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(54) **Title:**

**A PACKAGE FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

(57) **Abstract:**

A package for tobacco products comprises a container (3, 4) and an enclosure (2) of barrier material (15) for enclosing a charge of tobacco products. The enclosure of barrier material is located in the container and defines an access aperture. A moveable cover (7) extends over the access aperture and has a graspable tab (10). The container (3, 4) defines a window (14) overlying the tab (10).

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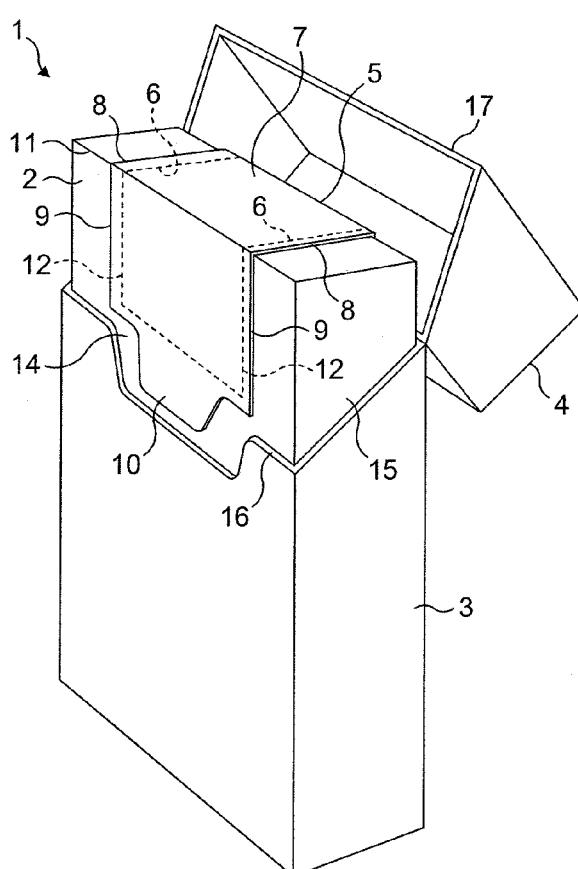
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(54) Title: A PACKAGE FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS



**FIG. 2**

(57) Abstract: A package for tobacco products comprises a container (3, 4) and an enclosure (2) of barrier material (15) for enclosing a charge of tobacco products. The enclosure of barrier material is located in the container and defines an access aperture. A moveable cover (7) extends over the access aperture and has a graspable tab (10). The container (3, 4) defines a window (14) overlying the tab (10).



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## A package for tobacco products

### Description

5 The present invention relates to packaging for tobacco products, and in particular, smoking articles such as cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos and loose tobacco. For convenience, these will be referred to as "cigarettes" in this specification.

10 It is known to provide a barrier layer as an inner wrap of a cigarette pack. The provision of a barrier layer greatly improves commercial shelf life in areas having hostile climatic conditions, especially in high temperature, high humidity areas.

15 Document WO 98/22367 discloses a cigarette pack having a body and a hinged lid. A barrier layer forms a sealed enclosure inside the body, with an access aperture to the enclosure. A cover over the access aperture is provided with a tab which can be grasped and pulled by a user to reveal the access opening. The tab is forced against the surface of the underlying barrier layer material by the hinged lid. This can make the tab difficult to grasp.

20 One solution to allow the tab to be more easily grasped is to fold the tab back on itself with a bend of 180°. This results in an underside of the tab being presented to a consumer on opening the hinged lid. The underside of the tab has a different surface finish to the exterior surface, and does not have a glossy finished surface which has been provided to the exterior surface of the tab, cover and barrier

25 material.

30 The present invention provides a package for tobacco products comprising: a container; an enclosure of barrier material for enclosing a charge of tobacco products, wherein the enclosure of barrier material is located in the container and defines an access aperture, a moveable cover extending over the access aperture and having a graspable tab; wherein the container defines a window overlying the tab.

Thus, the tab is free from pressure from the container. This allows the tab to be more easily grasped by the user once the container is opened.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described, by way of example 5 only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the package according to the present invention with the lid closed; and

10 Figure 2 is a perspective view of the package according to the present invention with the lid open.

Referring to Figures 1 and 2, a package 1 for tobacco products according to the present invention is shown. The package 1 includes a sealed charge 2 for containing 15 a tobacco product, preferably cigarettes. The sealed charge 2 is disposed within a container having a body 3 and a hinged lid 4. The body 3 has an edge 16 on a front side, which is adjacent to a facing edge 17 on a front side of the lid 4, when the lid 4 is in a closed position.

20 The sealed charge 2 comprises a charge of cigarettes which are optionally located in an inner frame (not shown). The charge 2 further comprises a layer of barrier material 15, which provides a sealed enclosure around the cigarettes and, if present, the inner frame. The layer of barrier material 15 has an access opening through 25 which cigarettes can be removed. The access opening is defined by edges 6 on a top side of the charge 2, and edges 12 on a front side of the charge 2, shown as dotted lines. The access opening is resealably closed by a moveable cover 7. The cover 7 is preferably in the form of a flap having a hinge line 5 on a surface of the barrier material 15. The hinge line 5 is preferably on a rear surface of the barrier material 15 or adjacent the rear surface. The cover 7 is attached to the barrier material 15, 30 or integrally formed with the barrier material 15.

The cover 7 is provided with a tab 10 on an edge distal to the hinge line 5. The tab 10 is dimensioned to be grasped by a user to open the cover 7 and reveal the access opening in order to remove a cigarette.

5 The cover 7 has side edges 8 overlapping with barrier material on the top side of the charge 2, and side edges 9 overlapping with barrier material on the front side of the charge 2. An undersurface of the cover 7 may be provided with a permanently tacky material to releasably adhere to the underlying barrier material adjacent the edges 6, 12. Alternatively, a permanently tacky material may be present on the barrier

10 material 15 to engage with the cover 7. The tab 10 is at least partly free of the permanently tacky material, and overlies a front side of the barrier material 15.

15 The barrier material 15 may be made of, for example, a metallised plastic or a plastics/metal foil laminate. The cover 7 and/or tab 10 may be made of the same material as the barrier layer 15.

A window 14 is formed in the container. The window 14 is an aperture in the container, formed between the edge 16 of the body 3 and the adjacent edge 17 of the lid 4. The window 14 is preferably in the form of a cut-out or recess in the body

20 3. The edge 16 is considered to extend along the periphery of the body 3 facing the lid 4, and so the shape of the edge 16 is determined by the shape of the cut-out. The cut-out defines the lower and side edges of the window 14. The lid 4 preferably has a straight edge 17 to define an upper edge of the window. The edge 16 is a top edge of the body 3, and the edge 17 is a bottom edge of the lid 4, when

25 the container is standing upright as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The window 14 is arranged to coincide with the position of the tab 10, when the cover 7 lies over the access opening. The tab 10 lies in an open space formed by the window 14. The tab 10 is visible through the window 14, even when the lid 4 is closed.

30 The window 14 is preferably rectangular, having a long side orientated across the width of the container, i.e. laterally across the front of the container. The corners of the window 14 may be rounded. The tab 10 is also substantially rectangular, preferably with rounded corners, with a long side extending laterally.

The window 14 preferably extends laterally a distance which is less than the width of the outer body 3. The window 14 preferably extends laterally a distance greater than the width of the tab 10. The vertical extent of the window 14, i.e. in a 5 longitudinal direction of the package 1, is preferably greater than the vertical extent of the tab 10. The window 14 preferably has a width of between 10mm and 80mm, and preferably has a width around 20 to 50mm, preferably around 30mm. The window 14 preferably has a vertical extent of at least 3mm, and preferably between 3mm and 15mm.

10

The tab 10 is preferably configured to be wholly within the area of the window 14. Alternatively, only part of the tab 10 may be located within the window 14. In particular, only a part of the tab 10 distal from the cover 7 may be located within the window 14.

15

The tab 10 is located in a free space when the hinged lid 4 is closed. The tab 10 is therefore not forced against the underlying barrier material 15, which makes the tab 10 easy for a consumer to grasp when the lid is open. The window 14 is an aperture aligned with the tab, such that the tab is not constrained by the container. The 20 container does not press the tab 10 against the underlying barrier material. The whole, or at least a part, and preferably a substantial part, of an exterior surface of the tab 10 is visible through the window 14.

The exterior surface of the tab 10 is continuous with an exterior surface of the 25 remainder of the cover, and preferably also the remainder of the barrier material 15. A continuous surface does not extend through an edge. The exterior surface of the tab 10 may be different to the interior surface of the tab 10. The exterior surface may have a glossy finished surface, and the interior surface may have a dull finish. The cover 7 and barrier material 15 preferably also have a finished glossy exterior 30 surface and a dull interior surface. The continuity of the outer surfaces of the tab 10, cover 7 and preferably the barrier material 15 means the finished surface of each faces outwardly and is visible to the user. The continuity of the exterior surfaces means that the same side of the tab 10 and cover 7 face outwardly from the charge

2. The tab 10 is therefore not folded over 180°, which would result in different sides facing outwardly. The exterior surface of the tab 10 may have a printed logo or writing, which is visible through the window 14.

5 The tab 10 does not need to extend through the window 14 in order to be visible or lie in free space, and so the tab 10 may be provided with a defined orientation independent of the window 14 and body 3, and may be spaced apart and/or angled to the underlying barrier material. The tab 10 may be pre-bent during manufacture to sit at a slight angle to the underlying barrier material 15. The angle is preferably 10 equal to or less than 90° to the barrier material, and more preferably less than 45° to the barrier material. The window 14 provides free space in which the angle of the tab 10 can be maintained, even when the hinged lid 4 is closed and the package 1 distributed to the user.

15 Alternatively, or in addition, a quantity of adhesive material may be applied between the tab 10 and the underlying barrier material 15. The adhesive is arranged to deflect the tab 10 away from the surface of the charge 2, making the tab 10 easier for a user to grasp. The tab 10 may be held at an angle to the barrier material 15 by a dot of adhesive, or spaced apart and parallel to the barrier material. A suitable 20 adhesive is a hot melt adhesive, of which a dot or dots could be applied to the barrier material 15. The tab 10 preferably does not extend beyond the front exterior surface of the container. Alternatively, the tab 10 may extend beyond the front exterior surface.

25 The container is formed from a blank, preferably made of card, or of a similar foldable material. The package 1 is formed such that the tab 10 is not constrained by the surrounding container. The tab 10 is visible and accessible to a user when the hinged lid is closed. The container may be overwrapped with a removable layer, for example cellophane.

30 The window 14 allows the tab 10 to be easily grasped, since the tab 10 is not pressed against the enclosure of barrier material. In addition, the window 14 allows

the tab to be freely angled or spaced from the barrier material. The window also allows a user to see the tab 10 before the container is opened

In order to extract a cigarette, the user first opens the lid 4. The user then grasps 5 the tab 10 and pulls open the cover 7 to reveal the access opening. The user may then extract the cigarette through the access opening. The package 1 is closed by the user pulling the tab 10 towards the barrier layer 15 to close the cover 7, and then closing the lid 4. Alternatively, the user may pull the tab 10 to open the lid and cover simultaneously.

10

The container may contain two separate enclosures, each containing a charge of cigarettes. Each enclosure has an independent cover having a tab. Alternatively, the container may contain a single enclosure having two separate covers with tabs. A single wide window in the container may be aligned with both tabs. Alternatively, 15 the container may define two separate windows, each aligned with a tab.

The window is described as defined by a cut-out in the edge 16 of the outer body. Alternatively, the window may be formed by a cut-out in the bottom edge 17 of the lid, and a straight top edge 16 of the body. Alternatively, the window may be 20 formed by a cut-out in the top edge of the outer body and by a cut-out in the bottom edge of the lid.

The tab has been described as folded over by less than 90°, or alternatively may be folded to any required angle. The tab may be folded by approximately 180°. The 25 fold may be carried out at the time the label/cover is applied or during the overwrapping process. For example, the pack may be overwrapped (for example, as conventionally known with cellophane) with the tab folded 180°, so that when the consumer unwraps the cellophane the tab 10 will be at an angle to the underlying barrier material and project from the pack for easy grasping by the consumer.

30 Further details are specified in EP1102712.

The window 14 has been described as defined between the lid 4 and body 3. Alternatively, the window may be formed as an aperture wholly within the lid 4. All

sides of the window would be defined by the lid. The window is then independent of the bottom edge of the lid 4 and top edge of the body 3. Alternatively, the window may be formed wholly with the body 3. The lid has been described as hinged to the body. The lid may be moveable onto the body in any manner, and in particular, the lid may not be hinged, and may slide onto the body.

The tab has been described as having an area smaller than the window, and having a width less than the width of the window. Alternatively, the tab may have an area larger than the area of the window, and/or a lateral width larger than the width of the window, and/or a height larger than the height of the window.

The window 14 has been described on a front surface of the container.

Alternatively, the window may be on a side surface of the container, or on a rear surface of the container.

**Claims**

1. A package for tobacco products comprising:  
a container;  
5 an enclosure of barrier material for enclosing a charge of tobacco products, wherein the enclosure of barrier material is located in the container and defines an access aperture,  
a moveable cover extending over the access aperture and having a graspable tab;  
wherein the container defines a window overlying the tab.  
10
2. A package for tobacco products according to claim 1 wherein the tab is visible through the window when the lid is closed
3. A package for tobacco products according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the  
15 container comprises a body and a lid, wherein the window is defined by an edge of the body and a facing edge of the lid.
4. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the window is defined by a cut-out in an edge of the body.  
20
5. A package for tobacco products according to claim 4 wherein the window is further defined by a straight edge of the lid of the container facing the body.
6. A package for tobacco products according to any one of claims 1 to 3  
25 wherein the container comprises a body and a lid, and the window is defined by a cut-out in an edge of the lid.
7. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein an exterior surface of the tab visible through the window is  
30 continuous with an exterior surface of the cover.

8. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the tab is spaced apart from and/or angled to the underlying barrier material.
- 5 9. A package for tobacco products according to claim 8 wherein the tab is present to extend at a predetermined angle to the underlying barrier material.
10. A package for tobacco products according to claim 8 wherein at least a part of the tab is spaced apart from the underlying barrier material by an adhesive.
11. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the window has an area larger than an area of the graspable tab.
12. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the tab is located at least in part within an area of the window, and preferably wholly within an area of the window.
13. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the cover is a flap attached to, or integrally formed with, the enclosure of barrier material.
14. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the enclosure of barrier material surrounds an inner frame.
- 25 15. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the enclosure of barrier material contains a tobacco product, and preferably, contains cigarettes.
- 30 16. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the lid is hinged to the body.

- 10 -

17. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the window is substantially rectangular, with a long side orientated along a width of the container.

5 18. A package for tobacco products according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the window extends over a length less than the width of the container.

19. A blank for forming the container according to any one of the preceding  
10 claims.

20. A package for tobacco products as hereinbefore described and shown with reference to any one of the accompanying drawings.