WEARABLE DISPENSER AND METHOD FOR CARRYING AT LEAST ONE ARTICLE

Abstract

The present invention provides a wearable dispenser for enabling a user to carry at least one article. The wearable dispenser includes a container having at least a portion of a three-dimensional character for containing at least one article and a connector attachable to the container and to the user or the user's clothing. Desirably, the wearable dispenser is suitable for containing tissues, and the connector is a wristband which can be worn about a wrist of a child.
WEARABLE DISPENSER AND METHOD FOR CARRYING AT LEAST ONE ARTICLE

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] This invention relates generally to consumer goods and more particularly to wearable dispensers and methods for carrying at least one article.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Consumers appreciate conveniences which make the tasks of their daily lives quicker and/or easier. Children in particular are less likely than others to stop an activity to look for a necessary item (e.g., a tissue) and therefore tend to do without such items with predictable consequences. Children also are more likely than others to leave an item (e.g., food, money, clothing, toys) in a quickly forgotten location when they do not deem it important at a specific moment in time.

[0003] There are various types of dispensers and holders to hold such items. However, these holders and dispensers are often easily left behind due to their bulk or size. Additionally, often it may not be convenient to access the contents of such holders and dispensers. For example, pocket-size holders are often used as an alternative to carrying around a standard sized tissue box at times when mobility is required or desired. However, these tissue holders can be easily lost due to their small size. Additionally, they may be too large to fit in a child’s pocket and often small children’s clothing does not include any pockets.

[0004] Thus, there is a need for a wearable dispenser to hold and dispense items, particularly tissues, which is readily available to a user, and in particular to children, at all times to facilitate use of such items and prevent them from being lost.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention provides, in a first aspect, a wearable dispenser for enabling a user to carry at least one article. The wearable dispenser includes a container in the form of at least a portion of a three-dimensional shape of a character for containing the at least one article and a connector which is attachable to the container and to the user or the user’s clothing.

[0006] The present invention provides, in a second aspect, a wearable tissue dispenser for enabling a user to carry a plurality of tissues. The wearable tissue dispenser includes a container for containing the plurality of tissues and a wristband which is attachable to the container and to a wrist of a user.

[0007] The present invention provides, in a third aspect, a method for enabling a user to carry at least one article. The method includes providing a container in the form of at least a portion of a three-dimensional shape of a character for containing the at least one article, and attaching the container to an outer portion of the user or the user’s clothing.

[0008] The present invention provides, in a fourth aspect, a method for enabling a user to carry a plurality of tissues. The method includes providing a container for containing the plurality of tissues, providing a connector, and attaching the connector to the container and to an outer portion of the user or the user’s clothing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The subject matter which is regarded as the invention is particularly pointed out and distinctly claimed in the claims at the conclusion of the specification. The foregoing and other features, and advantages of the invention will be readily understood from the following detailed description of preferred embodiments taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

[0010] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a wearable dispenser in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of the wearable dispenser of FIG. 1;

[0012] FIG. 3 is another perspective view of the wearable dispenser of FIG. 1;

[0013] FIG. 4 is a bottom view of the wearable dispenser of FIG. 1;

[0014] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a connector in accordance with the present invention; and

[0015] FIG. 6 is a side elevational view of a second embodiment of a wearable dispenser in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0016] Examples of a wearable dispenser are depicted in Figs. 1-6 and described in detail herein.

[0017] Figs. 1-3 depict one embodiment of a wearable dispenser 10 according to the present invention which includes a container 20 in the form or shape of a fictional character or non-fictional character adapted to hold a variety of items or articles such as gum, tissues, money, paper, food, toys, or other small items, and a connector or wristband 70 which is desirable worn by a user. Advantageously, wearable dispenser 10 may hold various items, thus making them readily available to a user, and in particular to children. In this way, needed items, for example tissues, can be dispensed or removed therefrom when needed without the necessity of searching for the items.

[0018] Container 20 includes a bottom, upwardly extending sides and an aperture or an opening 30 extending through a side thereof, preferably a top side 40 thereof. Opening 30 is adapted to dispense the items therethrough. Preferably, container 20 holds tissues 50 which are dispensed to a user through opening 30.

[0019] Desirably, container 20 is formed in a three-dimensional shape of a popular children’s character which might be drawn, for example, from books, movies, or television programming. Such a character might be, for example, an animal, person, caricature of a person, plant, or portion thereof. An example of container 20 embodying a fictional character is illustrated in Figs. 1-3 and 6. Opening 30 of container 20 may be formed as the mouth, nose, belly, hand, or other portion of such a character. For example, as illustrated in Figs. 1-3 and 6, opening 30 is formed as a portion of a belly of the fictional character. By forming container 20 in such a way, the child might more likely want to wear wearable dispenser 10 while storing items in container 20, such as tissues, and more likely dispense them as needed.
Thus, the child is saved the necessity of finding a tissue and a parent is saved the trouble of cleaning any clothing soiled as a result of the child ignoring a need for a tissue.

[0020] In this illustrated embodiment, container 20 includes an openable or a detachable portion 60 (FIGS. 1 and 3) for receiving various items to be contained within container 20. Items may thus be inserted or removed from container 20 through an opening 62 (FIG. 3). For example, openable portion 60 may be hingedly attached along an edge 73. As best illustrated in FIG. 3, edges 72, 75, and 79 may matingly engage edges 71 and include hook and loop fasteners, for example VELCRO-type fasteners, or other means, allowing openable portion 60 to be readily opened and securely closed. For example, openable portion 60 might include one or more hook portions 77 on edges 71 while container 20 might include one or more loop portions 78 on edges 72, 75, and 79. As an alternative, an openable portion may include a zipper or other releasably closable means. Desirably, openable portion 60 and opening 62 may be sized to allow the insertion of a tissue holder 65 (FIG. 3) into container 20 thus allowing tissues 50 to be dispensed to the user through opening 30.

[0021] As depicted in FIGS. 1-5, container 20 may be fixedly or removably attachable to a connector which might be a wristband 70, wrist strap, or bracelet which may be attached to a wrist of the user via fasteners, for example hook and loop fasteners, a buckle, or a zipper, or other suitable fasteners. FIG. 1 depicts a buckle 32 on an end portion 33 of wristband 70 and holes 34 to receive buckle 32 on an end portion 35 of wristband 70, for example. In addition, as shown in FIG. 4, wristband 70 may be attachable to container 20, for example, by being threaded through slots 90 in a bottom side 92 of container 20. Wristband 70 might also be formed in the shape of or might be adorned with images of, for example, the characters described above for container 20. Wristband 70 and container 20 might also be formed from materials which are soft, such as textiles, so as to be comfortable for the user and easily washable, allowing for convenient care thereof. Various portions of dispenser 10 might also be made of plastic materials. Advantageously, dispenser 10 might be made of materials sufficiently soft to reduce or prevent injury to a child if he were to fall while wearing it.

[0022] As shown in FIG. 5, another embodiment of a connector or wristband 170 may include hook and loop fasteners provided on the ends of wristband 170. For example, hook portions 80 might be attached to a first end portion 85 of wristband 170 while loop portions 82 might be attached to a second end portion 87 of wristband 170, thus enabling easy attachment to a wrist of the user. The use of hook and loop fasteners on first end portion 85 and second end portion 87 advantageously allow easy release of wrist band 170 from a user if wrist band 170 was to catch on a foreign object. For example, wrist band 170 might release from a child if it was to be caught on a piece of playground equipment. From the present description, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that a wristband might also be a continuous elongatable or stretchable band. A user might stretch such a band to put it on and take it off while it might suitably retract or constrict to a size of a user’s wrist when it is worn. The use of such fasteners is particularly useful for those, for example the elderly, who might have difficulty using other fasteners requiring more intricate maneuvering.

[0023] In a further embodiment of a wearable dispenser 110, illustrated in FIG. 6, container 120 may be fixedly or removably attachable to a connector 193, a portion of which may be removably or fixedly attachable to a user or directly to the user’s clothing. For example, the connector may be releasably attachable to an outer portion of the user or the user’s clothing. As shown in FIG. 6, connector 193 might include hook and loop fasteners to connect container 120 to the user’s clothing. A hook portion 194 may be connected to container 120 and a loop portion 196 may be connected to the user’s clothing 200, for example an outer portion of the user’s clothing such as a shirt or pants. Container 120 is readily attachable to clothing 200 by attaching hook portion 194 to loop portion 196.

[0024] From the present description, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that other forms of connectors for attaching a wearable dispenser to the user or to the user or to the user’s clothing might be suitably employed. For example, a container might be attached to a user’s clothing using a pin, zipper, spring biased clip or other means. For example, a container might be attached to a shirt pocket of a user using a spring biased clip. These described connectors for attaching the wearable dispenser are in contrast to the user simply carrying tissues in the shirt pocket.

[0025] As discussed above, by attaching container 20 to a user or a user’s clothing, the user can easily and conveniently remove the contents of container 20. For example, if the user is a child and container 20 holds tissues 50, then a child could conveniently pull tissues 50 from the dispenser for use as needed.

[0026] Although preferred embodiments have been depicted and described in detail herein, it will be apparent to those skilled in the relevant art that various modifications, additions, substitutions and the like can be made without departing from the spirit of the invention and these are therefore considered to be within the scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

We claim:
1. A wearable dispenser for enabling a user to carry at least one article, said wearable dispenser comprising:
   a container in the form of at least a portion of a three-dimensional character for containing at least one article; and
   a connector attachable to said container and to at least one of the user and the user’s clothing.
2. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 wherein said three-dimensional character comprises at least one of a three-dimensional fictional character and a three-dimensional non-fictional character.
3. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 wherein said container comprises a first opening for dispensing the at least one article to the user.
4. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a second opening for inserting the at least one article into said container.
5. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 further comprising a tissue holder receivable in said container.
6. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 wherein said at least one article comprises a plurality of tissues.

7. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 wherein said at least one article comprises at least one of paper, food, money and a toy.

8. The wearable dispenser of claim 1 wherein said connector comprises a wristband.

9. The wearable dispenser of claim 8 wherein said wristband comprises releasably attachable ends.

10. The wearable dispenser of claim 8 wherein the container further comprises at least two slots on a side of said container for connecting said wristband to said container.

11. A wearable tissue dispenser for enabling a user to carry a plurality of tissues, said wearable tissue dispenser comprising:
   a container for containing the plurality of tissues; and
   a wristband attachable to said container and to a wrist of the user.

12. The wearable tissue dispenser of claim 11 wherein said container is in the form of at least a portion of a three-dimensional fictional character.

13. The wearable tissue dispenser of claim 11 wherein said container further comprises an opening through which the plurality of tissues are removable from said container.

14. The wearable tissue dispenser of claim 12 wherein said opening comprises at least one of a mouth, nose, belly, and hand portion of said at least a portion of a three-dimensional character.

15. The wearable tissue dispenser of claim 11 further comprising a tissue holder receivable in said container.

16. A method for enabling a user to carry at least one article, said method comprising:
   providing a container comprising at least a portion of a three-dimensional character for containing at least one article; and
   attaching the container to at least one of an outer portion of the user and an outer portion of the user's clothing.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the three-dimensional character comprises at least one of a three-dimensional fictional character and a three-dimensional non-fictional character.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein the attaching the container comprises providing a connector, attaching the container to the connector, and attaching the connector to at least one of the outer portion of the user and the outer portion of the user's clothing.

19. The method of claim 18 wherein the connector comprises a wristband.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the attaching connector to at least one of the outer portion of the user and the outer portion of the user's clothing comprises releasably attaching ends of the wristband to one another.

21. The method of claim 16 further comprising inserting the at least one article into the container.

22. The method of claim 21 further comprising removing the at least one article from the container.

23. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one article comprises a tissue holder containing a plurality of tissues.

24. The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one article comprises at least one of paper, food, money and a toy.

25. A method for enabling a user to carry a plurality of tissues, said method comprising:
   providing a container for containing the plurality of tissues;
   providing a connector; and
   attaching the connector to the container and to an outer portion of at least one of the user and the user's clothing.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the container comprises at least a portion of a three-dimensional fictional character.

27. The method of claim 25 wherein the connector comprises a wristband.

28. The method of claim 25 further comprising inserting the plurality of tissues into the container.

29. The method of claim 28 further comprising removing at least one tissue of the plurality of tissues from the container.

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