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(54) **REMOVABLE RECEPTACLE FOR A TISSUE BOX**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

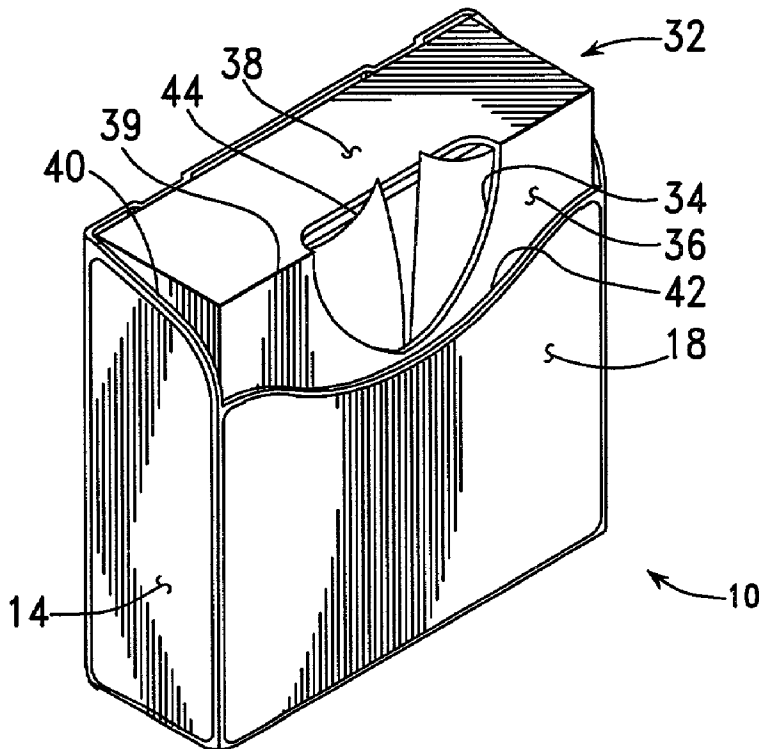
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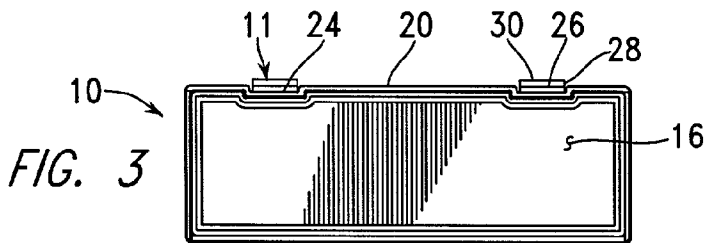
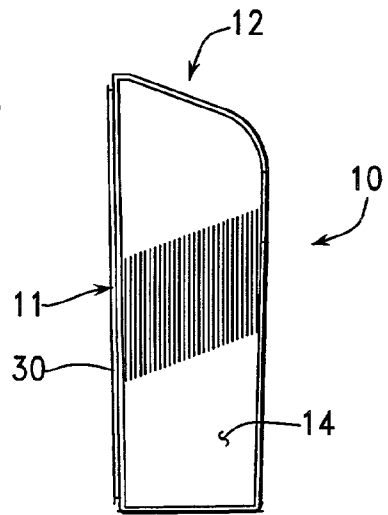
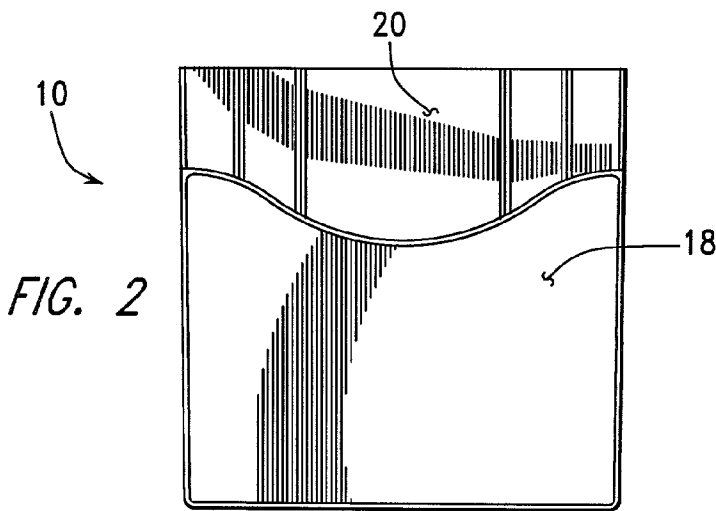
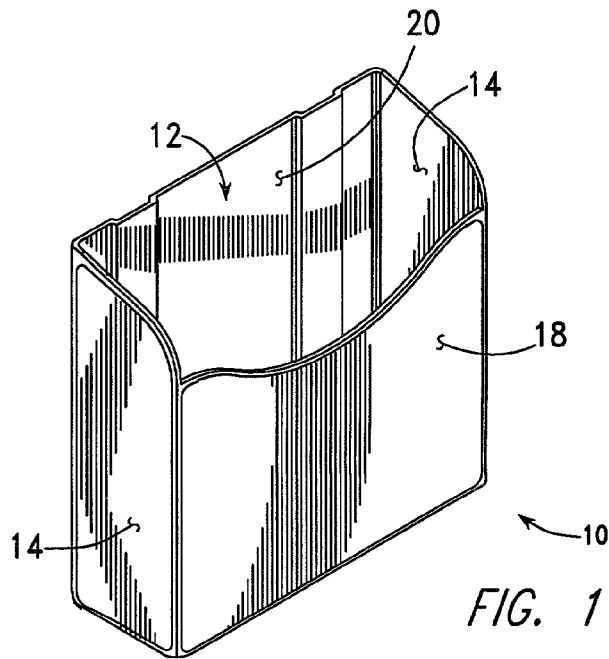
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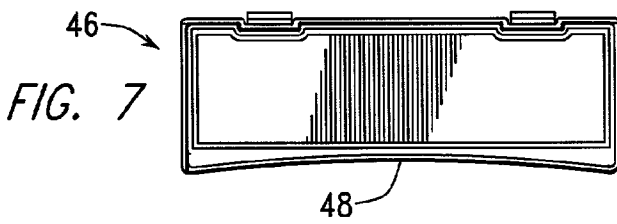
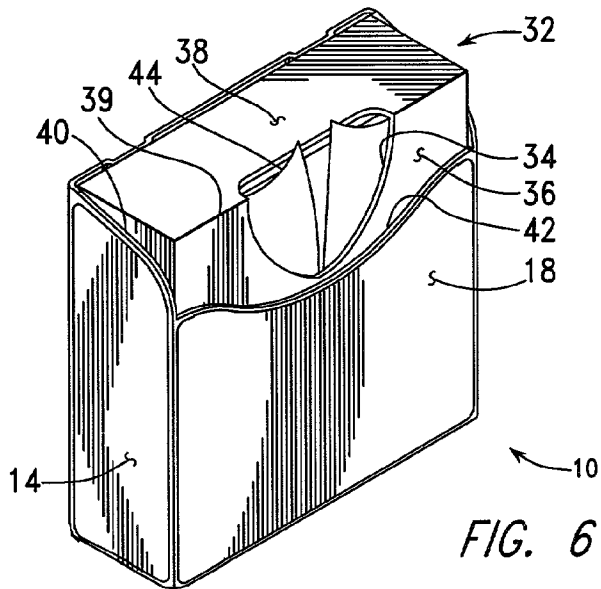
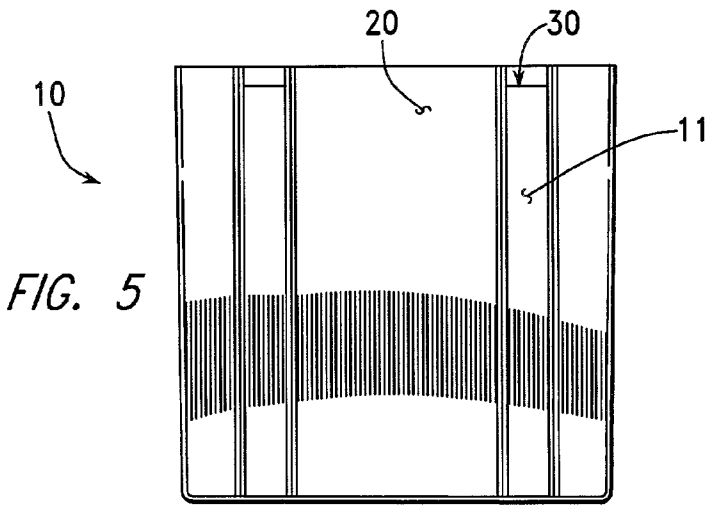
A receptacle for a tissue box includes front, back, right, left, and bottom sides, with an open top. A fastening structure, such as two sets of hook and loop fasteners, is provided for attaching the receptacle to an external surface, such as a surface within the passenger compartment of a vehicle. The tissue box is configured to accept and hold a small tissue box, with access to tissues within the box being provided through an opening within the tissue box and through the open top of the receptacle.

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/280,902, filed on Apr. 2, 2001.







REMOVABLE RECEPTACLE FOR A TISSUE BOX

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/280,902, filed Apr. 2, 2001.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] This invention relates to a receptacle to hold a tissue box, and, more particularly, to such a receptacle provided with means for attachment to a surface within the passenger compartment of a vehicle.

[0004] 2. Summary of the Background Art

[0005] Facial tissues are often needed within an automobile, for uses such as nose blowing and cleaning up spilled food. Such needs for tissues often arise with little warning, under conditions in which tissues are difficult or impossible to locate.

[0006] A box of facial tissues having a configuration particularly suitable for use within the passenger compartment of an automobile is sold by the Kimberly-Clark Corporation under the registered trademarks KLEENEX TRAVELERS. The size and shape of this box, being 12.07 cm (4.75 inches) wide, 12.07 cm (4.75 inches) high, and 3.81 cm (1.5 inches) deep make it particularly useful within an automobile because it has been configured to fit into small compartment locations convenient for a driver's use, such as map pockets, dash pockets, and console compartments in many vehicles, and further because it has been configured to allow to be removed from the front and top of the box as it is held within a suitable compartment. Various features and advantages of this type of tissue box are described in U.S. Pat. No. 5,516,000, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

[0007] When a suitable compartment can be found for holding this type of tissue box, significant advantages are achieved over other conventional types of tissue boxes. Full-sized flat or upright tissue boxes are typically too large to be conveniently stored in a compartment while remaining in a position convenient for use, and small tissue packs can be inadequate for many uses and difficult to use. A loose tissue box may slide around on the seat or floor of the vehicle, becoming damaged, and even contributing to a hazardous condition if a driver, needing to use a tissue, becomes distracted in an attempt locate the box.

[0008] However, some vehicles do not have suitable compartments for holding a tissue box, even when the tissue box has been configured particularly for use within a vehicle. Additionally, some drivers wanting to put such a tissue box in a compartment, will find all such compartments full of maps, tour guides, glasses, etc. Therefore, what is needed is a container for holding such a tissue box in an orientation ready for use, with the container additionally being removably attachable to various surfaces within the vehicle.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,516,000 describes the cardboard tissue box itself as being provided with a hook and loop type fastener to be affixed to a convenient surface within the vehicle. However, this arrangement has the disadvantage of being expensive, since one side of the hook and loop fastener would eventually be discarded with the empty box. Thus, what is needed is a method providing for such

attachment while allowing the replacement of tissue boxes without requiring the simultaneous replacement of fastener hardware.

[0010] Several patents describe articles to be worn by the a user, with the articles providing for the convenient dispensing of individual facial tissues. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 4,977,626 describes a garment or the like including a dispenser pocket attached thereon, formed by two overlaid panels, one of which is partially detachable. An elongate opening is provided through the outer panel, with a number of sheets being stored within the pocket to be removable through the elongate opening. U.S. Pat. No. 4,805,242 describes a pocket combination for holding a packet of disposable tissues and for incorporation in a leather glove or other like article of clothing. U.S. Pat. No. 4,401,232 describes a dispenser, which can be worn on the wrist of the user by means of an elastic strap, for dispensing one sheet at a time from a rectangular receptacle, with a resiliently mounted lever having an adhesive pad being used to engage each individual sheet.

[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 4,770,292 describes a set of hanging nesting containers, which can be fastened to one another and to a mounting channel by means of hook and loop fasteners. Each of the containers comprises a square base having a planar base with top and bottom surfaces and with four sides extending upward perpendicular to the top surface. A rectangular fastening lip extends outward from the base perpendicular to one of the sides. One component of hook and loop fastening material is disposed on opposed surfaces of the lip, and a strip of the other component is disposed on the bottom surface of the base beneath the side adjacent the side from which the loop extends outward.

[0012] Still, what is needed is a receptacle removably mountable on a vehicle surface for removably holding a box of tissues, with the box of tissues being outwardly exposed in a manner allowing the removal of individual tissues held within the box.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0013] In accordance with a first aspect of the invention, a receptacle is provided. The receptacle includes rear, left, right, bottom, and front sides and an open top. The side extends upward to a rear upper edge and includes an attachment structure for attaching said receptacle to a surface external to said receptacle. The left side extends forward from said rear side and upward to a left upper edge. The right side extends forward from said rear side and upward to a right upper edge. The bottom side extends forward from said rear side and between said left and right sides. The front side extends upward from said bottom side to a front upper edge and between said left and right sides.

[0014] In accordance with another aspect of the invention apparatus is provided including the receptacle and a tissue box fitting within the receptacle. The sides of the receptacle preferably form a tapered container, larger at the top opening than at the bottom to hold the tissue box in place after it is downwardly inserted into the receptacle. Additionally, one or more of the sides of the receptacle may have a concave shape to engage the tissue box. Preferably, the tissue box includes an opening extending downward and rearward from an upper front edge, and the upper front edge of the receptacle extends centrally downward to expose this open-

ing in the tissue box. When the tissue box is held in this way, a tissue can easily be removed with one hand.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a receptacle built in accordance with the invention, as viewed from in front and above;

[0016] FIG. 2 is a front elevation of the receptacle of FIG. 1;

[0017] FIG. 3 is a plan view of the receptacle of FIG. 1;

[0018] FIG. 4 is a left elevation of the receptacle of FIG. 1;

[0019] FIG. 5 is a rear elevation of the receptacle of FIG. 1;

[0020] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the receptacle of FIG. 1 holding a tissue box; and

[0021] FIG. 7 is a plan view of a receptacle built in accordance with an alternate version of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] FIGS. 1-5 are views of a receptacle 10 configured to hold a small tissue box including, for rapid installation on various surfaces and for subsequent removal therefrom, a pair of hook and loop fasteners 11, which are, for example, of a type sold under the trademark VELCRO. FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the receptacle 10; FIG. 2 is a front elevation thereof; FIG. 3 is a plan view thereof; FIG. 4 is a left elevation thereof, and FIG. 5 is a rear elevation thereof. The right elevation of the receptacle 10 is the is a mirror image of the left elevation shown in FIG. 4.

[0023] The receptacle 10 includes an open top 12, a left and right sides 14, a bottom 16, a front 18, and a back 20. Preferably, the body of the receptacle is molded from a thermoplastic resin, with upper edges being rounded, and the various surfaces being tapered to provided for extraction of an internally extending die piece and further to facilitate the insertion of a tissue box into the receptacle.

[0024] For ease of installation upon, and removal from, a vertical environmental surface, two sets of hook and loop fasteners 11 are included, being applied within depressed surfaces 24 of the back 20. Each of the fasteners 11 includes a first type of fastener 26, adhesively attached to the back 20, a second type of fastener 28, engaging the first type of fastener 26, and a protective strip 30 extending over an adhesive layer of the second type of fastener 28. For example, the first type of fastener is a hook type, while the second type of fastener is a loop type.

[0025] The receptacle 10 is applied to an environmental surface by first removing the protective strips 30 and by then pressing the receptacle 10 in place so that the adhesive layers of the fasteners 28 attach to the surface. Then, the receptacle 10 may be removed, and reapplied by using the removable attachment mechanism of the fasteners 11. For use of the receptacle 10 within a vehicle, the environmental surface is, for example, an interior side of a door, a side of a central console, or the back of a front seat to provide for tissue usage by persons in the back seat.

[0026] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the receptacle 10 holding a suitable tissue box 32 which is, for example, a tissue box sold by the Kimberly-Clark Corporation under the trademarks KLEENEX TRAVELERS. The tissue box 32, having been opened, includes an opening 34 extending downward along a front surface 36 of the tissue box 32 and rearward along a top surface 38 thereof. Preferably, the left and right side upper edges 40 of the opening 12 in the top of the receptacle 10 extend downward toward the front 18, along the left and right sides 14 of the receptacle, so that the upper front upper edge 39 of the tissue box 32 is exposed to facilitate the installation and removal of the tissue box 32 from the receptacle 10, while the front upper edge 42 of the opening 12 also extends further downward in the center of the front 18 to provide access to the opening 34 in the tissue box for the removal of tissues 44.

[0027] It is desirable that the receptacle 10 engages a suitable tissue box 32 snugly enough so that the box does not rattle or otherwise move around within the box as a result of the motion of a vehicle in which the receptacle 10 is being used, or as a result of an upward pull asserted on the box as a tissue 44 is removed by pulling upward. This kind of engagement between the tissue box 32 and the receptacle 10, with the receptacle 10 also being attached by means of the hook and loop fasteners 11, particularly facilitates an ability to remove a tissue with one hand, i.e. without a need to hold the tissue box 32 in place with the other hand. To this end, the receptacle 10 is preferably tapered, being larger at the top opening 12.

[0028] FIG. 7 is a plan view of a receptacle 46, formed in accordance with an alternative version of the invention to have one or more sides with a concave curvature. In the example of FIG. 7, the front side 48 has a convex curvature, so that a central portion of this side 48 contacts a tissue box 32 as it is inserted within the receptacle 46, and remains in resilient contact with the tissue box, preventing movement of the tissue box 32 due to vehicle movement and due to removal of a tissue with one hand.

[0029] While the invention has been shown in its preferred versions or embodiments with some degree of particularity, it is understood that this description has been given only by way of example, and that numerous variations in the configuration may be made without departing from the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A receptacle comprising:

- a rear side extending upward to a rear upper edge and including an attachment structure for attaching said receptacle to a surface external to said receptacle;
- a left side extending forward from said rear side and upward to a left upper edge;
- a right side extending forward from said rear side and upward to a right upper edge;
- a bottom side extending forward from said rear side and between said left and right sides;
- a front side extending upward from said bottom side to a front upper edge and between said left and right sides; and an open top.

2. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said attachment structure comprises:

a first component of a hook and loop fastener adhesively attached to a surface of said rear side a second component of said hook and loop fastener engaging said first component thereof; and

an adhesive surface outwardly disposed from said component of said hook and loop fastener.

3. The receptacle of claim 2, wherein said surface of said rear side includes a depressed area, and

said first component is attached to said depressed area.

4. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said rear side includes a pair of spaced apart depressed areas extending parallel to one another; and

said attachment structure comprises a first component of a hook and loop fastener adhesively attach to each of said depressed areas, a second component of said hook and loop fastener engaging each said first component thereof, and an adhesive surface outwardly disposed from each said second component of said hook and loop fastener.

5. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said sides define an open container approximately 12.065 cm (1.5 inches) deep, 12.065 cm (4.5 inches) high, and 3.81 cm (4.5 inches) wide.

6. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said sides define a tapered open container having said open top larger than said bottom side.

7. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein a side extending downward from said open top is curved in a concave shape.

8. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said left and right upper upper edges extend downward toward said front upper upper edge from said rear upper upper edge.

9. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein said front upper upper edge is curved to extend downward from said right and left upper edges to a center of said front upper edge.

10. Apparatus comprising a tissue box within a receptacle, wherein said receptacle comprises:

- a rear side extending upward to a rear upper edge and including an attachment structure for attaching said receptacle to a surface external to said receptacle;
- a left side extending forward from said rear side and upward to a left upper edge;
- a right side extending forward from said rear side and upward to a right upper edge;
- a bottom side extending forward from said rear side and between said left and right sides;
- a front side extending upward from said bottom side to a front upper edge and between said left and right sides; and

an open top, and

wherein a portion of said tissue box extends upward through said open top.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said attachment structure comprises:

- a first component of a hook and loop fastener adhesively attached to a surface of said rear side a second component of said hook and loop fastener engaging said first component thereof; and
- an adhesive surface outwardly disposed from said component of said hook and loop fastener.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein said surface of said rear side includes a depressed area, and

said first component is attached to said depressed area.

13. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said rear side includes a pair of spaced apart depressed areas extending parallel to one another; and

said attachment structure comprises a first component of a hook and loop fastener adhesively attach to each of said depressed areas, a second component of said hook and loop fastener engaging each said first component thereof, and an adhesive surface outwardly disposed from each said second component of said hook and loop fastener.

14. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein said sides define an open container approximately (1.5 inches) deep, (4.5 inches) high, and (4.5 inches) wide.

15. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein

- said sides define a tapered open container, having said open top larger than said bottom side,
- and said side surfaces engage said tissue box to hold said tissue box in place within said tapered open container.

16. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein a side extending downward from said open top is curved in a concave shape to engage said tissue box to hold said tissue box in place within said receptacle.

17. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein

- said left and right upper edges extend downward toward said front upper edge from said rear upper edge, and
- an upper portion of said tissue box extends above said left and right upper edges.

18. The receptacle of claim 1, wherein

- said tissue box includes an opening extending downward from a front upper edge for removal of tissues;
- said front upper edge is curved to extend downward from said right and left upper edges to a center of said front upper edge to provide external access to said opening within said tissue box.

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