



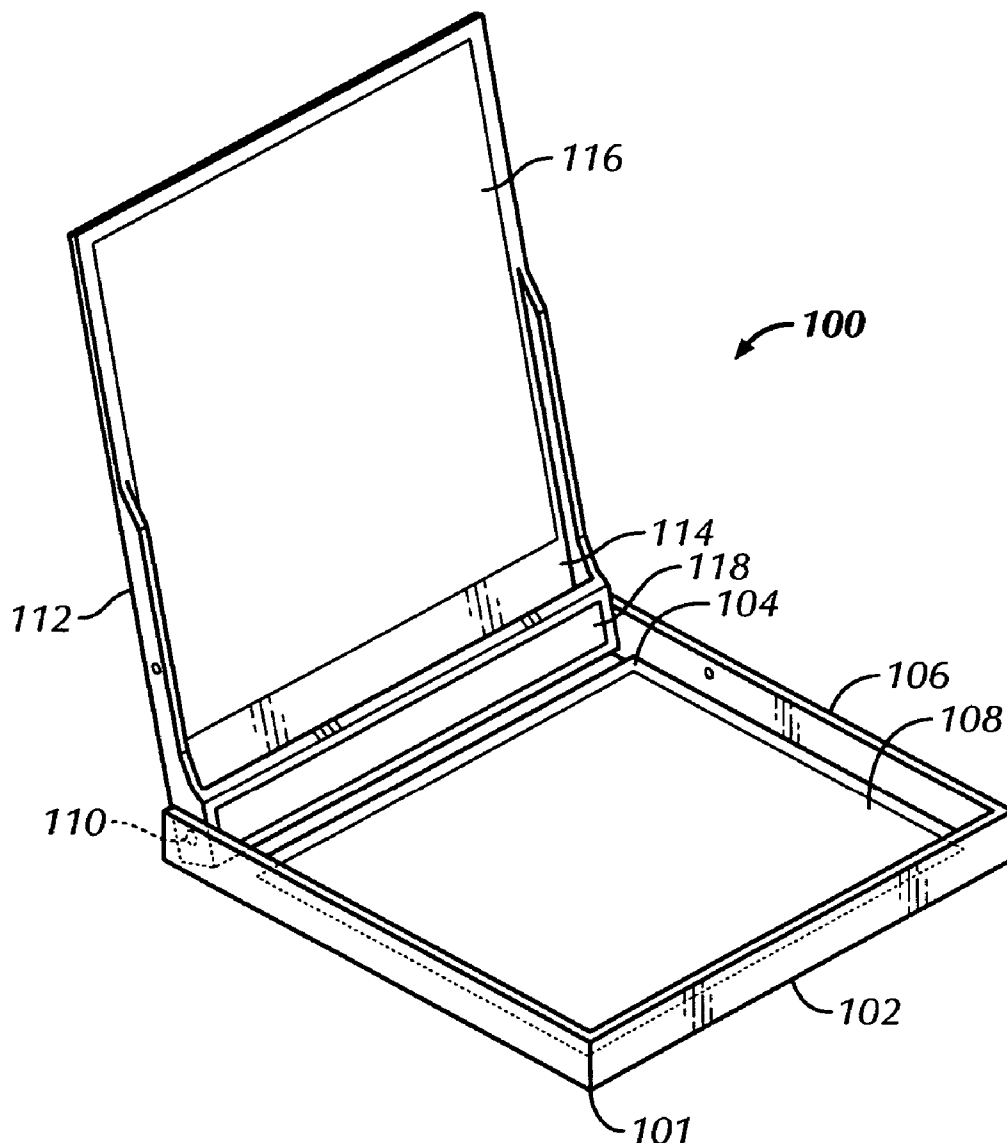
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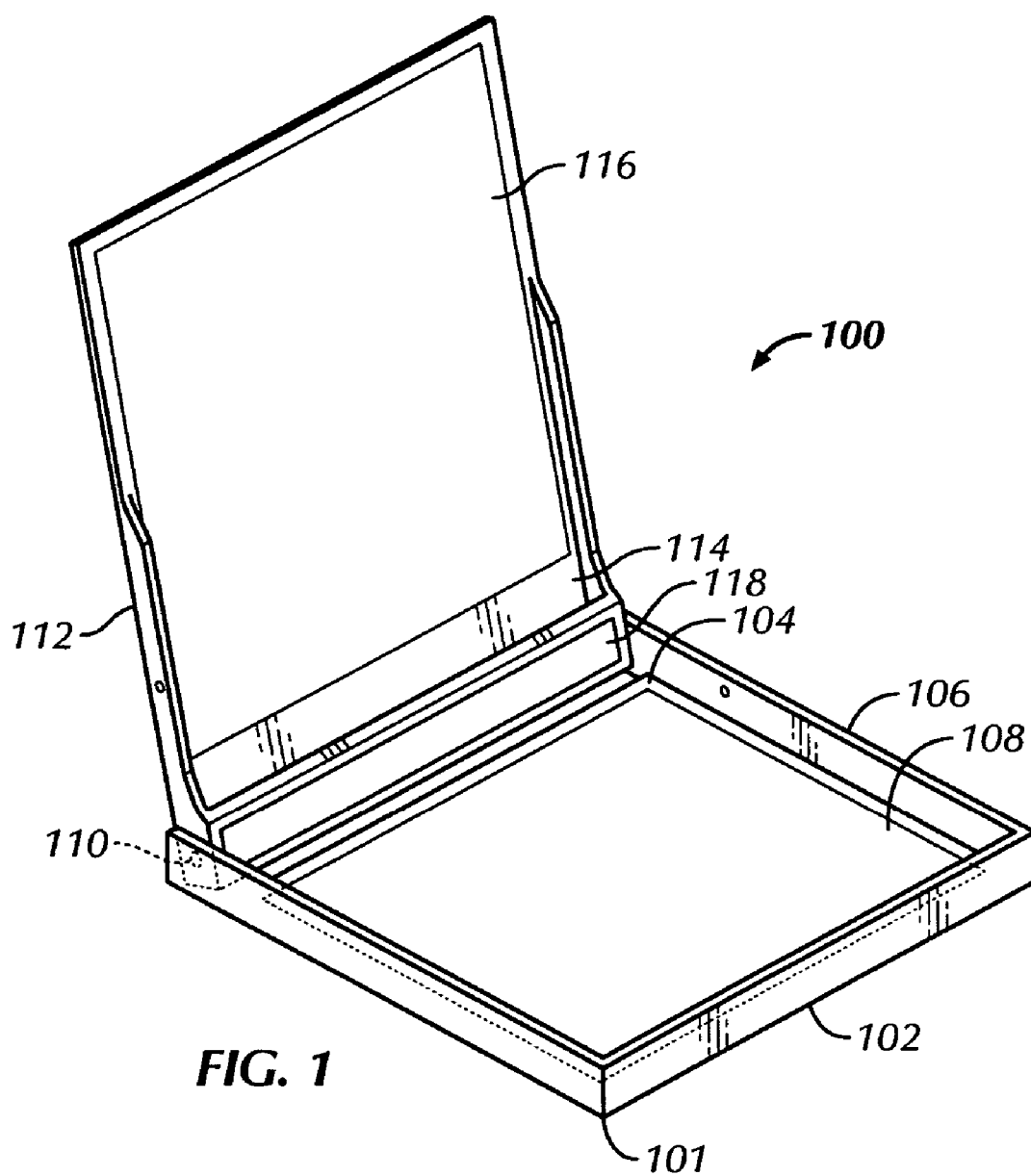
(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Hopper(10) **Pub. No.: US 2005/0274635 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Dec. 15, 2005**(54) **CASE FOR HOLDING AND STORING
SMALL ARTICLES**(52) **U.S. Cl. 206/308.1; 206/303; 206/232**(76) **Inventor: Jo Hopper, (US)**(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A case that holds and stores small articles is disclosed. The case includes a shallow base receptacle (101) having a bottom (102), hinged cover (112), and sides (106) that may be a compact disk ("CD") jewel case. The bottom has an inside and an outside surface, and the inside surface is substantially covered with a preferably acid-free first tacky surface (108). In some embodiments, the inside surface of the cover includes a preferably acid-free second tacky surface (116). The case may include a magnetic surface (118) that is accessible when the cover is open, and may also include a non-skid surface (122) on the outside surface of the case bottom.





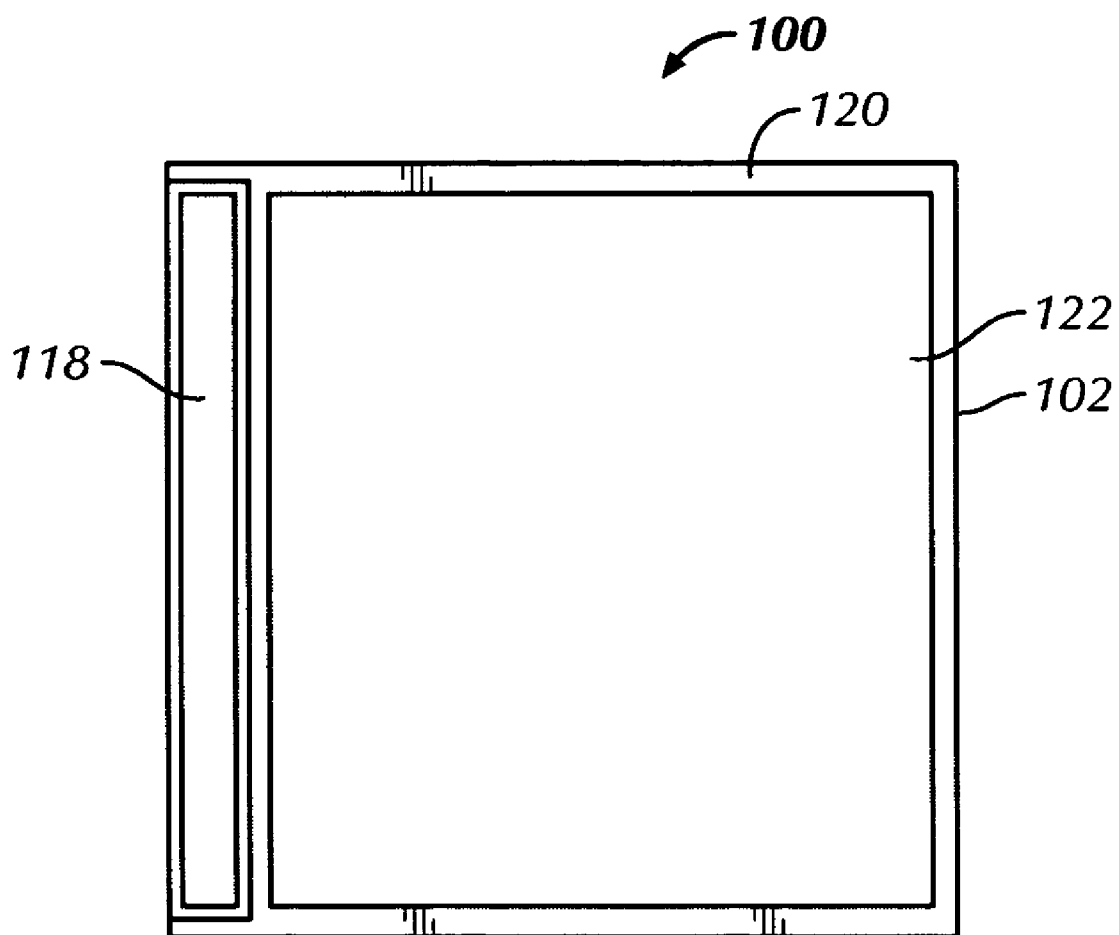


FIG. 2

CASE FOR HOLDING AND STORING SMALL ARTICLES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to arts and craft supplies. More specifically, the present invention relates to cases for holding and storing small craft supplies during use and afterwards.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] Crafting is currently a very popular hobby. More and more people are engaging in the highly satisfying and entertaining activity of designing and making handcrafted jewelry, clothing, gifts, and decorative items. As a result, a crafting industry has evolved that provides support, education, supplies, and tools to crafters. In addition, individual crafters and the crafting industry have developed ingenious methods, techniques, tools, and supplies to address crafting problems and inconveniences, thus making it easier for crafters to comfortably enjoy their hobby and to produce sophisticated and elegant handcrafted items.

[0005] Oftentimes, crafters use small, delicate, hard-to-handle supplies when making their handcrafted items. For example, jewelry makers, needleworkers, and seamstresses may include beads, jewels, spangles, or sequins in their designs. Leatherworkers and other crafters working with textiles may include brads, rivets, studs, or eyelets in their designs. Scrapbookers may include wooden die-cuts, buttons, tags, and other small trinkets to embellish their creations. In all these cases, keeping track of numerous small supplies, both during use and during storage, is difficult and inconvenient. In addition, transporting these kinds of supplies to enable work on a project at a location other than the crafter's ordinary location (such as in a class, at a friend's house, or during an airplane or car ride) can be awkward and result in losing supplies during transport or during setup and/or use at the new location.

[0006] Accordingly, a device that would make it simple to handle small craft supplies such as beads, jewels, or brads during use, and in addition, to store and transport these items without danger of loss would be highly desirable. The present invention is such a device.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The present invention is a case that holds and stores small articles, and methods to make and use the case. The case includes a shallow base receptacle having a bottom, hinged cover, and sides that may be a compact disk ("CD") jewel case. The bottom has an inside and an outside surface, and the inside surface is substantially covered with a preferably acid-free first tack surface. In some embodiments, the inside surface of the cover includes a preferably acid-free second tack surface. The case may include a magnetic surface that is accessible when the cover is open, and may also include a non-skid surface on the outside surface of the case bottom.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] To further aid in understanding the invention, the attached drawings help illustrate specific features of the invention and the following is a brief description of the attached drawings:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the supply case of the present invention, according to one embodiment.

[0010] FIG. 2 shows the bottom of the supply case of the present invention, according to one embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] The present invention is a method and apparatus for a craft supply case to aid in handling, transporting, and storing small and hard-to-handle craft supplies and parts. This disclosure describes numerous specific details that include specific structures and materials in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. One skilled in the art will appreciate that one may practice the present invention without these specific details.

[0012] FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of the supply case 100 of the present invention, according to a preferred embodiment. As shown in FIG. 1, the supply case 100 includes a shallow receptacle 101 having a bottom 102, sides 106, and a top 112. In a preferred embodiment, these features are provided via a transparent plastic holder that is readily available and commonly known as a "jewel case." Any size jewel case can be used, however, a jewel case sized to hold a 3-inch mini CD renders the craft supply case highly portable and is ordinarily large enough to hold a sufficient supply of beads, sequins, brads, etc. Those practicing the present invention will recognize that the size of the item to be handled, stored, and transported in the case 100 will suggest the most desirable size of the case 100. In addition, those skilled in the art will recognize that the present invention does not require the use of either a CD jewel case or a mini CD jewel case; any shallow receptacle 101 having a bottom 102, sides 106, and a top 112 will suffice.

[0013] In the preferred embodiment, top 112 is hingedly connected at 110 to bottom 102. The bottom 102 includes an inside surface 104 and an outside surface 120 (shown in FIG. 2). The inside surface 104 is substantially covered with a tack surface 108. Tacky surface 108 retains small items placed into the case 100 (such as beads, sequins, buttons, etc.) with an adhesive force that is sufficient to prevent the items from rolling around or falling out of the bottom 102, but still allows the item to be easily removed from the tacky surface 108. In addition, the tacky surface 108 is manufactured from an acid-free material that does not leave an adhesive or other residue on a craft supply that has adhered to it. In a preferred embodiment, tacky surface 108 further comprises one of the adhesive surfaces of DOUBLE TACK™ Mounting Film, a double-sided adhesive film that is acrylic-based, acid free, heat resistant, and transparent. DOUBLE TACK™ Mounting Film is available from Grafix Inc., 19499 Miles Rd., Cleveland, Ohio.

[0014] The cover 112 also includes an inside surface 114, which, in the preferred embodiment, is also substantially covered with a tacky surface 116 having the same properties as tacky surface 108, which also serves to retain small items within the case 100. In a preferred embodiment, tacky surface 116 is also made from DOUBLE TACK™ Mounting Film from Grafix Inc. The shallow receptacle 101 is deep enough to insure that tacky surfaces 108 and 112 do not contact each other when the cover 112 is closed. The cover 112 also includes a magnetic strip 118 that rotates to the upward position about hinge point 110 when the case 100 is

opened. The magnetic strip **118** serves to retain needles, needle threaders, and other small metallic objects.

[0015] Therefore, in the preferred embodiment, when the case **100** is opened for use, the top **112** and the bottom **102** generally form a plane with tacky surface **116**, tacky surface **108**, and magnetic strip **118** facing upwards. Beads, sequins, brads, or other small craft items within the case are gently adhered to the two tacky surfaces **116**, **108**, so that the items do not fall from the case as the user opens it, and when the case is in an open position, the adhered items are readily available for the crafter's use.

[0016] FIG. 2 shows the underside of the case **100**, with the case **100** in a closed position. In a preferred embodiment, the bottom surface **120** of the case bottom **102** is substantially covered with a material having a non-skid surface **122** such as a closed-cell foam, to prevent the case **100** from sliding during use. Since the case **100** is shown with the cover **112** in a closed position, magnetic strip **118** is also visible on the underside of the case **100**.

[0017] In sum, the present invention is a case that holds and stores small articles, and methods to make and use the case. The case includes a shallow base receptacle having a bottom, hinged cover, and sides that may be a compact disk ("CD") jewel case. The bottom has an inside and an outside surface, and the inside surface is substantially covered with a preferably acid-free first tacky surface. In some embodiments, the inside surface of the cover includes a preferably acid-free second tacky surface. The case may include a magnetic surface that is accessible when the cover is open, and may also include a non-skid surface on the outside surface of the case bottom.

[0018] Other embodiments of the invention will be apparent to those skilled in the art after considering this specification or practicing the disclosed invention. The specification and examples above are exemplary only, with the true scope of the invention being indicated by the following claims.

I claim the following invention:

1. A case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:
 - a shallow base receptacle having a bottom and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first tacky surface that retains small articles; and
 - a cover hingedly coupled to said shallow base receptacle that opens and closes the case.
2. A small article retention system that holds and stores small articles, comprising:
 - a shallow base receptacle having a bottom and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first tacky surface that retains small articles; and
 - a cover hingedly coupled to said shallow base receptacle that opens and closes said case.
3. A method that makes a case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:
 - providing a shallow base receptacle having a bottom and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first tacky surface that retains small articles; and

hingedly coupling a cover to said shallow base receptacle that opens and closes said case.

4. A method to use a case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:

- retaining small articles using a first tacky surface within a shallow base receptacle having a bottom and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with said first tacky surface; and

- opening and closing the case using a cover hingedly coupled to said shallow base receptacle.

5. A dependent claim according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4 wherein said shallow base receptacle and said cover further comprise one of the following: a compact disc jewel case sized to hold standard compact discs, or a compact disc jewel case sized to hold mini compact discs.

6. A dependent claim according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4 wherein said cover further comprises an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface of said cover is substantially covered with a second tacky surface that retains small articles.

7. A dependent claim according to claim 6 wherein said first tacky surface and said second tacky surface further comprise an acid-free tacky material.

8. A dependent claim according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4 wherein said cover further comprises a magnetic surface accessible when said cover is open.

9. A dependent claim according to claim 1, 2, 3, or 4 wherein said bottom further comprises a non-skid surface coupled to said outside surface.

10. A case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:

- a compact disc jewel case having a cover, bottom, and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles and a non-skid surface is coupled to said outside surface;

- wherein said cover further comprises an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface of said cover is substantially covered with a second acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles; and

- wherein said compact disc jewel case further comprises one of the following: a jewel case sized to hold standard compact discs or a jewel case sized to hold mini compact discs.

11. An article retention system that holds and stores small articles, comprising:

- a compact disc jewel case having a cover, bottom, and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles and a non-skid surface is coupled to said outside surface;

- wherein said cover further comprises an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface of said cover is substantially covered with a second acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles; and

- wherein said compact disc jewel case further comprises one of the following: a jewel case sized to hold standard compact discs or a jewel case sized to hold mini compact discs.

12. A method that makes a case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:

providing a compact disc jewel case having a cover, bottom, and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with a first acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles and a non-skid surface is coupled to said outside surface;

wherein said cover further comprises an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface of said cover is substantially covered with a second acid-free tacky surface that retains small articles; and

wherein said compact disc jewel case further comprises one of the following: a jewel case sized to hold standard compact discs or a jewel case sized to hold mini compact discs.

13. A method to use a case that holds and stores small articles, comprising:

retaining small articles on a first acid-free tacky surface contained within a compact disc jewel case having a cover, bottom, and sides, said bottom has an inside and an outside surface, wherein said inside surface is substantially covered with said first acid-free tacky surface and a non-skid surface is coupled to said outside surface;

retaining small articles on a second acid-free tacky surface that substantially covers the inside surface of said cover; and

wherein said compact disc jewel case further comprises one of the following: a jewel case sized to hold standard compact discs or a jewel case sized to hold mini compact discs.

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