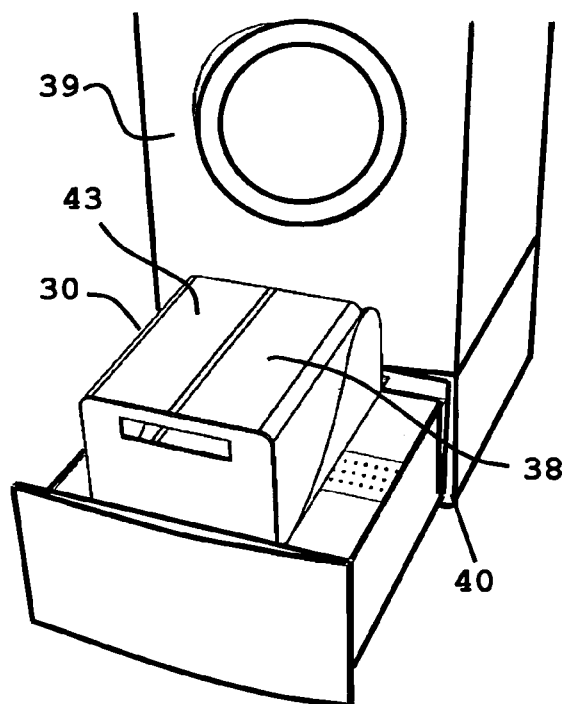


Fig. 5d

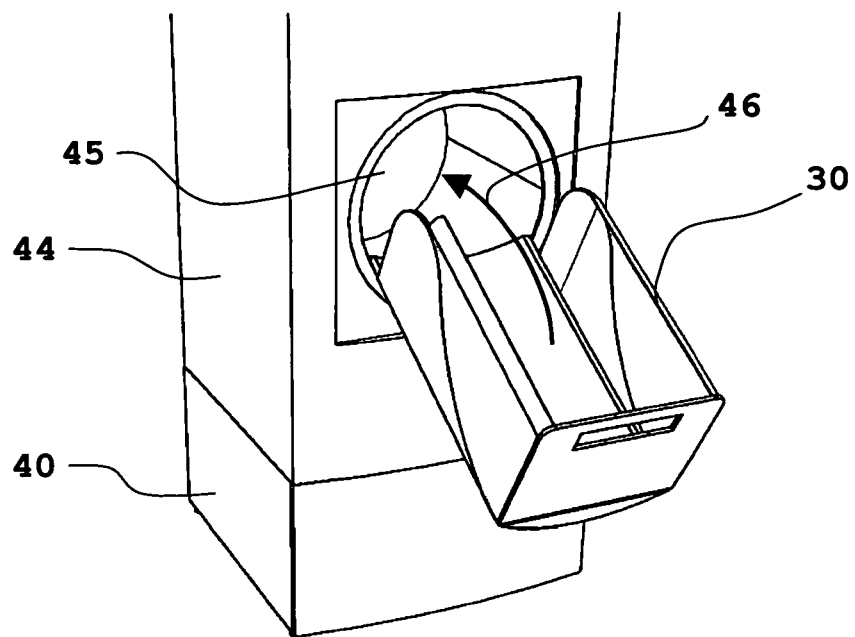


Fig. 6



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 09 01 4541

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
A	FR 2 171 084 A1 (SIEMENS ELEKTROGERAETE GMBH [DE]) 21 September 1973 (1973-09-21) * page 1, lines 7-13; page 3, line 36 - page 4, line 22; figures 2-7 *	1-5	INV. D06F95/00 D06F29/00
A	US 2 904 897 A (WHYTE RONAL H ET AL) 22 September 1959 (1959-09-22) * the whole document *	1-5	
A	DE 103 53 044 A1 (BSH BOSCH SIEMENS HAUSGERAETE [DE]) 9 June 2005 (2005-06-09) * the whole document *	1-5	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			D06F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 13 January 2010	Examiner Clivio, Eugenio
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	

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EP 09 01 4541

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13-01-2010

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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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