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(54) **TISSUE OR TRASH RECEPTACLE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

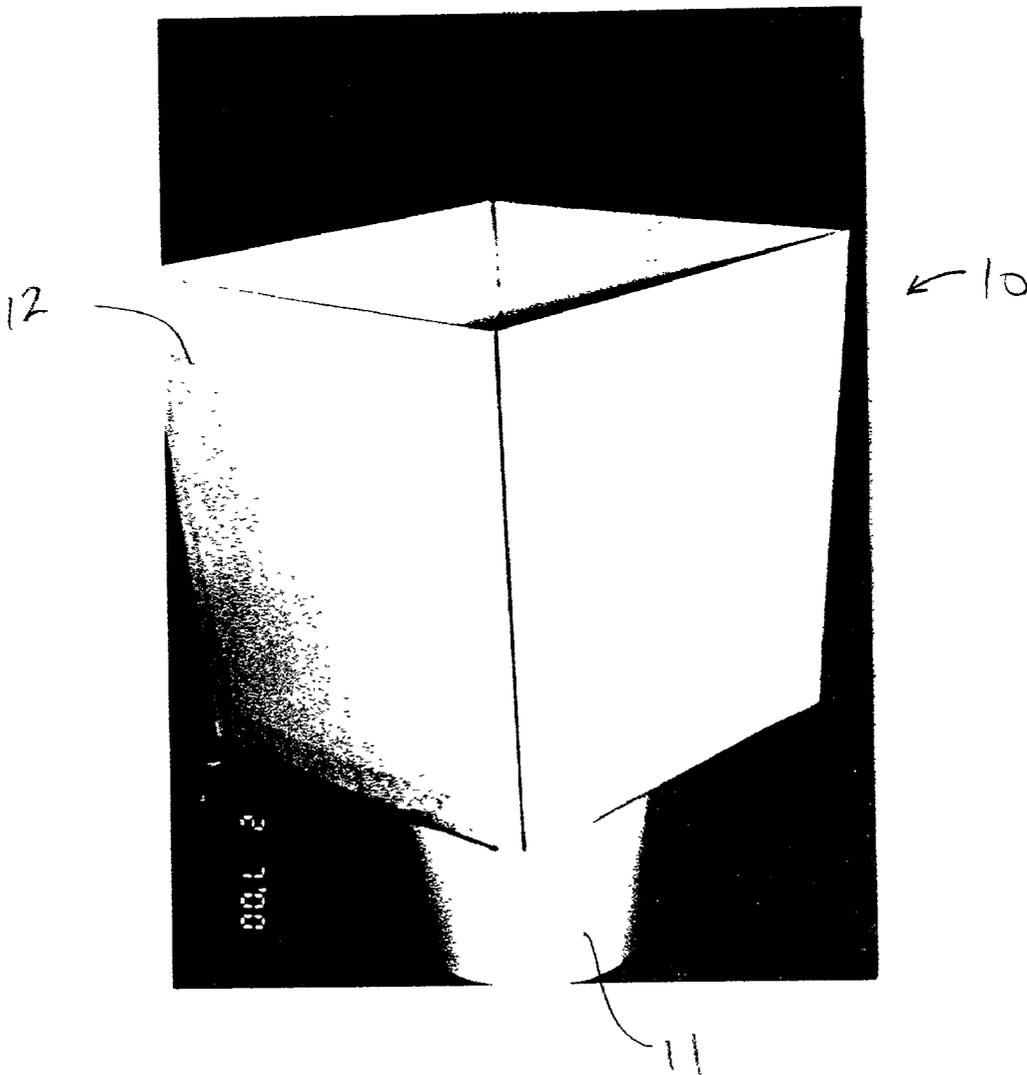
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A device for holding a box of tissues so that the tissues it can be readily accessed and used by an individual traveling alone in a vehicle such as a truck or automobile. The device preferably comprises a base member sized to fit in a cup holder, and a receptacle for receiving and holding a tissue box. Grippers in the receptacle hold the tissue box so that a tissue may be pulled therefrom without dislodging the box from the cup holder.



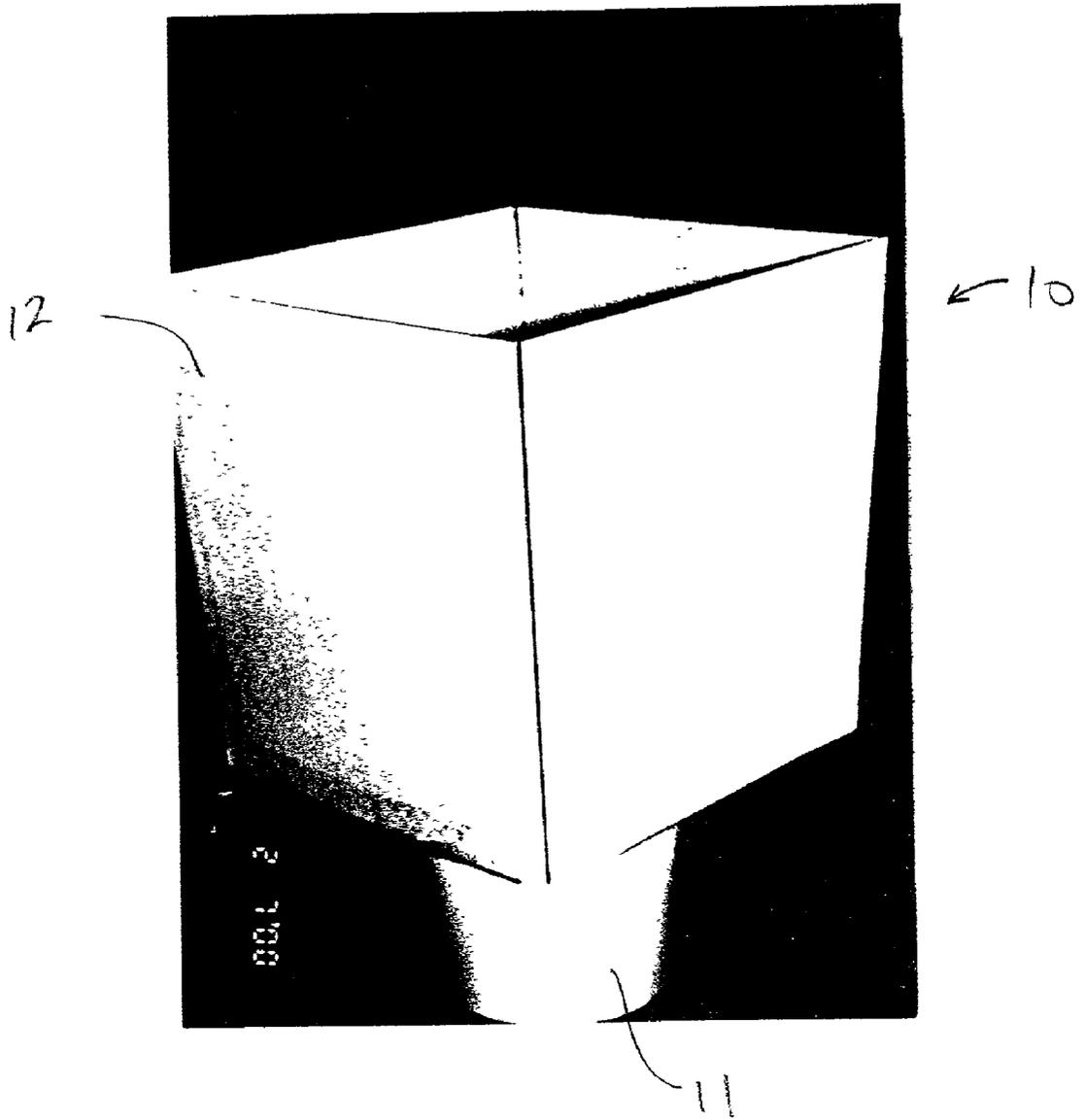


Fig. 1

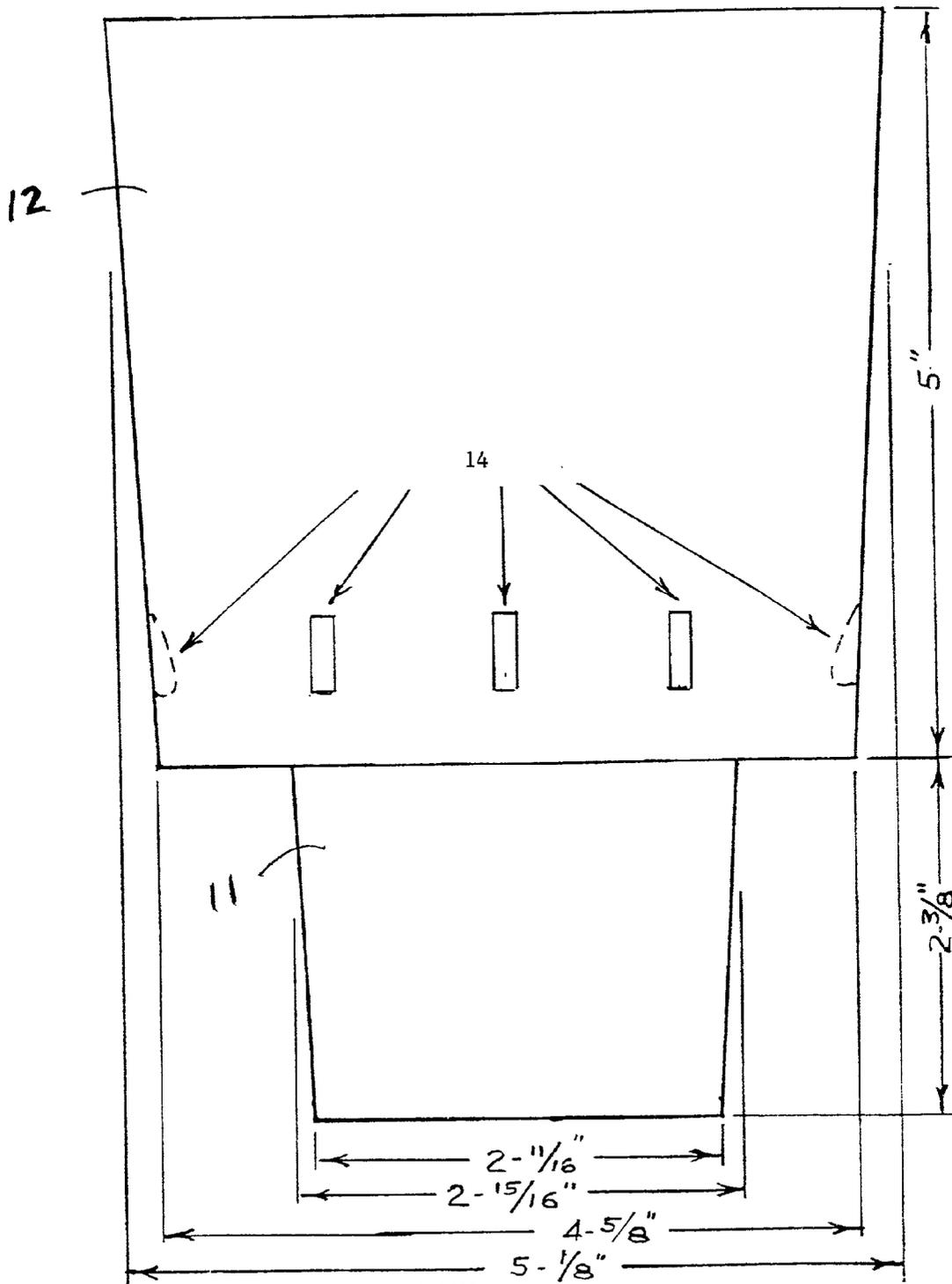


Fig. 2

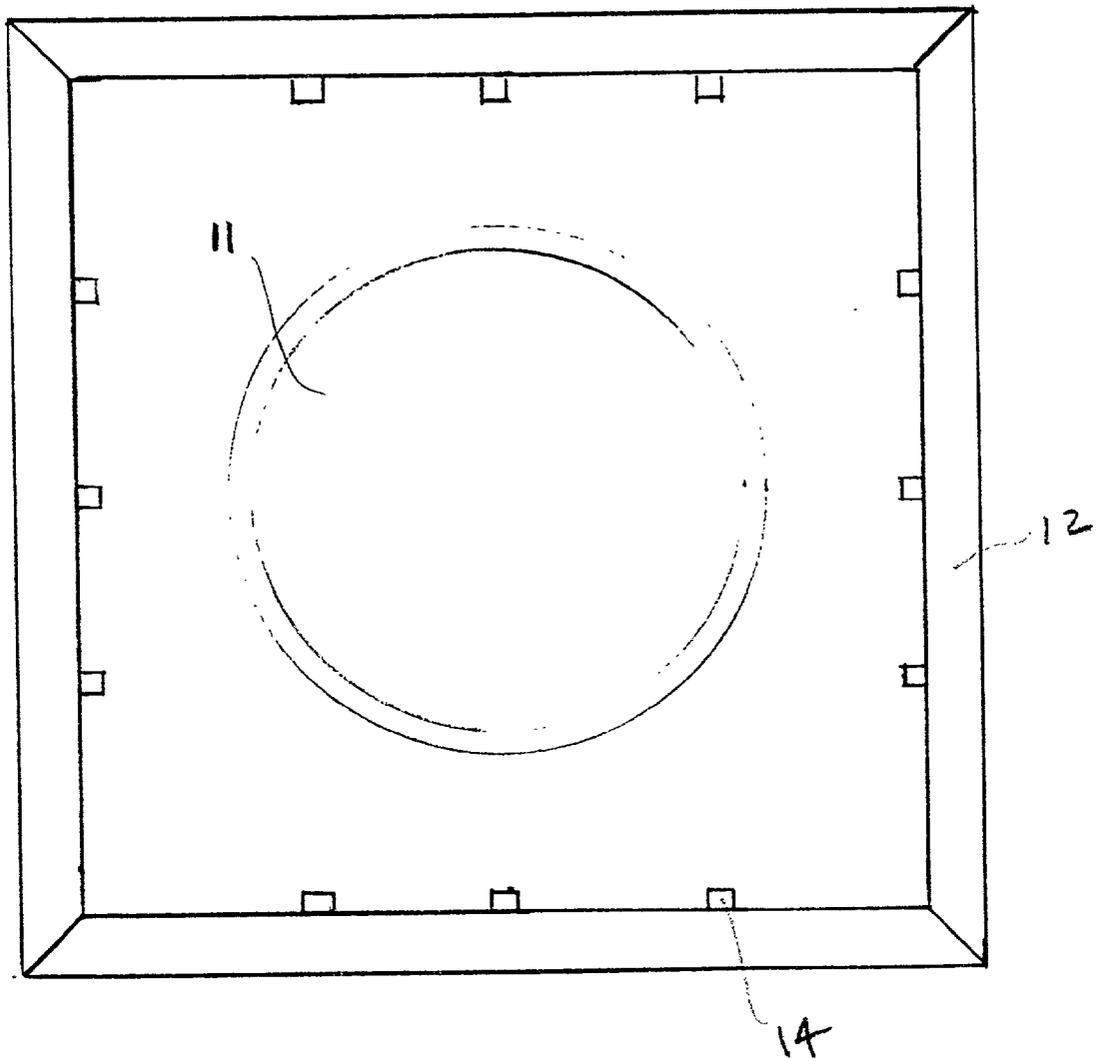


Fig. 3

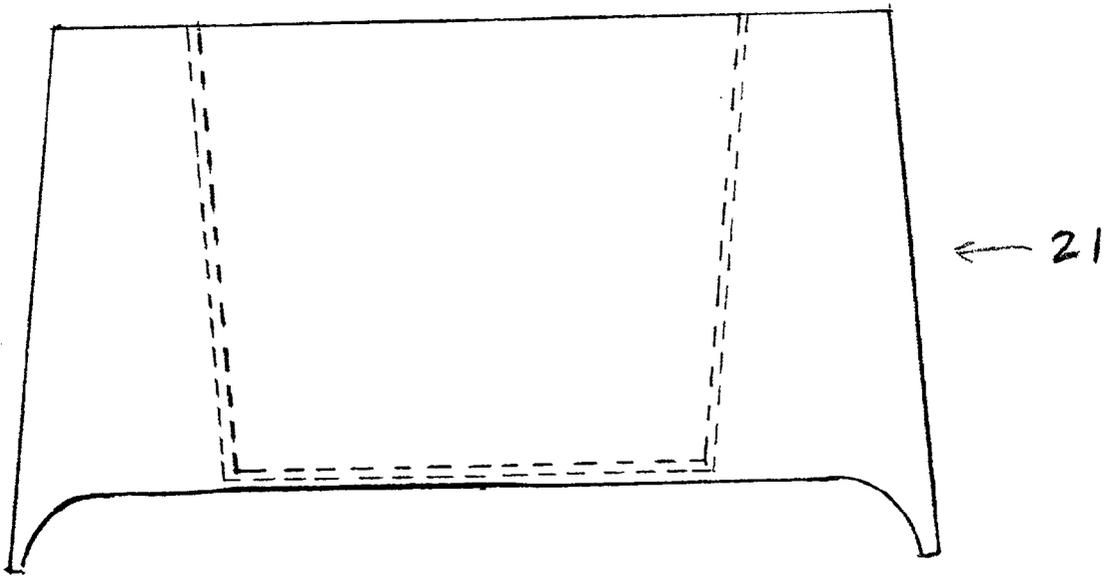


Fig. 4

TISSUE OR TRASH RECEPTACLE

[0001] The present invention relates generally to a device for holding a box of tissues, and more particularly to a device for holding a box of tissues where they are readily accessed by the driver of a truck or automobile.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Tissues are often desired by drivers or passengers in vehicles such as trucks, automobiles, boats, etc. When the need for a tissue arises though, there is generally no tissue readily available. If there are tissues in the vehicle at all, the box has generally fallen to the floor, or is otherwise unreachable by the occupants.

[0003] When a tissue box is present on the seat, it normally requires two hands to extract a tissue from the box—one hand to hold the box and the other to pull the tissue. This presents a risk for persons who are driving alone when they need a tissue, since it is desired to keep at least one hand on the wheel while the vehicle is in motion.

[0004] A need therefore exists for a device for holding tissues in a vehicle so that the tissues are readily accessible and may be procured with one hand. The present invention addresses that need.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] Briefly describing one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a device for holding a box of tissues in a vehicle so that the tissues it can be readily accessed and used by an individual driving or traveling alone. The device preferably comprises a generally conical base member sized to fit in a cup holder, and a generally cubical receptacle for receiving and holding a tissue box. Grippers are preferably provided in the receptacle to hold the tissue box so that a tissue may be pulled therefrom without dislodging the box from the cup holder. A secondary base unit for holding the device when the vehicle's cup holder is not available may also be included.

[0006] One object of the present invention is to provide a device for making it easy to obtain a tissue while driving.

[0007] Other objects and advantages will be apparent from the following description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the tissue holder of the present invention.

[0009] FIG. 2 is an elevational view, in full section, of the tissue holder of FIG. 1.

[0010] FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the tissue holder of FIG. 1.

[0011] FIG. 4 shows an optional secondary base unit that may be used with the tissue holder of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0012] For the purposes of promoting an understanding of the principles of the invention, reference will now be made to certain preferred embodiments and specific language will be used to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is

thereby intended, such alterations and further modifications in the illustrated device, and such further applications of the principles of the invention as illustrated therein being contemplated as would normally occur to one skilled in the art to which the invention relates.

[0013] As indicated above, one aspect of the present invention relates to provide a tissue holder that can be used by an individual driving alone in a vehicle such as a car or truck. As shown in the Figures, tissue holder 10 comprises a base member 11 and a receptacle 12. Grippers 14 are preferably included to hold the box of tissues in the receptacle, and a secondary base unit 21 may also be used.

[0014] Base member 11 fits in the cup holder of the vehicle to support the tissue holder in position where it is easily reached by the user. Accordingly, base member 11 is generally sized and shaped to fit in a cup holder, with its specific size and shape being variable as long as it is capable of accomplishing its stated function.

[0015] Preferably, the base member is generally cylindrical in shape, as a cup is, with conical or slightly conical shapes being more preferred. A slightly conical shape allows the base member to be inserted easily into the cup holder while still providing a snug fit at the top as long as the upper diameter is at least as great as the diameter of the cup holder.

[0016] In the most preferred embodiments the base member is an inverted, truncated cone shape, with the upper (large) end having a diameter of between about 2.5 inches and 4 inches, and the lower (smaller) end having a diameter of between 2 inches and 3.5 inches.

[0017] In some embodiments the base member is weighted to provide additional stability to the holder and to counteract the force tugging of tissues from the box. The weight may be located anywhere in the base member, with weights providing a lower center of gravity being preferred due to their greater impact on the stability of the device. Dry filler material is used as a weighting material in some preferred embodiments.

[0018] Receptacle 11 receives and holds the box of tissues. Here too, the specific size and shape is not as important as its ability to receive and hold a box of tissues.

[0019] In some preferred embodiments receptacle 11 is generally cubical, as is the shape of "boutique" boxes of tissues. To facilitate placing the box in the receptacle, the sides may slope inward from the top of the receptacle to the base member. This shape also facilitates stacking of the devices during storage, shipping and handling. Accordingly, in the most preferred embodiments the receptacle is shaped like an inverted, truncated, square-based pyramid. Other shapes, and particularly generally rectangular shapes corresponding to the shape of a tissue box, may also be used.

[0020] There is an opening at the top of the receptacle to receive the box of tissues. The opening is preferably between about 4.0 and 6.0 inches on each side, with an opening of between 5.0 and 5.25 inches on each side is more preferred. In some embodiments the opening may be covered with a removable lid or cover, such as is used with counter-top tissue holders.

[0021] It is to be appreciated that the tissue holder of the present invention may alternatively function as a trash receptacle when the receptacle portion of the device is not

being used to hold a box of tissues. If the device is to be used full-time as a trash receptacle, the grippers for holding a tissue box do not need to be included. In this embodiment, the receptacle of the device may be substantially any shape appropriate for holding trash, such as cubical, rectangular, conical, cylindrical, pyramidal, etc.

[0022] It is also to be appreciated that a secondary base unit may be used to hold the device when a cup holder is not present or is otherwise engaged. The secondary base unit has a stable base for resting on the floor or seat of a vehicle, and includes a "cup holder" open to the top to receive and hold the base member of the tissue holder. Optionally, a second cup holder may also be included in the secondary base unit to hold a cup or can while the tissue holder is being used to hold tissues or trash.

[0023] The device may be made of any substantially rigid material, preferably plastic. In the most preferred embodiments the plastic is about 1/16 inch thick.

[0024] While the invention has been illustrated and described in detail in the drawings and foregoing description, the same is to be considered as illustrative and not restrictive in character, it being understood that only the preferred embodiment has been shown and described and that all changes and modifications that come within the spirit of the invention are desired to be protected.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for holding a box of tissues, comprising:
 - (a) a base member sized to fit in a cup holder in a vehicle; and
 - (b) a receptacle attached to the upper end of the base member and sized to receive and hold a box of tissues.
2. The device of claim 1 wherein said base member is generally cylindrical.
3. The device of claim 2 wherein said cylindrical base member has a diameter of between 2 inches and 4 inches.
4. The device of claim 1 wherein said base member is generally conical.
5. The device of claim 4 wherein said conical base member has an upper diameter of between 2.5 inches and 4 inches, and a lower diameter of between 2 inches and 3.5 inches.

6. The device of claim 1 wherein said base member is weighted to provide additional stability to the device.

7. The device of claim 6 wherein said receptacle is generally cubical.

8. The device of claim 7 wherein said generally cubical receptacle has sides that slope outward from the base member to the top of the receptacle.

9. The device of claim 7 wherein said generally cubical receptacle is open at the top, with the opening being between 4.0 and 6.0 inches on each side.

10. The device of claim 9 wherein said generally cubical receptacle has an opening that is about between 5.0 and 5.25 inches on each side.

11. The device of claim 1 wherein said receptacle is shaped like an inverted, truncated, square-based pyramid.

12. The device of claim 1 wherein the device further includes at least one gripper to aid in holding the box of tissues in the receptacle when a tissue is pulled from the box

13. The device of claim 12 herein said at least one gripper comprises a multiplicity of grippers.

14. The device of claim 13 wherein said grippers are tabs located in the receptacle to hold the box of tissues by friction contact therewith.

15. The device of claim 1 wherein the device further includes holding means for securing the box of tissues in the receptacle portion of the device.

16. The device of claim 15 wherein said holding means comprises at least one gripper to hold the box of tissues by friction contact therewith.

17. The device of claim 1 wherein said device additionally includes a secondary base unit to hold the device when it is desired not to hold the device with a vehicle cup holder.

18. The device of claim 18 and further including an additional cup holder for holding a drink cup or can.

19. A device for holding trash, comprising:

(a) a base member sized to fit in a cup holder in a vehicle; and

(b) a receptacle attached to the upper end of the base member and sized to receive and hold trash.

20. The device of claim 19 wherein said device additionally includes a secondary base unit to hold the device when it is desired not to hold the device with a vehicle cup holder.

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