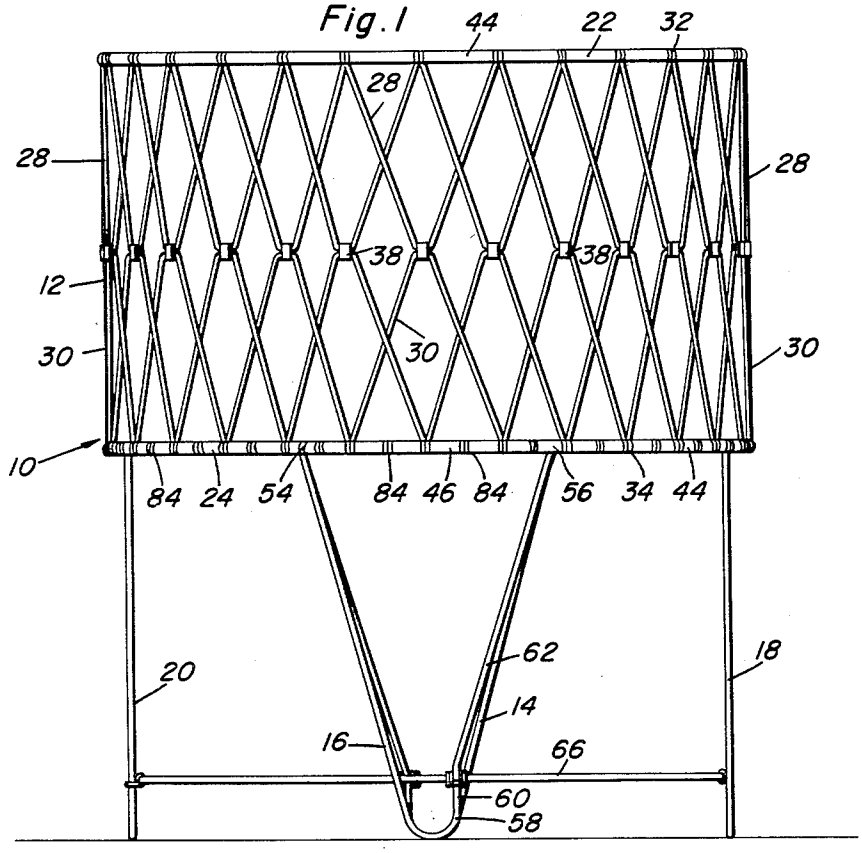
June 28, 1960 J. T. NEELY 2,942,750

COLLAPSIBLE BASKET

Filed Dec. 23, 1955 3 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1



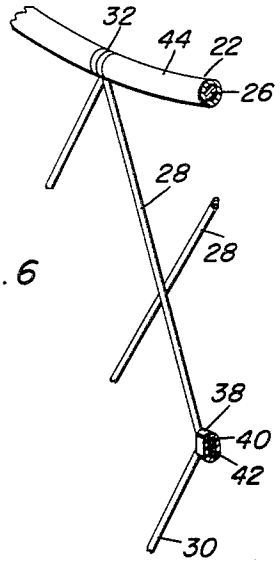


Fig. 6

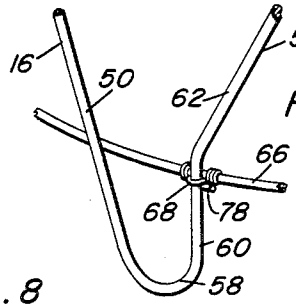
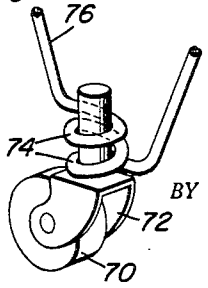


Fig. 7

Fig. 8



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June 28, 1960 J. T. NEELY 2,942,750

COLLAPSIBLE BASKET

Filed Dec. 23, 1955 3 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 2

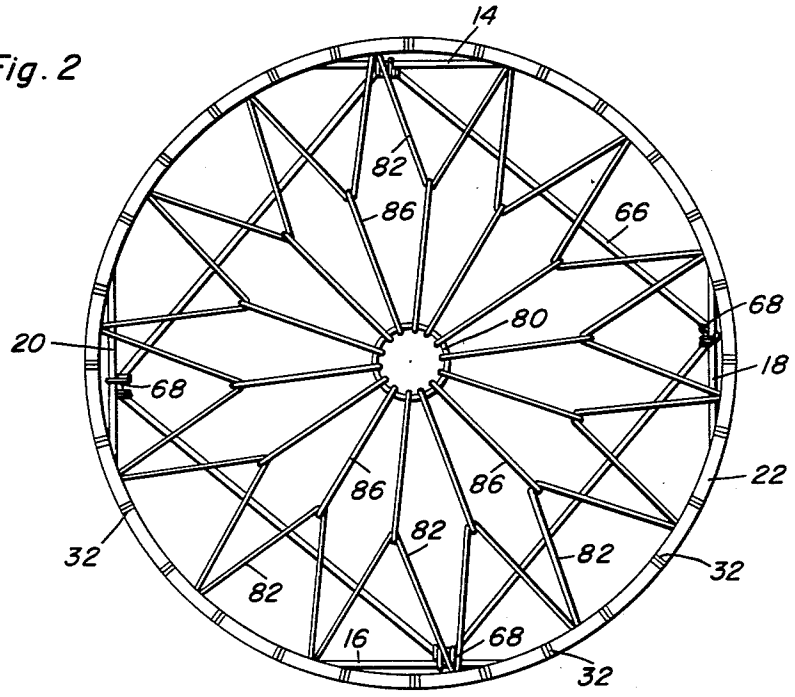
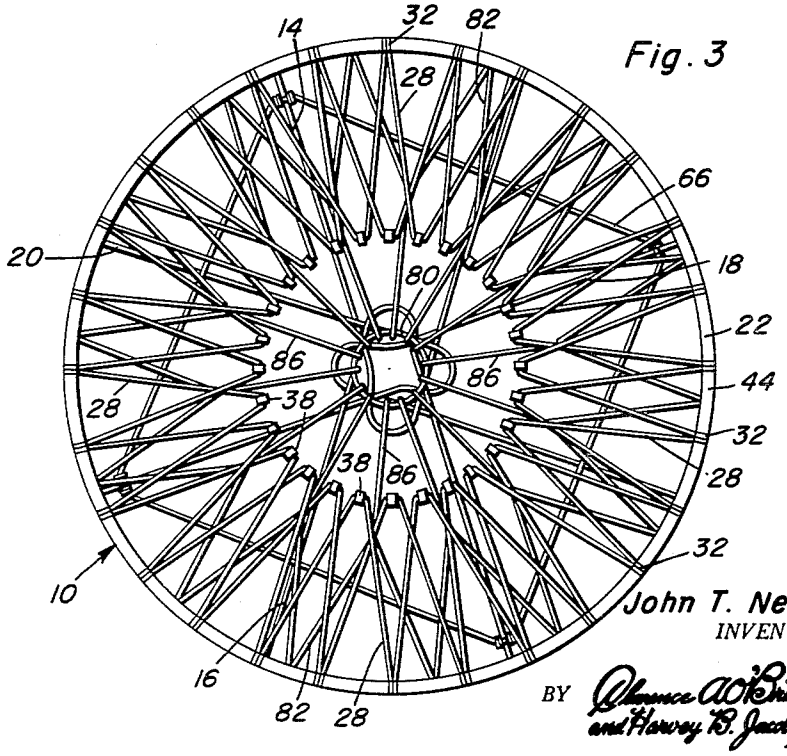


Fig. 3



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COLLAPSIBLE BASKET

Filed Dec. 23, 1955 3 Sheets-Sheet 3

Fig. 4

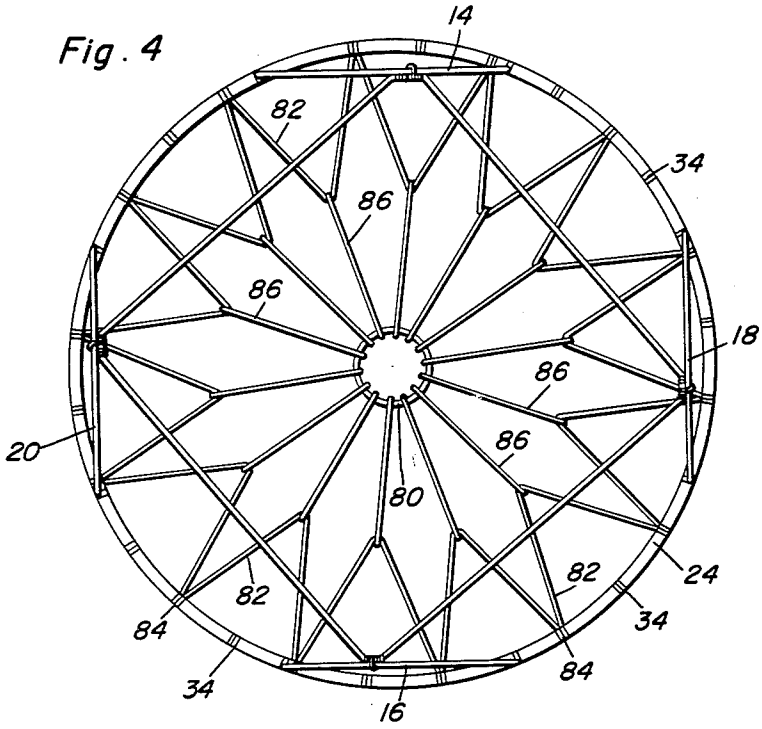
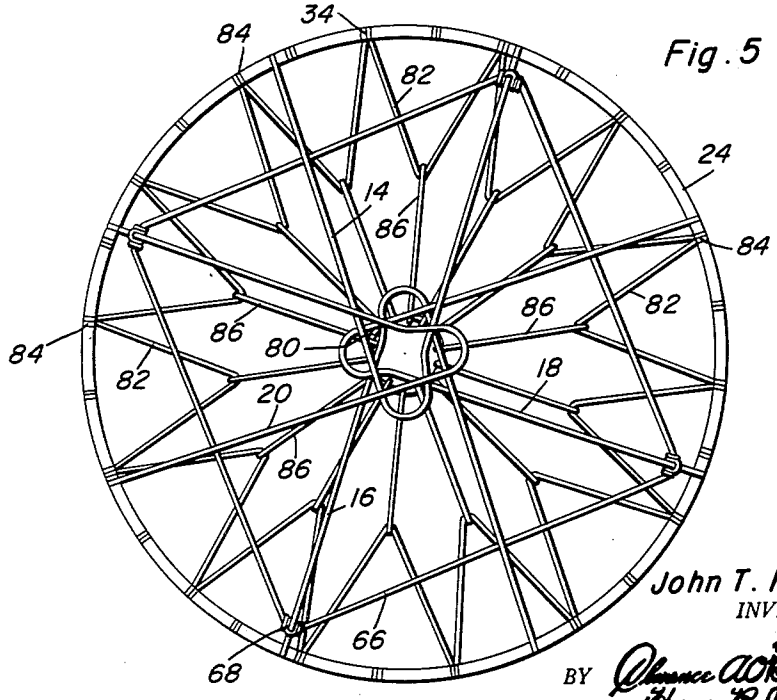


Fig. 5



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COLLAPSIBLE BASKET

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9 Claims. (Cl. 220—6)

This invention relates to contortible wire baskets.

An object of the invention is to provide a collapsible wire basket primarily useful in the home and secondarily useful for merchandising, as in display work in drug and grocery stores and also in connection with commercial work. Although there have been contortible wire baskets made and successfully used, various structural refinements make it possible to use the collapsible basket to be described subsequently, as an aid to the housewife particularly when hanging clothes and when taking the clothes from the clothes lines. In this connection, the basket portion is fitted with legs that are easily folded under the basket portion when the device is not in use and are held in the extended, operative position by a very simple frame movable toward and away from the basket portion.

It is important that the basket occupy a minimum volume when it is not being used. Accordingly, it is a further object of the invention to provide a contortible or collapsible basket with its legs that fold completely within the perimeter of the basket proper so that the entire assembly assumes a flat condition when it is not in use.

A further object of the invention is to provide a collapsible basket that has an upper and lower ring spaced from each other by means of series of pivoted loops connected at their ends to the rings and interconnected by pivotal means, the ends of the loops being held in definite spaced relationship on the upper and lower rings by means of spacers which are in essence the same diameter as the curved end parts of the loops. In this way, a smooth, finished basket with upper and lower rings results.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved leg structure wherein each leg has an angulated portion on which a leg frame is slidably disposed so that upon movement of the frame toward and away from the bottom of the basket portion of the device, the legs are pivotally moved, that is to an operative or folded position.

An important object of the invention is to provide a collapsible basket of the type described that is not only sturdy but also light in weight so that it is practical device.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

Figure 1 is a side view of the collapsible basket shown in the open position;

Figure 2 is a top view of the collapsible basket in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a top view of the collapsible basket showing the same in the collapsed position;

Figure 4 is a bottom view of the collapsible basket in the open position;

Figure 5 is a bottom view of the basket with only the legs in the collapsed position;

Figure 6 is a fragmentary perspective view of a part of the lattice work forming the sides of the basket and made of the series of loops interconnected for this purpose;

Figure 7 is an enlarged perspective view of a lower portion of one of the legs and wire frame mounted thereon; and,

Figure 8 is a fragmentary perspective view showing a modified construction wherein a caster is used as the foot for one leg.

The collapsible basket **10** is made of an upper basket portion **12** together with a plurality of legs **14**, **16**, **18** and **20**. Considering first basket portion **12**, it consists of an upper ring **22** and a lower ring **24**. Each ring is of identical construction. For example, ring **22** consists of a wire core **26** which may be made of any diameter so long as it is similar to the core of the ring **24**. The sides of the basket portion **12** are made of an upper series of loops **28** together with a lower series of loops **30**. Loops **28** are V-shaped, each having at their ends eyes **32** which embrace the core **26**. By virtue of this construction, each V-shaped loop is capable of being pivotally actuated about the ring **22**. Loops **28** are spaced apart a distance equal to one-half of the distance between eyes **32**. In this way, each side of each loop is crossed by a side of the adjacent loop. Loops **30** on ring **24** are provided with eyes **34**. They are arranged and constructed in a manner identical to the loops **28**.

There are means pivotally connecting the confronting ends of the loops **28** and **30**. These confronting ends are the apices of the V-shaped loops. The pivotal connection is made by means of sleeves, as the sleeve **38** (Fig. 6) and the material may be metal or plastic. In order that there be a smooth operation, each loop has a very short portion at its apex extending between the sides of the frame. Short portion **40** in Fig. 6 is disposed on and in parallel relationship to the short portion **42** of the loop **30**. In this way, all of the loops of the series are capable of being pivotally actuated without binding. However, enough friction in the pivotal connection is obtainable in order to hold the basket in the open position as shown in Fig. 1. Spacers **44** are placed on the core **26** between two of the eyes **32** and the next adjacent pair of eyes. Spacers **46** are placed on the core of the lower ring **24**. These spacers hold the eyes of the loops uniformly and properly spaced from each other. The diameter of the spacers is essentially the same as the diameter of the eyes **32** and the eyes **34** whereby a uniformly smooth and neat construction is obtained.

Each leg is made of a single piece of wire formed with two sides. For example, in Fig. 7 leg **16** is made of sides **50** and **52** which diverge upwardly and terminate in eyes **54** and **56** that are pivotally connected to the lower ring **24**. The foot **58** of the leg **16** is formed by bending the wire to such position that it forms an arc. Side **50** extends upwardly and angularly from the foot **58**, while side **52** extends vertically upwardly forming portion **60** and then is angulated outwardly as at **62**. Each angulated portion **62** functions as a cam. The frame **66** is preferably square and at the corners there are loops **68** formed integrally in the wire frame **66** or formed by a separate wire wrapped at its ends around the frame. The purpose of the frame is two-fold. When lowered it retains the legs **14**, **16**, **18** and **20** fixed in a lowered or extended position to support the basket portion **12**. With the frame in the lowered position (Fig. 1) the legs cannot move in any direction. Secondly, frame **66** functions to pivotally actuate the legs from the collapsed position (Fig. 3) to the open position (Fig. 1). These positions are reached by moving frame **66** toward or away from the bottom of the basket portion **12**. This movement is accompanied by pivotal motion of each leg

as the loops 68, which form a sliding connection with the sides 52, slide on the cam forming angulated portions 62 of the legs. With the frame 66 smaller than ring 24 on which the legs are pivoted, motion of the frame 66 toward ring 24 will necessitate the legs swinging inwardly to a position parallel to the ring 24. Moving the frame 66 outwardly of basket portion 12 causes the legs to be pivotally swung outwardly to the basket portion supporting position.

Although the feet 58 at the lower ends of the legs may function as skids, in some instances it may be desirable to use wheels such as wheel 70 or wheels of some other type. Wheel 70 is a part of a caster 72 that is mounted in coils 74 formed at the lower ends of a modified leg 76. Leg 76 is otherwise similar to any of the legs illustrated in Fig. 1.

When frame 66 is lowered, as shown in Fig. 1, it is capable of sliding downwardly to the straight portion 60 of each leg. At this point there is a stop 78 which protrudes laterally from the leg. Loop 68 seats upon the stop in order to limit the extent of movement of frame 66 downwardly.

The bottom of the basket portion 12 is made of a central ring 80 concentric with ring 24. A plurality of substantially V-shaped loops 82 are fitted with eyes 84 at their ends. These eyes are mounted for pivotal movement on the ring 24. Accordingly, the apices of the V-shaped loops 82 point toward the common center for rings 80 and 24. Links 86 are pivoted to the apex portion of each loop 82 and to the ring 80. This forms a sturdy base for the basket portion 12.

In operation, either the basket portion 12 or the legs are first opened. To open the basket portion ring 22 is separated from ring 34 by pulling the rings apart. This automatically pivotally actuates the series of loops 28 with respect to the series of loops 30 so that they become extended as shown in Fig. 1. Friction in all of the joints is sufficient to hold the loops in the extended, lattice-work arrangement as shown in Figure 1.

Then the legs are swung on their eyes 54 and 56 while at the same time frame 66 is being pulled outwardly from the ring 24. The camming action described previously moves or permits the legs to move only a proper distance until they are in the upright position. At this time frame 66 is resting on stops 78 so that a firm leg base is the result. The basket is then ready for use. After it is used, it is collapsed by reversing the procedure.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. In a collapsible basket, an upper and a lower ring, a bottom in said lower ring, a series of wire loops having ends pivoted to said upper ring, a series of wire loops having ends pivoted to said lower ring, means pivotally connecting the loops of one series to the loops of the other series, spacers on said rings between said ends of said loops holding the ends of the loops of each series uniformly spaced from each other, legs pivoted to said lower ring and having angulated portions, and bracing means slidably disposed on said angulated portions for holding said legs in a position substantially normal to said rings.

2. The basket of claim 1 wherein said bracing means comprise a frame, and a loop for each leg slidably mounted on the angulated portion thereof so that when said frame is moved toward and away from said rings said legs are pivotally actuated.

3. The collapsible wire basket of claim 2 and a stop secured to at least one angulated portion and projecting into the path of travel of said frame and on which said frame rests when in a lowered position.

4. The basket of claim 2 wherein said leg angulated portions have stops and in the path of movement of said loops to establish a limit of motion of said frame in one direction and form a rest on which said frame is supported.

5. In a collapsible basket which includes a collapsible basket portion having a lower ring and an upper ring, a plurality of legs, each leg having sides, at least one of said sides being angulated, means pivotally connecting the sides of said legs to said lower ring, a leg bracing frame having means spaced a distance smaller than the distance across said legs pivotally connecting means and disposed on the angulated portions of said legs for sliding on said angulated portions to pivotally actuate said legs and for bracing said legs in a spaced position generally perpendicular to the plane of said lower ring.

6. The basket of claim 5 together with a plurality of stops connected with said legs intermediate the inner and outer ends thereof and projecting into the path of travel of said frame to support said frame in a predetermined position with respect to said legs thereby retaining said frame in the leg bracing position.

7. The collapsible basket of claim 5 and spacers on said lower ring holding said leg sides pivotally connecting means assembled on said lower ring.

8. In a collapsible basket, a wire basket portion which includes a lower ring, together with a plurality of loops provided with eyes pivotally mounted on said ring, a bottom for the basket and including loops that have eyes at their ends mounted for pivotal movement on said lower ring, tubular spacers disposed on said lower ring between said eyes holding said eyes assembled on said ring, legs having an angulated side and pivoted to said bottom, leg bracing means connected with said legs for pivotally actuating said legs from a collapsed position parallel to said bottom to a position generally perpendicular to said bottom, said means including a frame movably mounted on said legs and which constitutes bracing for said legs when said legs are in the generally perpendicular position with respect to said basket bottom, said frame having loops that are spaced a smaller distance than the distance between said legs at their pivotal connection with said bottom and slidably mounted on said legs.

9. In a basket which has a bottom, the improvement comprising a plurality of legs, connecting means pivotally connecting the inner ends of said legs to said bottom, each leg having an inclined portion, a leg bracing structure having a sliding connection with the inclined portion of each of said legs, the distance between said sliding connections being slightly smaller than the distance between the legs inner ends connecting means so that as said leg bracing structure is slid from a position closer to said basket toward the outer ends of said legs and on said inclined portions the legs are pivotally movable to extended position at which said leg bracing structure supports said legs.

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