March 6, 1962 H. L. KOTKINS 3,023,867

LUGGAGE CONSTRUCTION

Filed March 18, 1960

3 Sheets-Sheet 1

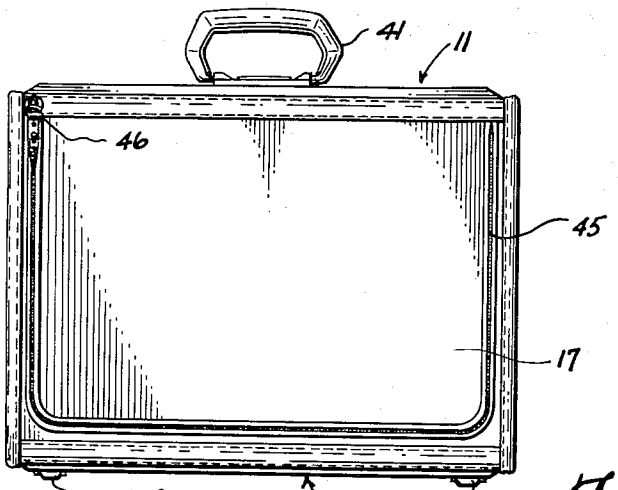


Fig. 1

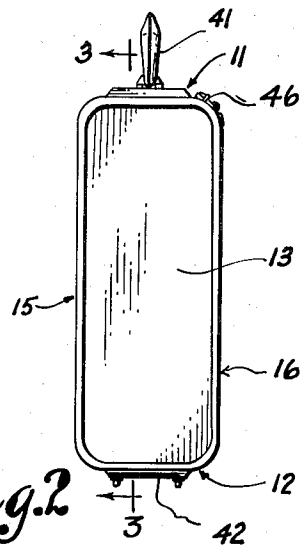


Fig. 2

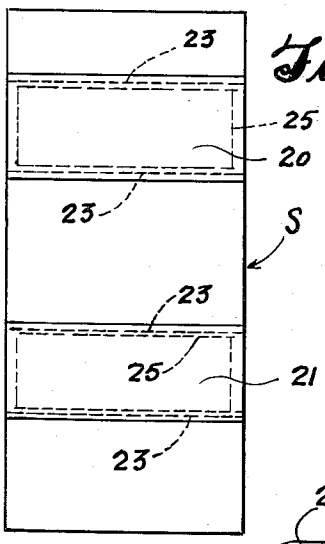


Fig. 4

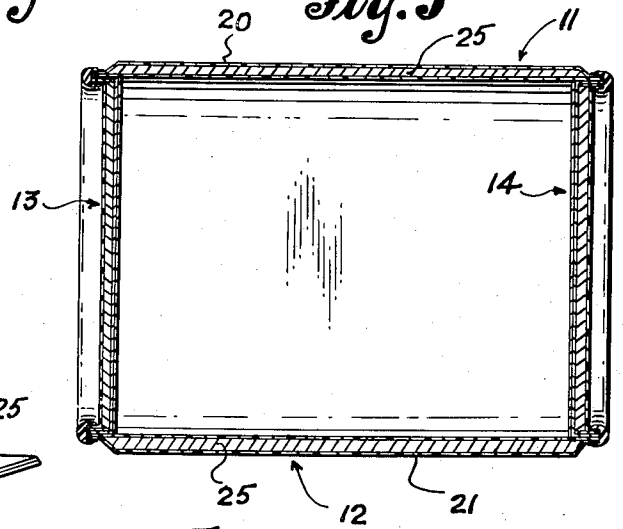


Fig. 3

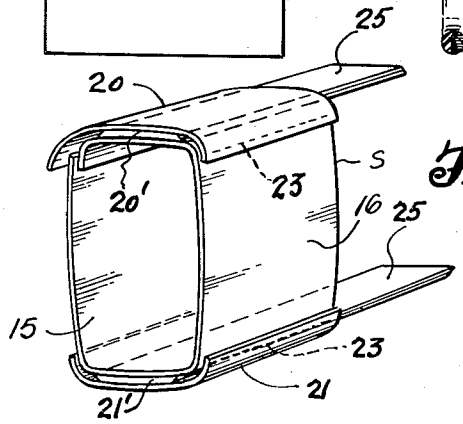


Fig. 5

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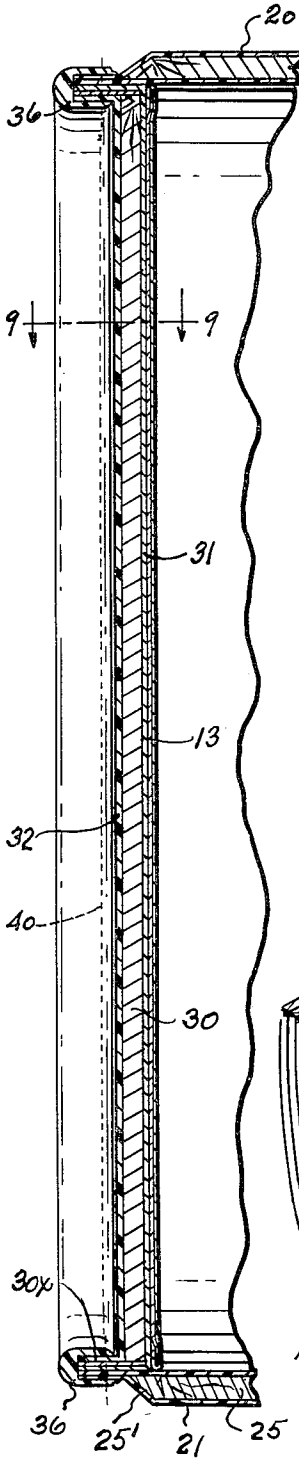


Fig. 6

Fig. 7

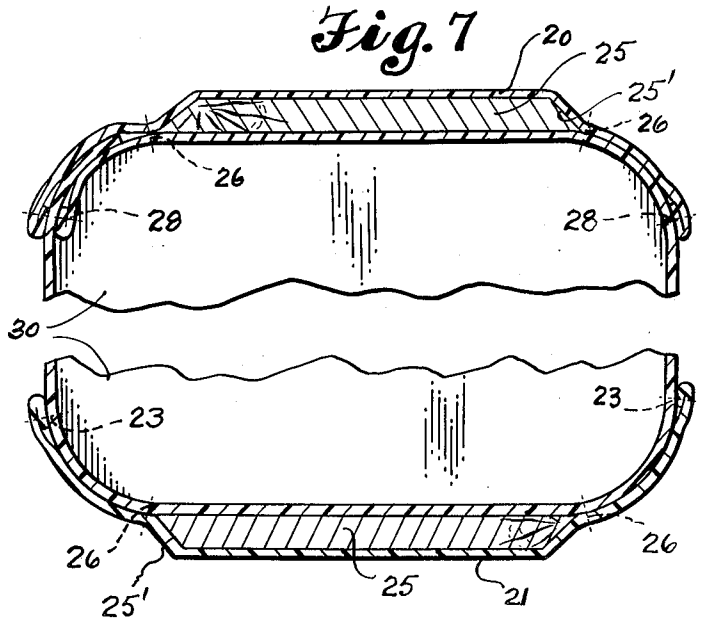


Fig. 8

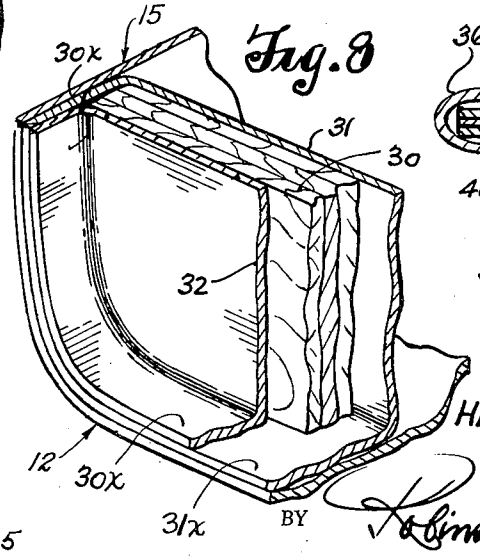
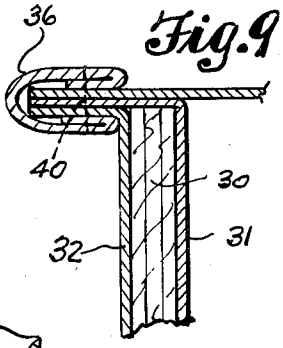


Fig. 9



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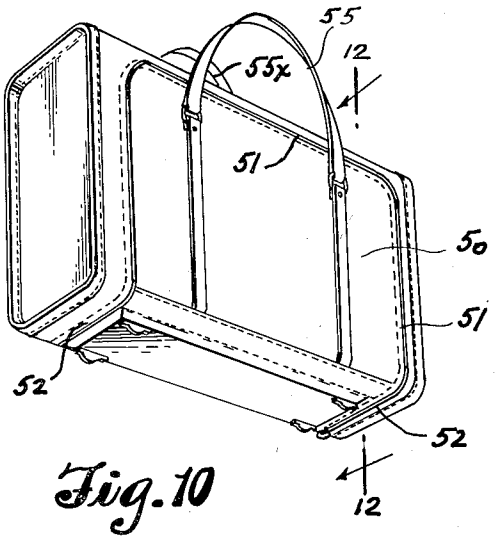


Fig. 10

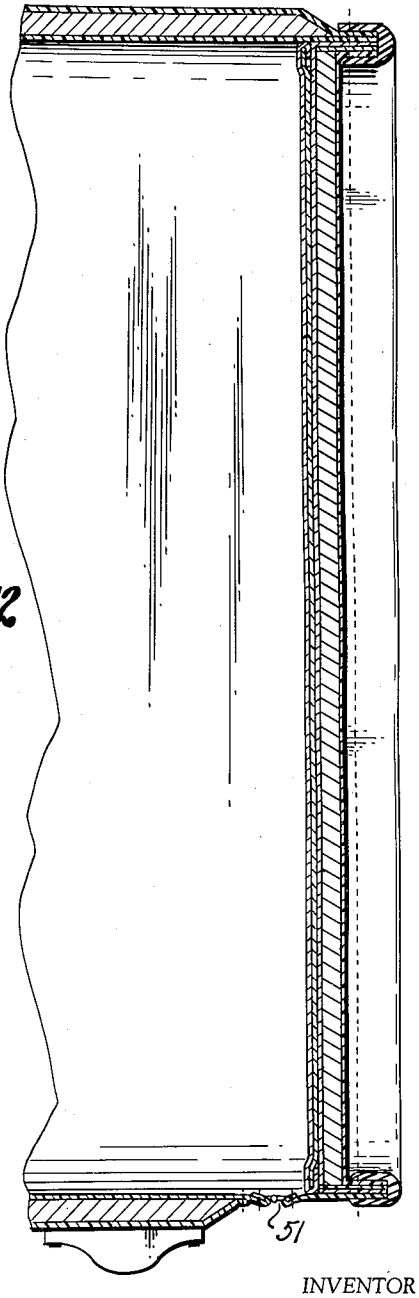


Fig. 12

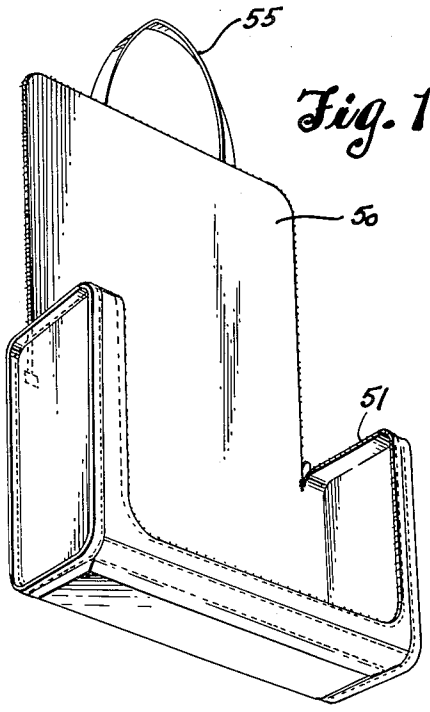


Fig. 11

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United States Patent Office

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LUGGAGE CONSTRUCTION

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7 Claims. (Cl. 190—41)

This invention relates to suitcases. More particularly, it relates to improved details of construction of wall forming parts to be embodied in suitcases and in the sequence and mode or manner of their assembly in suitcase manufacturing; it being the principal objects of the present invention to provide a strong, lightweight and practical construction without detriment to strength, capacity, durability or utility.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a suitcase that has increased strength; that avoids the gluing together of frame forming parts and those costs of manufacturing that are incident to such gluing; that provides for a faster and more practical manufacture and assembly of parts and an incident reduction in manufacturing costs.

More specifically stated, the objects and advantages of the present invention reside in the provision of a suitcase wherein opposite ends of a flexible strip of a selected material are joined to provide a tubular body of predetermined length and circumference; which strip is transversely pocketed to receive and retain, in said pockets, top and bottom wall stiffening and defining panels, preferably of plywood or the like and to which tubular body rigid endwall forming panels are applied to coact with the top and bottom wall forming panels in the provision of a rigid, rectangular frame structure; all of which parts, as thus assembled, being secured in rectangular suitcase form by the application and securement of binding strips to the joining or interfitted edge portions of the assembled tubular body and the inserted opposite end panels.

Further objects and advantages of the present invention reside in the details of construction or formation of the various parts embodied in the suitcase; in their mode of assembly, and in the specific means for and manner of their securement together as assembled, as will hereinafter be fully described.

In accomplishing the above mentioned and various other objects and advantages of the invention, I have provided the improved details of construction the preferred forms of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a side view of a suitcase embodying the improvements of the present invention therein.

FIG. 2 is an end view of the same.

FIG. 3 is a vertical section, taken lengthwise of the suitcase as on line 3—3 in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a flattened out view of a strip of flexible material from which the body forming tube is made; this strip being shown with overlays, of strip form stitched transversely thereto thus to provide pockets for the reception and retaining therein of rigid, wall stiffening panels of plywood, or the like.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view, showing the body forming strip, as joined at its opposite ends to provide the tubular body, and as formed with pockets for reception therein of wall stiffening panels.

FIG. 6 is an enlarged cross-sectional view of one of the opposite end wall panels of the suitcase, as applied within an end portion of the tubular body and as secured in position by an edge binding strip.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged, cross-sectional view of the tubular body of the suitcase showing the plywood panels as applied to the pockets thereof and as engaged with upper and lower end edges of the end wall panel, as disposed within that end of the tubular body; the medial portion of the body being removed to shorten the view.

FIG. 8 is a fragmental, perspective view, showing a lower corner formation of the suitcase before the binding strip has been applied thereto.

FIG. 9 is a horizontal, cross-section taken on line 9—9 in FIG. 6, showing the applied binding strip.

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of a suitcase designed to serve particularly as a shoe bag; this being shown in its closed, carrying position.

FIG. 11 is a perspective view of the shoe bag of FIG. 10, shown opened and as suspended for easy access thereto.

FIG. 12 is an enlarged, vertical section of an end portion of the shoe bag of FIG. 10, taken on line 12—12 in FIG. 10.

Referring more in detail to the drawings:

The present suitcase, as illustrated in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, is of typical or conventional form in that it is rectangular both in cross-section and in longitudinal section. It is unique in that its body portion is of tubular formation, as disclosed best by FIG. 5, and in that this tubular body has rigid end wall panels fitted and secured in its opposite ends, which give the desired shape and strength to the suitcase. The length of the suitcase is established by the transverse width of the continuous strip from which the tubular body is formed as presently explained and its height and width is established by the circumference of the tubular body and width and height of the opposite end panels that are fitted within the ends of the tubular body. It is anticipated that the present suitcase will be equipped with suitable lining material and with exterior fixtures such as glides, lock and handle, as will presently be explained. The present suitcase is further characterized by the provision of a partially detached sidewall panel, with Zipper fastening, which may be released to permit access to the suitcase, in lieu of the usual hinged lid.

As best shown in FIG. 3, the suitcase of FIG. 1 comprises horizontally disposed top and bottom panels that are designated in their entireties, respectively, by numerals 11 and 12 and opposite sidewall panels designated in their entireties respectively, by numerals 13 and 14. It is further to be understood that the tubular body portion of the suitcase provides the opposite sidewalls, 15 and 16 thereof that are well shown in FIGS. 2 and 5. It is in sidewall 16 that the previously mentioned partially detached panel, designated by numeral 17, is applied; this being shown in FIG. 1.

For the manufacture of the present suitcase of FIG. 1, a strip of suitable material which might be leather, fabric or any other suitable material of predetermined length and width, such as that designated by reference character S in FIG. 4 is provided. Before the opposite ends of the strip S are joined to provide the tubular body of FIG. 5, strips 20 and 21, which may be of a like material and each of which has a length equal to the width of strip S and a width that is slightly more than the transverse width of the suitcase, are applied across strip S and are stitched thereto along their opposite side edges, as at 23 in FIGS. 4 and 5. These transverse strips 20—21 are so disposed on the strip S that when its opposite ends are joined to provide the tubular body, they will coincide with the top and bottom wall forming areas of strip S as has been shown in FIG. 5. The pockets 20' and 21' that are provided between and by the stitching of the two transverse strips 20—21 to the body strip S are open at their ends and into each of them a rectangular panel 25 of plywood, or the like, is disposed as has been shown in FIGS. 4 and 5. These plywood panels are substantially of the full width of the pockets but are shorter in length so that, when properly in position therein, as in FIG. 7, they terminate short of the side edges of strip S as secured by the stitching 23 and the open ends of the pocket

forming strips. It is further to be noted that the plywood panels 25 are beveled along opposite end and side edges, as at 25' in FIGS. 6 and 7. After these plywood panels have been applied to the pockets, lines of stitching, as at 26 in FIG. 7, are applied through the strips 20 and 21 and body strip S to retain these wall stiffening panels snugly and properly in position. After the panels 25 have been inserted and secured thus in the pockets, the opposite end portions of the strip S are overlapped and joined beneath the overlying edge portion of strip 20 as in FIG. 7 by a line of stitching as at 28. The tubular body portion of the suitcase is then in the condition shown in FIG. 5, ready to receive the opposite end wall panels which will now be described, attention being directed more particularly to FIGS. 6, 7 and 8.

Each of the opposite end wall panels 13 and 14 is like the other in size and construction. It is shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 that the end panel is rounded at its corners thus, together they give the suitcase the rounded corner form that is well shown in FIG. 2. Each end panel comprises a rectangular core 30 of plywood or the like, of the predetermined length and width. Glued to the inside and outside faces of this panel are overlays or coverings 31—32 of suitable fabric, leather, or the like. It is well shown in FIG. 8 that the outside overlay 32 is formed flush with the peripheral portion of the panel 30 with outturned flanges 30*x* and that the inside ply or covering 31 is formed with a flange 31*x* turned outwardly to extend across the edges of the plywood panel to the full extent of the flanges 30*x*. These flanges may, if desired, be adhesively united.

When completed, these opposite end panels are fitted within the opposite ends of the tubular body, as shown in FIG. 6 to dispose the upper and lower end surfaces of their plywood cores 30 flatly against the inside end surfaces of the top and bottom wall panels 25. Then, U-shaped binding strips 36 are applied over the registering flanges and edges of strip S and all are stitched together as at 40 in FIGS. 6 and 9. With the parts so assembled and secured, the suitcase is held rigid and sturdy, and can be subjected to more than ordinary rough handling without damage thereto.

It has been shown in FIGS. 1 and 2 that a handle 41 is fixed centrally to the top wall panel 11 and that protective metal glides 42 are applied across the ends of the bottom panel 12. The partially detached sidewall panel 17 is severed from the strip S along opposite sides and across the bottom edge of the sidewall 16 and it is equipped about its edges with a zipper strip 45 and slide lock and fastener 46 shown in FIG. 1. When the suitcase is to be opened, it is preferably laid on its side 15, the zipper 45 disengaged and the panel 17 folded back over the top wall to which the handle is attached.

The essence of this invention is thought to reside, for the greater part, in the formation of the tubular body; the provision of the panel receiving pocket across its top and bottom wall forming portions thereof; the application of the rigid stiffening panels 25 to these pockets; the fitting of the rigid end panels within the opposite ends of the tubular body and the securement of the body and end panels together by the application of the binding strips 36, thus to provide a rigid durable, light weight construction that is especially desirable for air plane travel. It is further to be pointed out that the suitcase, as so constructed is attractive in design and without square or sharp corners or edges that are subject to wear. The beveling of the edges of panels 25 and the fitting of the overlay thereto gives the suitcase a strong paneled appearance that is quite ornamental.

Referring now to the shoe bag of FIG. 10, this insofar as its general construction is concerned, is substantially like that of the suitcase of FIG. 1. It differs, however, in the provision of an opening or access panel. It has been shown in FIG. 10 that the container is formed with a detachable wall panel 50 that is formed along its top edge and along opposite side edges with a zipper fastening 51. The panel side edges extend across the bottom of the container, as at 52—52 in FIG. 10, to terminate as they reach the opposite sidewall. This partially detached panel 50, and the opposite sidewall panel are formed with handle loops or straps 55—55*x* for carrying the device when in the position of FIG. 10. To open the device, the zipper fastening is released to its full length and the bag lifted by the carrying loop 55 only, this causes the case to drop to the position of FIG. 11. It can then be suspended by means of loop 55. It is the intention that such bags be equipped interiorly with a lining not herein shown, that is pocketed to receive or contain articles such as, for example, shoes or slippers, for easy selection.

What I claim as new is:

1. A suitcase, or the like, comprising a flexible strip of material joined at its ends to provide a tubular body forming portion, rigid panels fitted within said tubular body to define its top and bottom areas, rigid panels fitted and secured within the opposite ends of the tubular body between the opposite ends of the first mentioned panels to define the height and width dimensions of the suitcase and a partially detached sidewall panel providing access to the interior of the suitcase.

2. A suitcase, or the like, comprising a continuous, flexible strip of material providing a tubular body forming portion; said body forming portion being equipped with pockets extending lengthwise thereof and defining the top wall and bottom wall areas of the suitcase, rigid panels fitted and secured within said pockets and extending to the full length of the tubular body, and rigid end wall forming panels fitted within the opposite ends of the tubular body portion to establish the height and width dimensions of the suitcase; each end wall panel being disposed with its ends in supporting engagement with corresponding ends of the rigid top and bottom wall panels and a partially detached sidewall panel providing access to the interior of the suitcase.

3. The suitcase of claim 2 wherein said rigid end wall panels have surface coverings of flexible material permanently secured thereto and forming outturned securing flanges about their peripheries; said panels being so disposed within the ends of said tubular body as to lie flatly against the inside faces of the flexible body forming strip, and a binding strip folded over and secured to the engaged flanges and body strip to join the body portion and end walls.

4. The suitcase of claim 3 wherein said panels as applied to the top and bottom defining portions of the suitcase extend to the full width and length of said top and bottom wall defining pockets and wherein the securement of said binding strips is by stitching that closes the opposite ends of said pockets.

5. A suitcase construction comprising a continuous, flexible strip of material of predetermined length and width, joined at its ends to provide a tubular body portion, overlays of flexible strip material applied along the top and bottom defining areas of said body portion and secured thereto along their opposite side edges, rigid panels fitted within the pockets as provided by the securement of said overlays to the body; said panels extending to the full width of the pockets and substantially to their full length, rigid rectangular panels fitted within the opposite ends of said tubular body to establish the width and height dimensions of the suitcase; the latter panels having flexible surface covering material secured thereto and projecting, as outturned flanges, beyond their peripheries, and binding strips applied about the peripheral edge portions of the tubular body portion and end wall flanges to secure the assembly of body and end wall parts and a partially detached entrance panel formed in a sidewall of the body portion.

6. The suitcase of claim 5 wherein one end portion of said continuous flexible body forming strip is overlapped with the opposite end portion of said strip and is secured thereto between one longitudinal edge portion of the top wall pocket forming overlay and said opposite end portions of the body strip, by a line of stitching through said parts.

7. The suitcase of claim 5 wherein the rigid panels as applied within the top and bottom pockets provided by said overlays are snugly contained in said pockets and are beveled along their edges to give the defined top and bottom wall areas, pyramidal effect.

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