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COMBINATION THREE-DIMENSIONAL ARTICLE AND CLOSED DISPLAY PACKAGE THEREFOR

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Original application Dec. 15, 1958, Ser. No. 780,564, now Patent No. 3,064,402, dated Nov. 20, 1962. Divided and this application Oct. 3, 1962, Ser. No. 233,171
5 Claims. (Cl. 206—45.31)

This application is a divisional application of Serial No. 780,564, filed December 15, 1958, now U.S. Patent No. 3,064,402.

This invention relates to packages for articles of merchandise, and method of packaging and more particularly to articles and closed packages containing the same, which are arranged to provide for display of the articles.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved combination article and closed package containing the same, which is adapted to constitute an attractive and protective display for the article, whereby the latter may be readily viewed and presented to the best possible advantage.

Another object of the invention is to provide an improved combination three-dimensional article and closed display package therefor, wherein the package portion of the combination is extremely simple, and is constituted of a minimum number of components.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved method of packaging and presenting a three-dimensional article for display purposes, which method is extremely simple and involves little expense, and which may be quickly carried out, preferably utilizing mass-production techniques.

In line with the above, still another object of the invention is to provide a combination three-dimensional article and display package, wherein the package structure may be readily machine-produced and also machine-applied to the article in a quick and easy manner.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved combination article and display package as characterized, wherein the cost of the package and the cost of applying the same to the article may be held to a very low figure whereby the packaging is economically effected.

An additional object of the invention is to provide an improved combination article and display package as above set forth, wherein an effective seal and closure is provided for the protection of the article.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a novel combination three-dimensional article and closed display package in accordance with the foregoing, which is inherently self-supporting when the article is of the type having a surface which may constitute a supporting base.

A feature of the invention resides in the provision of a combination three-dimensional article and closed display package, wherein all sides of the article may be fully viewed, thereby to enable a complete inspection of the article to be had without removing the same from the package.

Another feature of the invention resides in the provision of a novel combination article and display package as above characterized, wherein an appreciable saving of space is effected, and whereby a number of said packaged articles may be readily packed in lots, in relatively little space.

A further object of the invention is to provide an improved combination three-dimensional article and closed display package, wherein the package means is durable, and reasonably reliable at all times in sealing and protecting the displayed article.

Other features and advantages will hereinafter appear. In the drawings accompanying this specification, similar characters of reference are used wherever possible to designate like components throughout the several views, in which

FIGURE 1 is a front elevational view of a combination three dimensional article and closed display package as provided by the invention, resting on a table surface shown in section.

FIG. 2 is a horizontal sectional view taken on the line 2—2 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a top plan view of a blank from which the closed package is made.

FIG. 4 is a transverse sectional view, taken on the line 4—4 of FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a front elevational view of a combination article and display package illustrating a modification of the invention.

FIG. 6 is a vertical sectional view taken on the line 6—6 of FIG. 5.

Referring first to FIGS. 1 and 2, the novel combination three-dimensional article and closed display package containing the same is shown as resting on a flat table or supporting surface 10. The packaged article is indicated by the numeral 11, and may have any of numerous different shapes or configurations. Preferably, the article 11 has a flat undersurface 12 adapted to constitute a base, by which the article 11 may be supported on any flat table or other supporting surface. The article 11 may, for example, be in the form of a small figurine or other image; or, as shown, it may be constituted of a small container or bottle such as is used for cosmetic preparations and the like.

The display package of the invention comprises essentially a stiff supporting sheet 14 which is formed with a cut-out portion to provide a large opening indicated by the outline 15 in FIG. 1, in which the article 11 is disposed. The straight edge bottom portion 17 of the supporting sheet is preferably, as shown in FIG. 1, substantially flush with the base or bottom surface 12 of the article 11. The straight edge portion 17 is formed by folding sheet 14 on a fold line 28 which extends across the opening 15. In the species illustrated, the fold line 28 bisects the opening 15.

The package further comprises a thin, transparent plastic membranous sheet 20 which is folded about the article 11 on a fold line common to that on which sheet 14 is folded and conforms more or less closely to the contour of the article or at least to major parts of the contour of the article. The edge portions 21 and 22 of the plastic sheet 20 are arranged in opposed, juxtaposed relation as clearly seen in FIG. 2, and lie substantially in a plane which is intersected by the article 11 and which substantially contains the said supporting sheet 14. The opposed edge portions 21 and 22 of the plastic sheet 20 are, in accordance with the invention, held in place by the stiff sheet 14.

Preferably, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, the folded stiff sheet 14 is constituted to have a double thickness whereby it comprises two opposed portions or halves 24 and 25, said stiff supporting sheet being also preferably formed from a single piece, such as the blank 26 indicated in FIG. 3. This blank 26 may be folded about a central fold line indicated by the numeral 28 in FIG. 3, thereby to form the composite or double thickness support shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. When constituting the stiff supporting sheet 14 in this manner, the blank 26 is preferably provided with a large opening 30 by virtue of the cutout portion whereby the opening 15 of the package indicated in FIG. 1 is formed at the time that the blank 26 is folded about the fold lines 28.

Further, in accordance with the invention, the package

may be advantageously constituted by attaching the transparent plastic membranous sheet 20 to the blank 26 as indicated in FIG. 3, prior to folding of the blank, and the resultant assemblage may then be folded about the article 11 to completely enclose the latter at the time that the forming of the package is being completed. Preferably, the transparent plastic sheet 20 has its entire peripheral edge portion adhered to the blank 26 so that the plastic sheet spans the opening 30 of the blank, as seen in FIG. 3. Also, the plastic sheet 20 is preferably preformed as seen in FIG. 4, whereby its central portion is laterally offset or dished, said central portion thus forming a pocket and being that which spans and occupies the opening 30 of the blank 26. The pocket may be readily and conveniently formed by any suitable means for stretching the plastic sheet, as for example, vacuum forming apparatus.

After the composite structure shown in FIG. 3 has been fabricated, it is then folded about the article 11 by placing the article in the hollow or dished portion of the plastic sheet 20 and thereafter folding the stiff supporting sheet 14 about the fold lines 28. The two halves of the stiff sheet 14 are brought together and secured to each other, whereby the article 11 will be completely enclosed by the plastic sheet 20, and the opposed edge portions of said sheet will lie in a flat plane containing the rigid sheet 14, said plane being intersected by the article 11. Also, the base surface 12 of the article 11 may be disposed substantially flush with the horizontal straight edge portion 17 formed by the fold lines 28 of the stiff supporting sheet 14, with the article projecting substantially from both sides of the supporting sheet, as clearly seen in FIG. 2.

The superposed halves 24 and 25 of the stiff supporting sheet 14 may be secured together in any suitable manner, as by stapling or the use of a suitable adhesive.

In accordance with the present invention, after enclosing the article 11 in the plastic sheet 20 as above described, the pocket may be preformed of dimensions similar to those of the article to be carried thereby. Thereafter the size of the plastic sheet may be reduced to substantially conform to the article. The pocket may also be preformed of a larger size than that of the article and then shrunk. For example, where the plastic sheet is constituted of a vinyl composition, such as polyvinyl chloride, the size of the plastic sheet may be quickly and advantageously so reduced by the application of heat to the sheet, as through the use of a heated stream of air. Upon the plastic sheet being heated and allowed to cool, it will conform to the contours and protuberant portions of the article 11. During such process, the article and the display package may be rested on a flat supporting surface, such as the table surface 10 shown in FIG. 1, whereupon the flat bottom surface 12 of the article 11 will be positioned substantially flush with the straight edges 28 constituting the fold lines of the stiff supporting sheet 14. By extending laterally outwardly in both directions from base 12 of the article 11, the folded edge 17 of sheet 14 provides lateral stability for the displayed article.

Another form of the invention is illustrated in FIGS. 5 and 6. As shown herein the packaged article projects from only one side of the folded stiff supporting sheet, and is positioned thereon by certain portions of the supporting sheet, which are provided in a novel manner. The article 32 shown in FIGS. 5 and 6 comprises a flat, squat cylindrical container such as the metal or paper containers commonly used in the cosmetic industry or in other fields to package small articles and which is substantially flush with or tangent to the lower surface 44 of the article 32. As in the first species, the folded edge 42 extends horizontally outwardly in both lateral directions from the base 44 of article 32 to provide lateral stability for the same while on display. The container 32 is disposed in a circular opening 33 formed in a stiff supporting sheet 34, the bottom or back surface of the container 32 being substantially flush with the back surface of the supporting sheet 34.

Folded about the container 32 is a thin transparent

plastic membranous sheet 36, said plastic sheet having edge portions 37 and 38 which are arranged in juxtaposed relation to each other and which lie substantially in the plane which contains the said stiff sheet.

The rear portion 39 of the stiff supporting sheet 34 has means for positioning the article 32. In effecting such positioning, the rear parts may be provided with a relatively large opening 40 aligned with the opening 33 of the front portion of the sheet 34 and formed to be slightly smaller in size than the said opening 33. By this organization, the edge portions of the rear portion 39 which surround the opening 40 thereof will engage the back peripheral portions of the container 32, as clearly shown in FIG. 6, thereby to securely position the container and maintain the latter projecting only from the front of the front portion of the stiff sheet 34.

Preferably the front and rear portions of the sheet 34 are constituted of a single piece of stiff cardboard or the like, having a single opening, said single piece being folded about a line which intersects the said single opening. Thus, the opening of the said single piece of stiff board would have two parts which, when the board is folded, produce the larger opening 33 in the front portion of the sheet 34 and the smaller opening 40 in the rear portion 39. Also, as seen in FIG. 5, the openings 33 and 40 in the stiff sheets 34 and 39 extend to the corresponding superposed edges of the sheets, which make up the folded edge 42 of the blank.

The article 32 has a bottom surface 44 which is disposed substantially in the plane containing the said folded edge 42, whereby the surface 44 constitutes a base on which the article 32 may rest.

The forming of the package illustrated in FIGS. 5 and 6 is done in a manner similar to that already described above. The single piece from which the stiff sheet is formed, having the double-circle opening is provided with the transparent plastic sheet 36, the latter being stretched to provide a displaced or dished portion forming a pocket which extends through mainly the circular opening 33 of the stiff sheet portion 34. The article 32 is placed in the said pocket, and the large single piece of stiff board or blank is then folded about the line 42, whereupon the two superposed portions of the board are adhered or secured together in any desired manner. Thereafter, the plastic sheet containing the article 32 is caused to closely conform to the contour of the article. The finished product then has the appearance seen in FIGS. 5 and 6. As in the first species, the plastic sheet 36 may have a fold line common to that of the stiff sheet 34, although this is obviously not necessary.

It will now be understood from the foregoing that I have provided novel and improved combinations of an article and display package therefor, as well as a unique and advantageous method for packaging three-dimensional articles. The display package is seen to be extremely simple in its construction, constituting essentially but two main components, the stiff supporting sheet 14 and the plastic enclosing sheet 20. The package may be readily fabricated by machine methods and equipment as well as by hand, and may be also easily applied to the article by mass production techniques, and this latter is true of the shrinking process by which the plastic sheet 20 is made to conform more or less closely to the contour of the packaged article. The method as provided by the invention is further seen to be simple and capable of being readily carried out by automatic equipment as well as by hand, whereby desirable manufacturing economies are effected.

The completed combination article and display package has a number of advantages. The folded edges 17 or 42 of the stiffening sheets 14 or 34 provide lateral stability for the displayed article by being flush with the bases 12 and 44 of the same. The enclosed article may be so arranged that all portions of it are readily viewable. Also, the surfaces of the article are protected from dust, dirt

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and other adverse influences, and instead the glossy appearance which is effected by the transparent plastic sheet enhances the colors and general appearance of the article, resulting in an attractive display thereof. Advertising or other data may be readily imprinted on the exposed sides of the stiff supporting sheet 14, as this information relates to the enclosed article.

A number of articles and packages as above constituted may be readily positioned in shipping containers, by staggering the disposition of those portions of the package which enclose the article 11. Thus, a saving of space may be readily effected, which is not possible where articles are placed in rectangular, round or other similar types of box containers.

Variations and modifications may be made within the scope of the claims, and portions of the improvements may be used without others.

I claim:

1. An upright display package and mount for a displayed article, said article having a base surface for supporting the same, comprising a sheet of stiffening material formed with an article receiving opening therethrough, a flexible sheet of transparent material overlying at least said opening of said stiffening material, said flexible sheet being formed with an article receiving recess within said opening, said sheets being folded about said article on a common fold line, means securing the side edges of said stiffening sheet together, means securing the ends of said stiffening sheet remote from the fold line together, and said fold line being disposed centrally of said sheet of stiffening material in flush relation to said base surface of said article providing horizontal coplanar and laterally oppositely directed extensions of the same to provide lateral stability to said package when placed upright on a supporting surface.

2. A display package and mount according to claim 1 wherein said fold line is located to bisect said recess.

3. A display package according to claim 1 wherein said

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fold line is disposed along one edge of said article receiving recess.

4. A display package according to claim 1, wherein said fold line extends across said opening and recess.

5. An upright display package and mount for a displayed article, said article having a base surface for supporting the same, comprising a sheet of stiffening material formed with an article receiving opening therethrough, said sheet being folded upon itself on a transverse fold line to provide a straight folded lower edge, a flexible transparent sheet enclosing said article, said flexible sheet having laterally extending marginal portions secured to said sheet of stiffening material outwardly of said opening providing means supporting said article in said opening, said base surface of said article and said flexible transparent sheet being flush with said folded lower edge of said sheet of stiffening material, and said folded lower edge extending laterally and horizontally outwardly of said article in both directions to provide lateral stability to said package when placed upright on a supporting surface.

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