

[54] **PORTABLE COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION
FOR A TABLE**[76] Inventor: **Nathan N. Safranek**, 2 Morris Road,
Bethpage, N.Y. 11714[22] Filed: **July 5, 1974**[21] Appl. No.: **485,824**[52] U.S. Cl. **35/60; 160/130; 160/135**[51] Int. Cl.² **A47G 5/00**[58] Field of Search **35/60, 16; 46/31, 29, 12,
46/13; 160/DIG. 13, 130, 135, 229;
108/60, 61**

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[57]

ABSTRACT

A portable collapsible partition for a table which consists of different panels that are hinged to each other and that can be positioned so as to form a cluster of carrels. Separators designed to align the panels in the unfolded condition also make communication media available in each carrel.

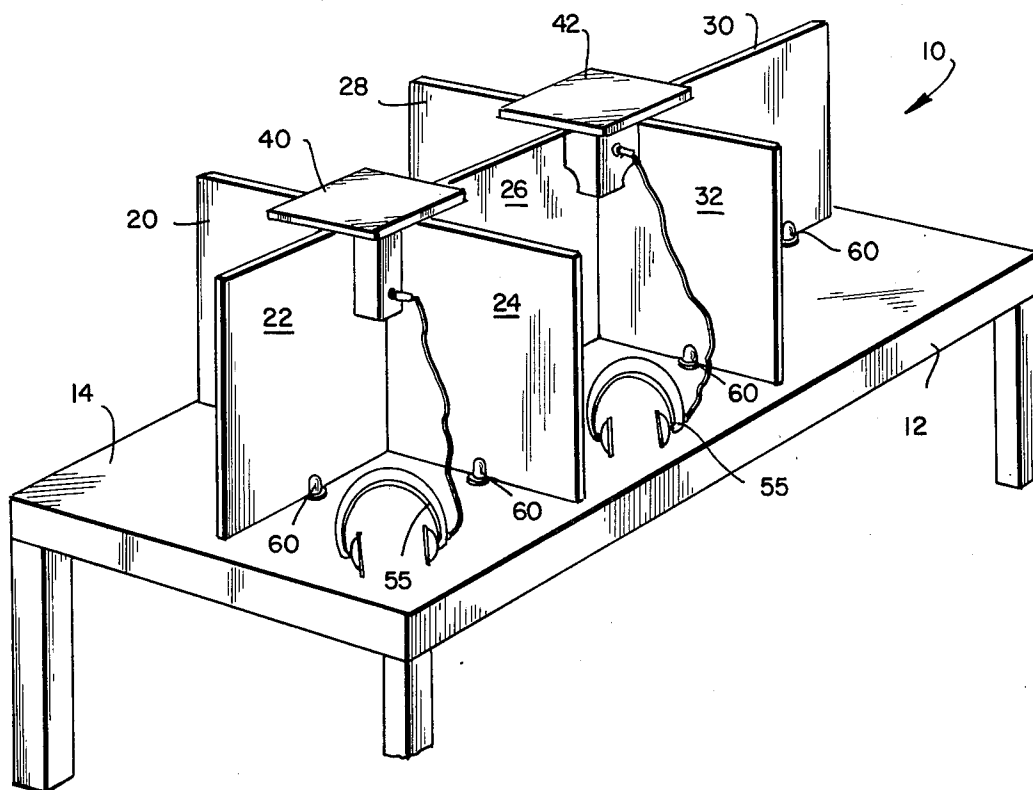
4 Claims, 11 Drawing Figures

FIG. 3

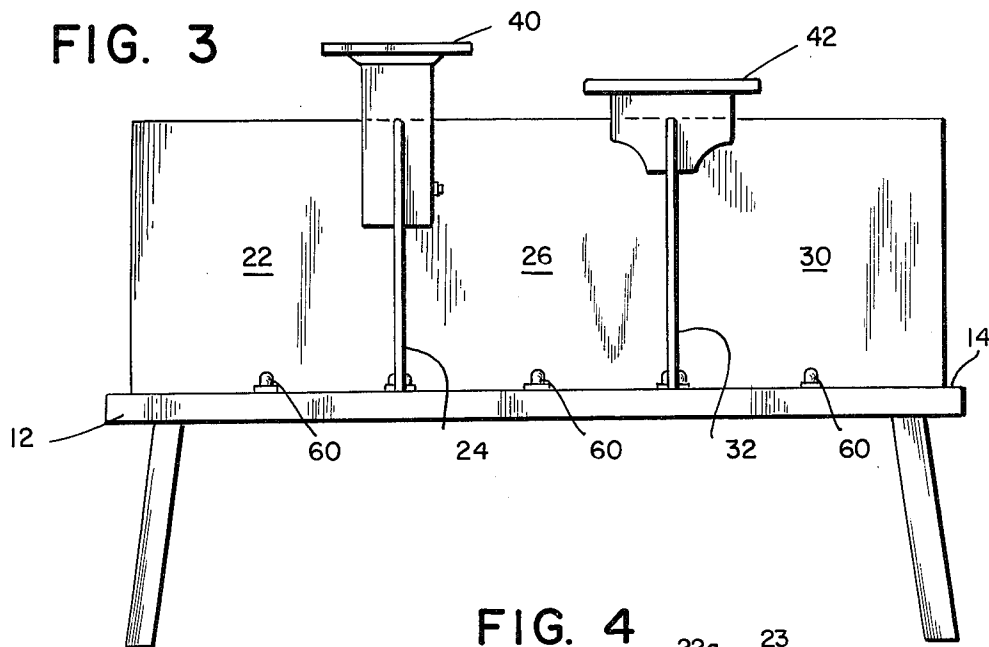


FIG. 4

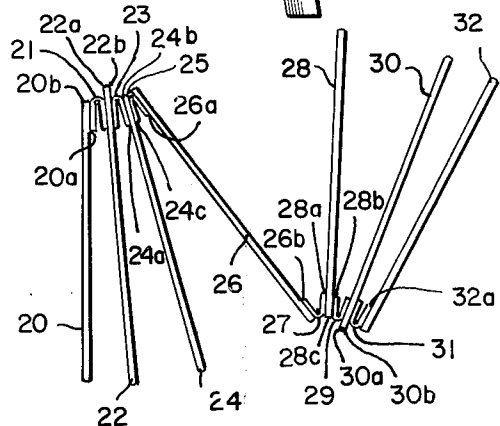


FIG. 5

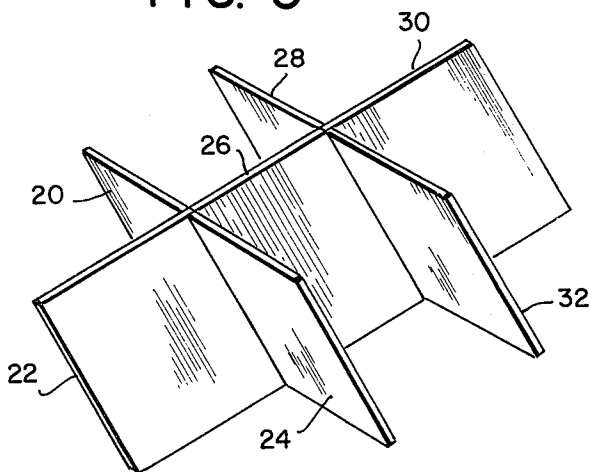
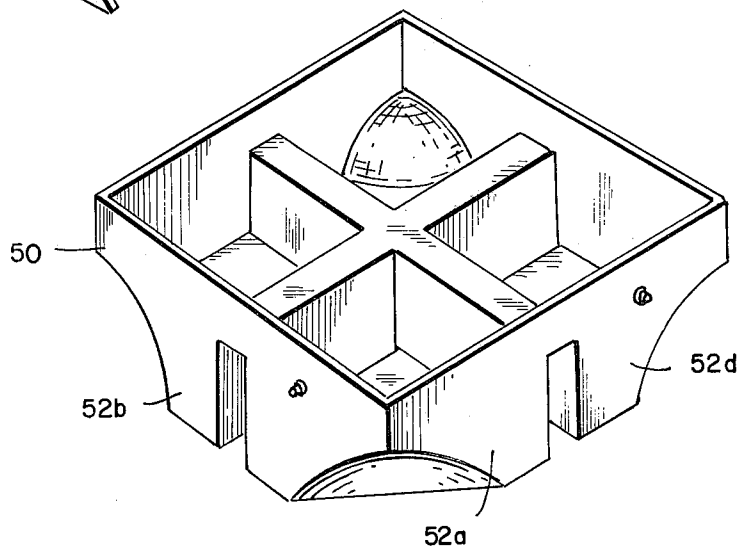


FIG. 8



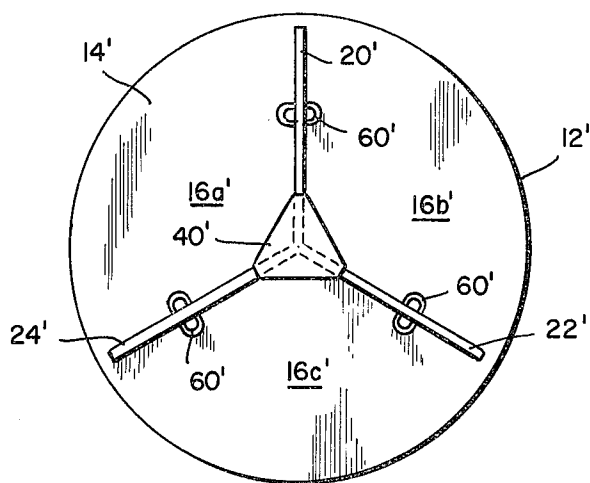
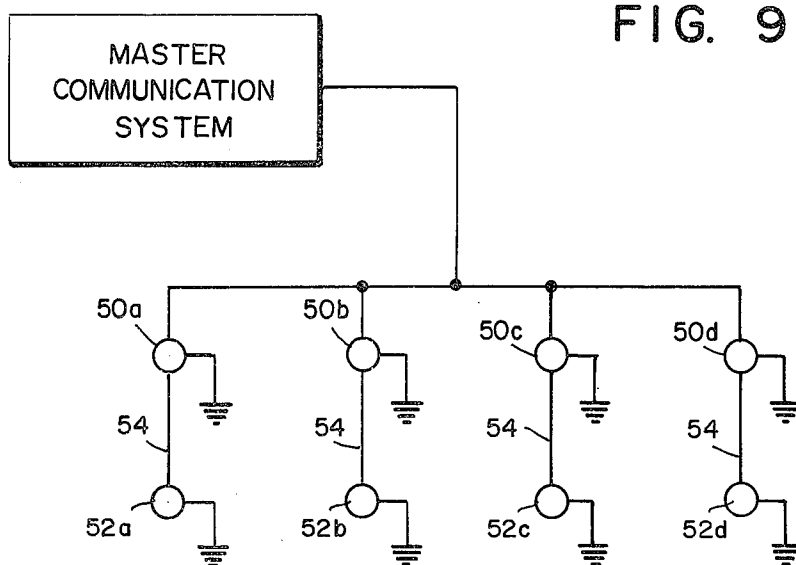
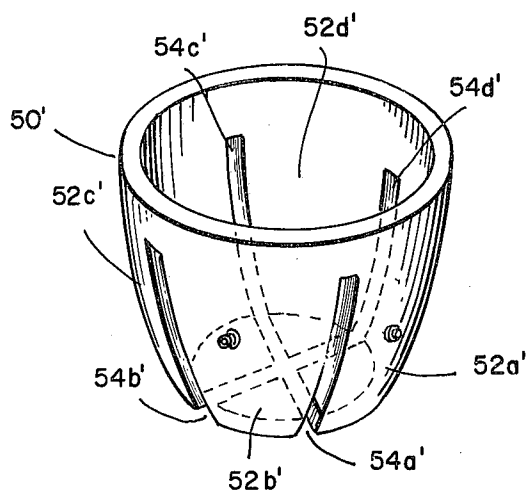


FIG. 11



PORTABLE COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION FOR A TABLE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a portable partition and more particularly to a portable partition for a table which when unfolded will create a cluster of carrels.

2. Description of the Prior Art

It is well known in the prior art to use partitions to break-up a large table area into several individual compartments or carrels. It is also well known to make available to each compartment separate audio and visual communication connections. However, the prior art carrel systems were of a permanent nature having fixed or permanently positioned walls and were not easily dismantled or removeable to another location. It is toward elimination of these problems that the present invention is directed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is the object of the present invention to provide a portable, collapsible partition for a flat table which when unfolded will establish a cluster of individual carrels.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a separator which will align each of the panels of the partition and which will provide access to communication media in each of the carrels.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a low cost partition which will transform a table surface into a cluster of individual carrels.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a partition which is inexpensive to manufacture and lightweight.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a partition which will allow for maximum utility of limited available space.

A still further object of the present invention is to readily convert open table areas into individual carrels for use in independent educational instruction or study.

Generally the foregoing and other objects are achieved by a portable collapsible partition for a table which consists of different wall segments that are hinged to each other and can be positioned so as to form a cluster of carrels. A separator is designed to align the partitions and also makes communication media available in each carrel.

Still further objects and advantages of the invention will in part be obvious and will in part be apparent from the specifications. The invention accordingly consists in the features of construction combinations of elements and arrangement of parts which will be exemplified in the portable, collapsible partition hereinafter described in the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a better understanding of the present invention, reference should be had to the accompanying drawings, wherein like numerals of reference indicate similar parts throughout the several views and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a portable, collapsible partition fully unfolded upon a table;

FIG. 2 is a top view of the partition shown in FIG. 1 with one of the separators removed;

FIG. 3 is a front view of the portable collapsible partition shown in FIG. 1 wherein the separators shown are of alternative construction;

FIG. 4 is a top view of the partition in a slightly unfolded state;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the partition fully unfolded;

FIG. 6 is a front view of a separator;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the separator shown in FIG. 6 with the top portion removed;

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a separator of an alternative construction with the top portion removed;

FIG. 9 is a schematic view of the information jack system within a separator;

FIG. 10 is a top view of a partition of an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 11 is a perspective view of a separator of a further alternative construction with the top portion removed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With specific reference to the form of the present invention illustrated in the drawings and referring particularly to FIGS. 1 and 2, a portable collapsible partition is indicated generally by the reference numeral 10. The portable collapsible partition is depicted in its open position and is shown resting upon the top surface 14 of a table 12. The portable collapsible partition 10 in its unfolded state serves to divide the top surface 14 of the table 12 into several individual areas 16a, b, c, d, e and f.

While the partition shown in the drawings and hereinafter described consists of seven panels, it is to be understood that the present invention is not so limited. The partition may consist of any number of panels sufficient to create a cluster of carrels comparable with a particular size and shape table surface.

As illustrated, the partition is composed of seven panels or wall segments 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32. The panels can be made of any lightweight, rigid material such as plastic, wood or fiberboard. In order to provide a collapsible partition, the various panels are hinged together and the manner of hinging will hereinafter be more fully described.

As may be seen in FIG. 4 a first hinge 21 enables panels 20 and 22 to be connected together and rotated relative to each other. The hinge 21 may extend the length of the side 20a of panel 20 and can be a piano hinge or a hinge of a similar type, as can any of the other hinges used in the present invention. The hinge 21 is set back from the edge 22a of the panel 22 so that when the panel 20 is rotated away from the panel 22 the edge 20b of the panel 20 will come in contact with the edge 22a to keep the panel 20 substantially perpendicular to the panel 22. Similarly a second hinge 23 along edge 24a of the panel 24 enables panels 22 and 24 to be rotated relative to each other. The hinge 23 is set back from the edge 22b so that when the panel 24 is rotated away from the panel 22 the edge 24b will come in contact with the edge 22b to keep the panel 24 substantially perpendicular to the panel 22.

A third hinge 25 is provided along the edges 24c and 26a of panels 24 and 26 respectively which allows the panel 24 to rotate away from the panel 26.

A fourth hinge 27 is provided along the edges 26b and 28a of panels 26 and 28 respectively to allow panel 28 to rotate away from panel 26.

Provided along edge 28b is a fifth hinge 29 which will allow the panel 28 to be rotated relative to the panel 30. The hinge 29 is mounted away from the edge 30a so that the end 28c will contact the edge area 30a when the panel 28 is rotated away from the panel 30 to keep the panel 28 substantially perpendicular to the panel 30.

A last hinge 31 is provided along the edge 32a of panel 32 and set back from the edge 30b so that when the panel 32 is rotated away from the panel 30 edge 32c will contact 30b to keep the panels substantially perpendicular.

When the partition is fully unfolded, as shown in FIG. 5, panels 22, 26 and 30 are in alignment and panels 20 and 24 are in alignment and perpendicular to panels 22 and 26 and panels 28 and 32 are in alignment and perpendicular to panels 26 and 30.

In order to further align the panels of the unfolded partition and to prevent them from moving relative to each other, separators 40 and 42 are placed over the two junctions formed by the unfolded panels. As shown in FIGS. 6 and 7 the separators have a platform-like portion 44 and a locking portion 46. The locking portion 46 has essentially four legs 46a, b, c and d which are spaced from one another so that slots 48a, b, c and d are formed therebetween. The slots are all at right angles to one another and are substantially the same width as the thickness of the panels so that when the separator is placed over the panels the panels are fixedly held in place perpendicular to each other and a rigid partition is formed.

A partition constructed in accordance with the present invention has many practical uses. Since it can be used to transform any open table area into a cluster of individual carrels, it is of particular value in the field of education. Communication media being made available to the individual areas through a jack system in the separators, hereinafter to be described, allows for individual instruction and testing. For example, a library or reading room can be quickly and economically transformed into a testing area by placing the partitions on the tables. A master communication system can be connected to a predetermined number of carrels by means of the jack system in the separators.

The jack system consists of information-receiving jacks 50a, b, c and d located in the separator 40 as shown in FIG. 7. As shown in FIG. 9, circuit means 54 connects the information-receiving jacks to information-distributing jacks 52a, b, c and d on the legs 46a, b, c and d of the separator 40. Each information-receiving jack can be connected to just one information-distributing jack or more than one, as is desired. Since each of the legs has an information-distributing jack, each area has access to the communication system.

As shown in FIG. 1, individuals using the areas may use headphones 55, or other devices to receive the communications.

In the alternative, instead of connecting each of the areas to a master communications system the platform-like portion 44 of the separator 40 can serve as a table upon which a communication device such as a tape recorder (not shown) may be placed. The communication device can then be connected to the various areas by means of the jack system hereinabove described.

A separator of an alternative construction is shown in FIG. 8. The separator locking portion 50 is of a unitary construction. The truncated legs 52a, b, c and d are spaced to create slots 54a, b, c and d therebetween. The

slots created have a width substantially equal to the thickness of the panels so that when the separator is placed over the panels the panels are fixedly held in place and a rigid partition is formed.

Another alternative construction for the separator is shown in FIG. 11 wherein the separator locking portion 50' is of a unitary construction, having legs 52a', b', c' and d' which are spaced to create slots 54a', b', c' and d' therebetween.

In order to prevent the partition from sliding along the top 14 of the table 12 when the partition is in use, the partition may be releasably fixed to the top 14. As shown in FIG. 1, suction devices 60 may be placed on the bottom of the individual panels so that the partition will be prevented from moving across the top surface 14 but can be easily removed from the top surface 14, when desired. In the alternative, a high friction material may be placed on the bottom of the individual panels to prevent slippage.

An alternative embodiment of the partition is shown in FIG. 10 wherein the table 12' has partition 10' placed upon the top 14'. The partition is composed of three panels 20', 22' and 24' which are aligned by separator 40' so that the panels 20', 22' and 24' extend radially outward from the approximate center of the table 12' and each panel is disposed 120° from the other. Suction devices 60' prevent the partition from sliding on the top 14'.

It will be recognized by those skilled in the art that the objects of the present invention have been achieved by a partition consisting of different panels which are hinged to each other and which are aligned and secured in place by separators. The separators make communication media available in each carrel through a system of jacks.

While in accordance with the patent statutes a preferred embodiment has been described in detail, it should be understood that the invention is not limited thereby.

What is claimed is:

1. A portable, collapsible partition for forming carrels on a table top comprising:

- a. a multiplicity of panels;
- b. hinge means for securing said panels to each other to enable said panels to be manipulated in a plurality of different positions to create enclosed areas on said table top when said partition is unfolded;
- c. separating means for positioning said panels in a predetermined relationship to create said enclosed areas; and
- d. access means integral with said separating means for making available communication media in each of said enclosed areas.

2. A portable, collapsible partition in accordance with claim 1 wherein said partition has seven panels, said panels being manipulated to create enclosed areas on said table so that a first, fourth and seventh panel are in alignment with each other, a second and third panel are in alignment with each other and perpendicular to said first and fourth panels and a fifth and sixth panel are in alignment with each other and perpendicular to said fourth and seventh panels.

3. A portable collapsible partition in accordance with claim 1 wherein more than four panels are provided having at least two separating means in communication therewith, one of said separating means being associated with the junction formed by said four panels when they are unfolded.

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4. A portable collapsible partition in accordance with claim 3, wherein said separating means comprises a platform, legs depending from said platform, said legs being separated to form slots therebetween, said slots being of a width substantially the same as said panels so that when said separating means is placed over said panels said panels are received in said slots and are locked in position and said access means comprises at

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least one information-receiving jack located on said separating means, at least one information-distributing jack located on at least one of said legs within the confines of one of said enclosed areas and circuit means connecting said information-receiving jack to said information-receiving jack to said information-distributing jack.

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