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NONTIPPING DRINKING-GLASS COASTER

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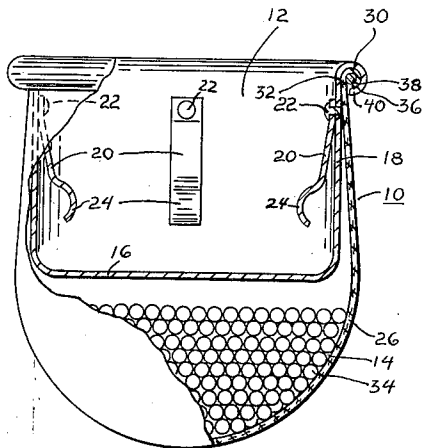


Fig. 1.

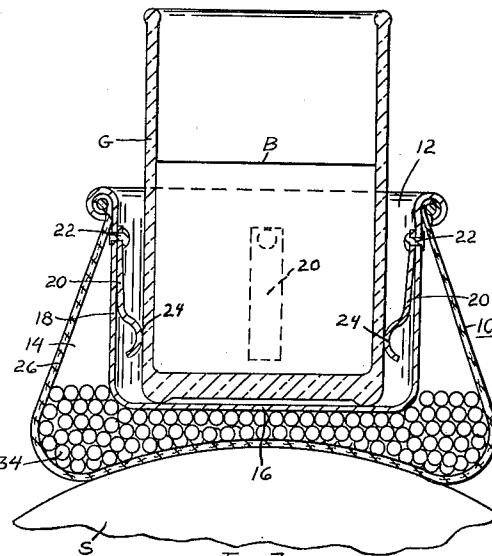


Fig. 3.

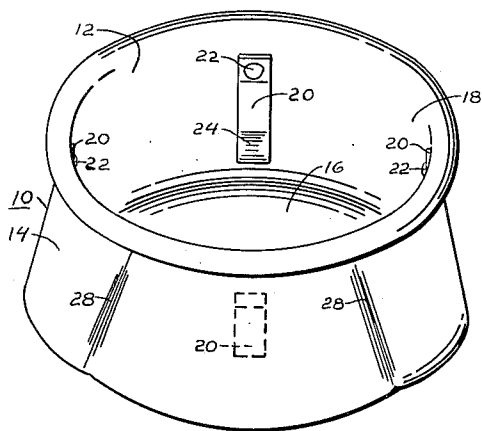


Fig. 2

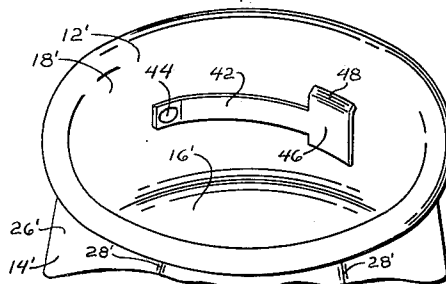


Fig. 4.

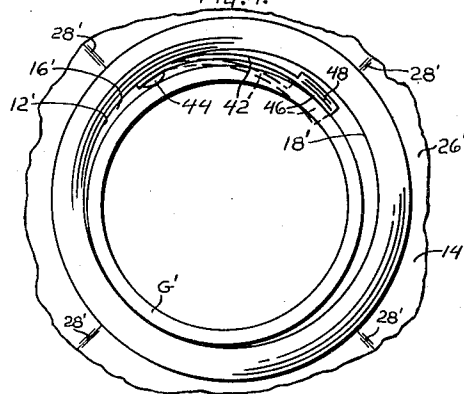


Fig. 5.

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NONTIPPING DRINKING-GLASS COASTER

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1 Claim. (Cl. 45-68.4)

This invention relates to supports for cup-like containers, such as drinking-glasses, which are commonly referred to as coasters, which are utilized to protect a supporting surface, for example, the top of a table or other furniture, when a person utilizing such a container temporarily places it down on such a surface.

It is a common experience for people to encounter on social occasions, such as when they are seated about a living-room and indulging in liquid refreshment, difficulty in temporarily placing down a drinking-glass on a piece of furniture. Usually a coaster is provided which approximates the form of a saucer. Unless a table is readily available, the drinking-glass cannot be placed down for the usual coaster is incapable of being accommodated on most irregular surfaces, such as the arms of chairs and the like. Furthermore, the usual coaster does not grip a drinking-glass and retain it in position; therefore, the drinking-glass is subject to sliding movement on the usual coaster. It frequently occurs on such occasions, much to the embarrassment of the guest, that a drinking-glass topples over and often damage results, particularly if the beverage is alcoholic. Such a mishap results from either or both the drinking-glass sliding off the coaster during the usual manipulation of the drinking-glass and coaster, or the attempt by a user to balance the drinking-glass and coaster on an irregular supporting surface.

It is an object of this invention to provide an improved coaster for drinking-glass or the like which includes a glass support that firmly positions and retains a drinking-glass and a mounting base that is arranged and constructed to accommodate and conform to any irregular supporting surface that is ordinarily found in a living-room on which it may be desired to rest a drinking-glass.

The object of this invention is achieved in one form by providing an improved drinking-glass coaster which comprises a cup-shaped support for removably but securely receiving a drinking-glass and a flexible mounting base which readily and automatically adapts itself and conforms to the configuration of an irregular supporting surface, and thereby safely supports the entire assembly of the coaster with the drinking-glass mounted thereon in an upright position.

The above, other objects and further details of that which I believe to be novel and my invention will be clear from the following description and claim taken with the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of one embodiment of my invention with portions broken away and shown in section for the sake of clarity;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the FIG. 1 embodiment shown as it appears from above and one side when resting on a substantially flat surface;

FIG. 3 is a central vertical sectional view of the FIG. 1 embodiment when in operative condition being supported on an irregular surface and supporting a drinking-glass;

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary top perspective view of the upper portion of another embodiment of the invention, and

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary top plan view of the FIG. 4 modification in operative condition showing a drinking-glass supported therein.

In FIGS. 1-3, one embodiment of the invention is

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illustrated, wherein the improved, nontipping, drinking-glass coaster is designated therein generally by the reference numeral 10. Coaster 10 comprises essentially a drinking-glass support 12 and a mounting base 14.

The drinking-glass support 12 comprises a rigid, cup-shaped member that may be conveniently made of metal, a rigid plastic or any other suitable rigid material. Drinking-glass support 12 comprises a circular, flat bottom wall 16 and a cylindrical side wall 18 having its axis vertically oriented. The upper portion of the drinking-glass support 12 is formed, in a manner to be described in greater detail subsequently, to be rigidly secured to the mounting base 14 to form a unitary coaster assembly. Within the drinking-glass support 12 there is formed means for positioning and retaining a drinking-glass, in the form of a plurality of downwardly extending, spring fingers 20 that are individually secured at their upper ends to the side wall 18, as by the rivets 22 or any other convenient equivalent securing members. The lower ends 24 of the spring fingers 20 are arcuately curved with their convex sides facing radially inwardly and are each spaced radially inwardly from the side wall 18.

The mounting base 14 comprises a loose sack 26 of flexible material, such as fabric, resilient plastic material or any other suitable resilient material, that may conveniently be formed in sections and bonded or sewn together at seams 28. Sack 26 is generally bowl-shaped and includes an upper portion 30 which is constricted to form a mouth 32. The sack 26 is partially filled with a plurality of loose weighted pellets 34, such as beans, sand, gravel or shot.

To assemble the coaster, after the weighted pellets have been disposed in the sack 26, the drinking-glass support 12 is lowered, bottom wall 16 first, into the sack 26 through the mouth 32 thereof. The upper end 36 of the sack 26 is then curled around a rigid ring 38 that is co-axially disposed relative to the upper portion of the drinking-glass support 12. The upper portion of the drinking-glass support 12 is then curled around both the sack's upper end 36 and ring 38, and crimped thereabout at 40 to retain the drinking-glass support 12 and mounting base 11 in fully assembled condition. If the drinking-glass support is made of metal the curling of its upper portion may readily be accomplished by crimping.

In operation of the FIGS. 1-3 embodiment after it is fully assembled, the drinking-glass G, filled with a beverage B, is disposed in the drinking-glass support 12 by the user inserting its bottom therein. The diameter of the cylindrical side wall 18 may vary according to choice; however, it will be such as to accommodate drinking-glasses of conventional size but to require slight pressure to force them into the drinking-glass support to bias the free ends 24 of the spring fingers 20 radially outwardly in order to accomplish such mounting. When mounted in the drinking-glass support 12, the drinking-glass G is securely retained therein by the spring fingers 20 which are individually biased radially inwardly as a result of their inherent flexibility and they contact the side of the drinking-glass and retain it. The assembled drinking-glass and coaster 10 may then be placed on a supporting surface. In so doing, the mounting base 14 will automatically accommodate itself and conform to the shape of the supporting surface, and thereafter securely retain both the coaster and drinking-glass in an upright position.

In FIG. 3 this operational relationship is illustrated, and the supporting surface S is illustrated as being arcuate in cross section, as the arms of many armchairs are configured. It will be understood, however, that the mounting base 14 will accommodate itself to any reasonably irregularly-shaped supporting surface, and that this desirable operation results from the automatic shifting

of the loosely mounted, weighted pellets 34 within the sack 26. It will also be understood that in practical usage of the improved coaster, glass G will be frequently, intermittently lifted to the lips of the user. When this is done, the user has an option of either removing the glass G from the coaster 10, for example, either by: (1) gripping the mounting base 14 with one hand and pulling the drinking-glass upwardly relative to the coaster with the other hand and leaving the coaster on the support, or (2) by lifting the entire, temporarily assembled, drinking-glass and coaster. In order to facilitate operation, the sack 26 may have its exterior made of a roughly textured material to aid in gripping. When used in the latter manner, it will be observed that the improved coaster has an important advantage over known coasters in that known coasters frequently get misplaced or fall in usage and the user thereafter places the glass on the top of a piece of furniture, because he may not want to bother the hostess for another coaster. However, when utilizing the improved coaster, it may be left attached to the glass, and therefore, it is always present when the glass is placed on supporting surface after the user has sipped from it. Furthermore, in so using the improved coaster, it functions additionally to prevent the hand of the user from contacting the moisture which usually forms on a drinking-glass, particularly one containing a very cold beverage.

The FIGS. 4 and 5 embodiment of the invention is constructed and operates in substantially the same manner as the FIGS. 1-3 embodiment, with the exception of the means for positioning and retaining the drinking-glass in the coaster. Therefore, in FIGS. 4 and 5, the same reference numerals as those employed in FIGS. 1-3 have been employed with a prime (') added to designate portions which correspond in both embodiments.

In FIGS. 4 and 5, only a portion of the mounting base 14' has been illustrated, namely, the sack 26' having the seams 28'; however, it should be clearly understood that the remainder of the mounting base 14' is substantially identical to the mounting base 14. The drinking-glass support 12' includes circular, flat, bottom wall 16' and cylindrical side wall 18'. Means for positioning and retaining a drinking-glass is formed on the glass support 12' and comprises an arcuately bent, leaf spring 42 that is disposed within the side wall 18' intermediate the top and bottom edges thereof and is secured thereto at one of its ends in any convenient manner, such as by the rivet 44. The free end of the leaf spring 42 is formed into or supports an enlarged tab 46 having an upper, radially outwardly, curved edge 48. The radius of the leaf spring 42 is less than that of the upper edge of the side wall 18', and therefore, the leaf spring is initially disposed so that tab 46 is spaced radially inwardly of the side wall 18', as shown in dotted lines in FIG. 5.

When it is desired to place a glass G' into the FIGS. 4 and 5 type of coaster, its bottom is inserted through the open upper end of the drinking-glass support 12', and a side portion of it will engage the tab 46 and force it radially outwardly, the curved edge 48 of the tab facilitating such insertion and operation. In order to mount the drinking-glass, it is necessary to stress the leaf spring 42 and force the tab 46 to its solid line position in FIG. 5; therefore, after the drinking-glass is mounted, it is securely retained in mounted position by the leaf spring which biases the tab 46 against a portion of the side of the drinking-glass and forces another portion of the drinking-glass against a portion of the cylindrical side wall 18'.

The FIGS. 4 and 5 coaster operates in the same general manner as the FIGS. 1-3 embodiment when placed in practical usage, the only difference between the embodiments residing in the means for positioning and retaining a drinking-glass. Regardless of the type of glass positioning and retaining means employed, it will be understood that it may be made of a noncorrosive flexible material, such as a spring steel which may be chrome plated. As pointed out above, my improved coasters are intended to be manufactured in varying diameter sizes; however, in any given diameter size, there should be sufficient flexibility in the glass-retaining means so as to permit the accommodation of drinking-glasses that vary in diameter within a range of approximately one-half inch.

In view of the foregoing it will be apparent that I have provided an improved coaster for a drinking-glass which possesses the following principal advantages over known coasters: (1) it includes means for positively, firmly supporting a drinking-glass; (2) it includes means for eliminating getting the hands of the user wet from condensed moisture on the drinking-glass, and (3) it includes means for permitting it to be mounted on irregular supporting surfaces.

As will be evident from the foregoing description, certain aspects of my invention are not limited to the particular details of construction of the examples illustrated, and I contemplate that various and other modifications and applications will occur to those skilled in the art. It is, therefore, my intention that the appended claim shall cover such modifications and applications as do not depart from the true spirit and scope of my invention.

What I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States is:

A drinking-glass coaster comprising: means for supporting a drinking-glass including a rigid cup-shaped member having a flat bottom wall adapted to support the bottom of a glass and a cylindrical side wall arranged to surround a portion of such a glass; flexible means in the form of an arcuately bent leaf spring that has a radius that is less than said member secured at one of its ends to said member on the interior thereof near the open top of said member and disposed to extend transversely relative to the axis of said member and have its free end spaced radially inwardly of said member; an enlarged tab formed at the free end of said spring having an upper curved radially outwardly extending edge disposed to engage and facilitate insertion of a drinking-glass into said member; said spring being arranged to have its free end resiliently radially displaceable to engage the side of a drinking-glass that is inserted into said member and firmly retain the drinking-glass therein after it is disposed in said member by biasing it toward said side wall; and a mounting base comprising a flexible sack secured to said member and extending loosely around and beneath it; a chamber formed between said member and said sack; and a plurality of small weights loosely partially filling said chamber and freely movable and shiftable therein to automatically rearrange themselves to permit said sack to conform to the shape of the surface on which said mounting base is placed.

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