

March 29, 1966

C. A. EVERSMAN ETAL

3,243,246

FLOATING PEDESTAL FOR DESKS AND THE LIKE

Filed Aug. 4, 1964

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

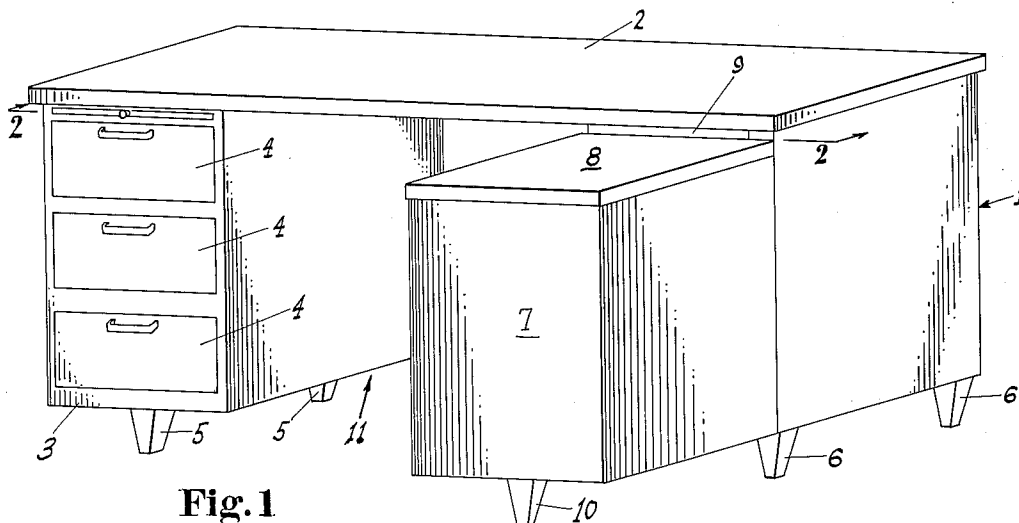


Fig. 1

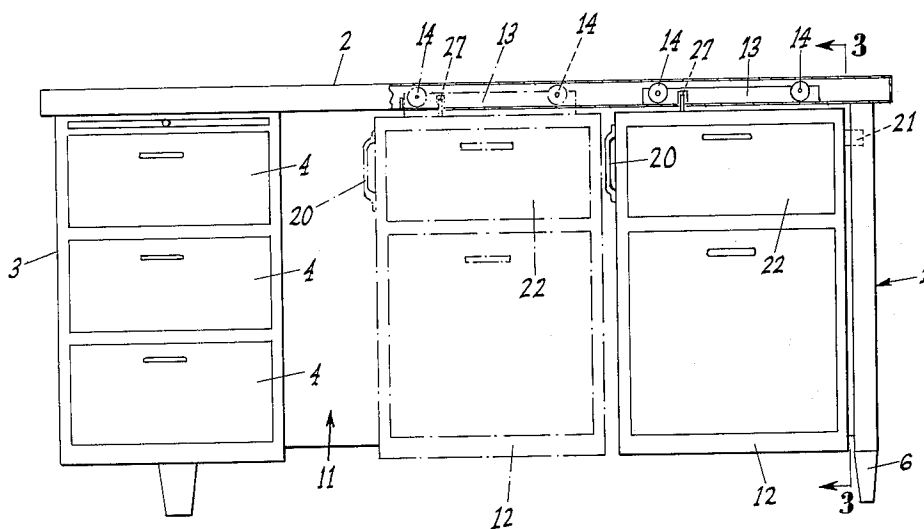


Fig. 2

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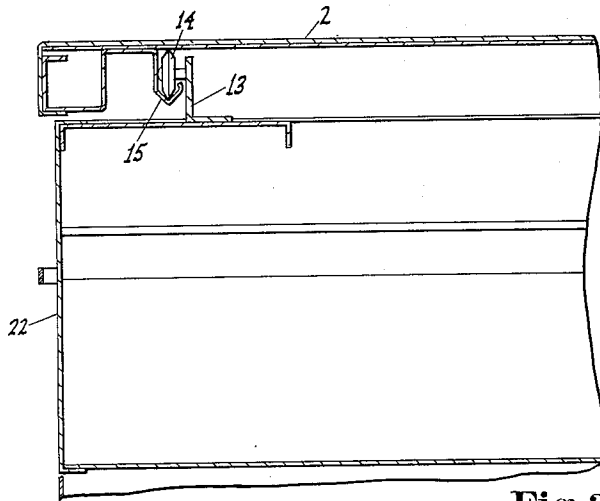


Fig. 3

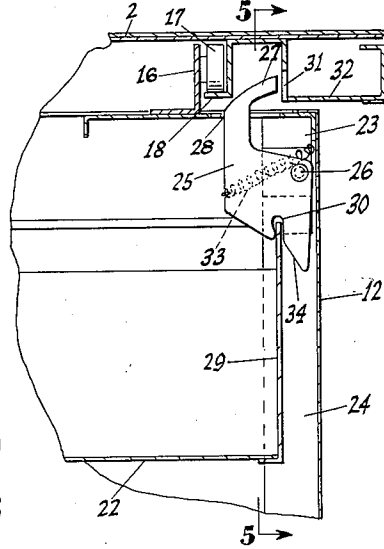


Fig. 4

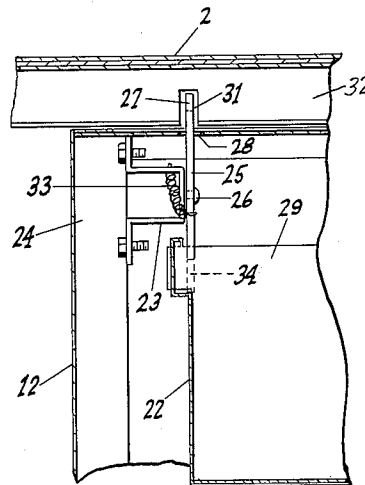


Fig. 5

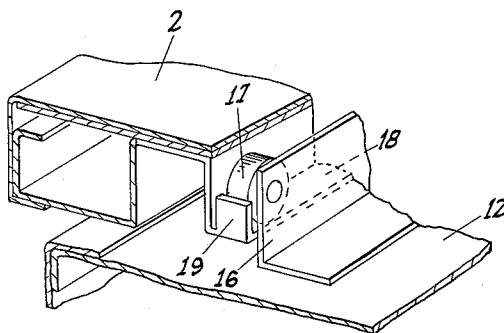


Fig. 6

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FLOATING PEDESTAL FOR DESKS AND THE LIKE

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8 Claims. (Cl. 312—194)

This invention relates to desks and similar pieces of furniture wherein drawers, storage cabinets, files and the like are mounted beneath the top or work surface of the unit. For example, a conventional desk may have a pair of legs at one end thereof and a pedestal at its opposite end, the pedestal comprising, in effect, a cabinet composed of a plurality of drawers. In larger size desks, a pedestal is provided at each end of the desk. In recent years there has been a trend toward L-shaped desks in which a work surface projects rearwardly from one end of the desk so that a person sitting behind the desk has a readily available work area at right angles to the desk top. Such extensions are sometimes known as run-out tables and are used extensively for secretary desks, the run-out table providing a convenient space for a typewriter and/or dictating equipment.

One of the disadvantages of an L-shaped desk lies in the fact that a drawer pedestal is impractical at the end of the desk to which the extension or run-out table is secured. The extension will either prevent the uppermost drawer in the pedestal from being opened; and even if it can be opened, the overlying top of the extension will prevent entry into the drawer. Even as to the underlying drawers, the presence of the extension will make them relatively inaccessible. Consequently, where an extension is employed, the space underlying the adjoining end of the desk is vacant and the unit suffers from a lack of drawer and storage space, being limited to a pedestal on the opposite end of the desk and, possibly, a secretary tray or the like in the extension itself.

In accordance with the instant invention, the desk is provided with a floating pedestal, that is, a movably mounted cabinet which can be readily moved from a position in which it underlies the end of the desk to which the extension is attached to a position in which it occupies the knee well of the desk and hence is in a position where its drawers or the like are readily accessible to the user.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a floating pedestal desk of the character described which is movable from an inoperative position in which the pedestal underlies one end of the desk to an operative position in which the pedestal has been displaced laterally with respect to the extension or run-out table and is locked in the operative position when one or more of its drawers are opened, thereby preventing the pedestal from being returned to the inoperative position with its drawers open.

Still a further object of the instant invention is the provision of a floating pedestal desk of the character described embodying latch mechanism which is automatically actuated upon opening and closing movement of one or more of the pedestal drawers, the opening movement of the drawers serving to engage the latch mechanism and hence lock the pedestal against movement, whereas upon the closing of the drawers, the latch mechanism is automatically disengaged and the pedestal freed for movement to its inoperative position.

Still a further object of the invention is the provision of a desk of the character described wherein the movable pedestal is suspended from the undersurface of the desk top by means of rollers adapted to move along spaced apart tracks forming a part of the desk frame. The foregoing together with other objects of the invention which

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will appear hereinafter or which will be apparent to the skilled worker in the art upon the reading of this specification, is accomplished by that construction and arrangement of parts of which an exemplary embodiment shall now be described.

Reference is made to the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a desk unit incorporating an extension or run-out table which would normally preclude the use of a pedestal at the right-most end of the desk.

FIGURE 2 is a vertical sectional view taken along the line 2—2 of FIGURE 1 illustrating the manner in which a floating pedestal is suspended from the desk.

FIGURE 3 is an enlarged fragmentary vertical sectional view illustrating the manner in which the floating pedestal is suspended from the desk, the view also illustrating the latch means in the open position.

FIGURE 4 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view similar to FIGURE 3 but illustrating the latch mechanism in the locked position.

FIGURE 5 is a vertical sectional view taken along the line 5—5 of FIGURE 3.

FIGURE 6 is a fragmentary perspective view illustrating the manner in which stops are provided at the ends of the roller supporting tracks to establish the operative position of the movable pedestal.

Referring now to FIGURE 1 of the drawings, the reference numeral 1 refers generally to a desk which, in the embodiment illustrated, comprises a top 2 supported at one end by a fixed pedestal 3 having a plurality of drawers 4, the pedestal being supported by legs 5. At its opposite end, the top 2 is supported by a spaced apart pair of legs 6. An extension or run-out table 7 projects rearwardly from one end of the desk, the extension having a top 8 which, in the embodiment illustrated, is somewhat lower than the top 2 of the desk—as is often the case where the extension or run-out table is to be used for a typewriter. Bracket means 9 serves to secure the extension to the desk; and the extension will be supported on one or more legs, such as the leg 10.

In most desks of the character just described, the width of the extension or run-out table 7 is usually equal to the width of the pedestal 3, thereby providing a centrally disposed knee opening 11 between the pedestal on one side and the extension on the other, although the area lying beneath the top 2 and forwardly of the extension 7 is also open and, as already indicated, comprises essentially wasted space.

As seen in FIGURE 2, the foregoing otherwise waste space is occupied by the floating or movable pedestal 12 which is suspended from the undersurface of the desk top 2 and movable from the inoperative position illustrated in solid lines to the operative position illustrated in dotted lines. In essence, the floating pedestal comprises a movable cabinet which may contain drawers, files, shelves, or the like, although it has been designated as a pedestal due to the fact that it serves essentially the same function as the pedestal 3 insofar as its storage capacity is concerned.

As seen in FIGURE 3, the pedestal is suspended from the desk top 2 by means of rollers secured to the movable pedestal which engage spaced apart tracks secured to the under side of the desk top and extending lengthwise thereof. These tracks are constituted by the conventional reinforcing and stiffening construction found in most metal desks. Thus, the front portion of the pedestal is supported by means of a bracket 13 mounting a plurality of rollers 14 which engage a track 15 secured to the undersurface of desk top 2. Similarly, a bracket 16 toward the rear of the pedestal mounts rollers 17 which engage a flat track 18. It will be noted that the rollers 17 have a cylindrical surface adapted to ride on the flat track 18,

whereas the rollers 14 are V-shaped in cross-sections so as to seat in the V-shaped track 15. This arrangement not only facilitates the attachment of the movable pedestal to the desk but additionally acts to maintain the movable pedestal in proper alignment for free and easy movement along the tracks.

Stops will be provided at the opposite ends of the tracks to establish the alternate positions of the movable pedestal. As seen in FIGURE 6, such stops may be conveniently formed by providing up-turned flanges 19 at the ends of the tracks formed integrally therewith. Of course, if desired, detachable stops or bumpers may be employed.

Movement of the pedestal from the inoperative to the operative position may be conveniently effected by means of a handle 20 secured to the side wall of the movable pedestal facing the knee opening 11 where it may be conveniently gripped by the user. If desired, the pedestal may be maintained in the inoperative position by means of a touch latch 21 which will engage and retain the pedestal when it is moved to the inoperative position. Such touch latches release upon the application of pressure to the latch through the pedestal. Of course, other types of releasable latch means, such as magnetic latches and spring latches, may be employed if desired.

When the movable pedestal is in its operative position, it lies within the kneehole 11 and its drawers, such as the drawer 22, may be readily opened without obstruction from the run-out table 7. However, if the drawer 22 is open and it is attempted to move the pedestal toward its inoperative position, the side of the open drawer will strike the run-out table. Consequently, to avoid this possibility, a latch mechanism is provided which locks the movable pedestal in the operative position when the drawer 22 is open. Thus, as seen in FIGURES 3, 4 and 5, a bracket 23 is secured to one of the inset corner shoulders 24 at the rear of the movable pedestal 12; and a latch member 25 is pivotally secured to the bracket by means of pivot pin 26. The latch member has an upwardly projecting curved finger 27 which extends through an opening 28 in the top of the movable pedestal 12 in the event the pedestal has a closed or partially closed top. In the event the pedestal has an open top, it will be evident that the finger 27 will simply project freely upwardly from the pedestal.

When the drawer 22 is closed, the upper edge of its rear wall 29 engages in a slot 30 in the latch 25 and the latch is maintained in the upright position shown in FIGURE 3. In such position, the latch finger 27 is free from contact with the desk and hence the pedestal may be moved along its tracks.

When the drawer 22 is opened, it will move away from the latch in the manner illustrated in FIGURE 4, such movement serving to pivot the latch in a clockwise direction and at the same time withdraw the upper edge of rear wall 29 from the slot 30. The clockwise movement of the latch causes its curved finger 27 to enter the slot 31 formed in frame member 32 which comprises a part of the desk top. The pedestal is thus locked in its operative position and cannot be moved along the tracks until the latch is released. The latch is maintained in the locked position by means of spring 33.

When the drawer 22 is reclosed its rear wall 29 will contact the surface 34 of the latch lying below the slot 30 and the uppermost edge of the rear wall will reenter the slot 30. As closing movement of the drawer continues, the latch will be moved in a counterclockwise direction against the tension of spring 33 and the latch finger 27 will be withdrawn from the slot 31, so that when the drawer is completely closed the latch will have returned to the position illustrated in FIGURE 3 and the movable pedestal will be freed for movement to the inoperative position. Since the frame member 32 extends substantially the length of the desk top, and the only slot therein is at 31, it will be clear that the latch finger 27 abutting the frame member 32 will prevent the drawer

22 from being opened except when the movable pedestal is in the broken line position of FIGURE 2.

If desired, similar latch means may be utilized in conjunction with the underlying drawers in the movable pedestal, although in most instances no harm is done if the pedestal is moved to the inoperative position with the lowermost drawers open since there is usually nothing underlying the top 8 of the run-out table which would obstruct such movement.

As should now be apparent, the instant invention provides for additional storage space in an area of a desk which is otherwise essentially unusable for such purpose, and yet, by reason of the floating movement of the pedestal, it is readily accessible to the user when access to its contents is desired. It will be understood that the location of the movable pedestal does not constitute a limitation on the invention, and it may be utilized at either end of the desk depending upon the conditions of use. Indeed, the instant invention is applicable to any desk or table wherein it is desired to provide a suspended storage cabinet and the conditions of use would dictate the desirability of rendering such storage cabinet movable from one location to another. The floating pedestal is readily adapted to be installed at an integral part of a new piece of furniture or, if desired, it may be provided as a separate attachment for installation in existing units. Other modifications and adaptations of the invention may be made without departing from its spirit and purpose.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. In a desk or the like having a top, a movable pedestal compartment underlying said top, said pedestal compartment having at least one drawer therein movable from a closed to an opened position, suspension means mounting said pedestal compartment for movement from a storage position to a position of use, and latch means operatively connected to said pedestal compartment for releasably securing it in its position of use, said latch means being movable from a release position to a locking position upon opening movement of said drawer and returnable to the release position upon the closing of said drawer.

2. The structure claimed in claim 1 wherein said latch means comprises a latch member pivotally connected to said pedestal compartment, and wherein said latch means has a portion thereof positioned to be engaged by said drawer, said drawer acting to move said latch member to the release position when said drawer is closed and to move said latch member to the locking position when the drawer is opened.

3. The structure claimed in claim 2 wherein said desk top has a frame member, said frame member having a single slot entered by said latch member when said drawer is opened, whereby said drawer may be opened only when said latch member is aligned with said slot.

4. The structure claimed in claim 2 including spring means normally biasing said latch member to the locking position.

5. The structure claimed in claim 4 wherein the portion of the latch member which engages said drawer comprises a slot positioned to receive the uppermost edge of the rear wall of said drawer when said drawer is in the closed position, said slot being so oriented relative to the pivot point of said latch that, as the drawer is opened, the rear wall thereof will effect pivoting movement of the latch member with the release of said rear wall from said slot.

6. In a desk or the like having a top, an extension projecting outwardly from one side of said desk at one end thereof, a movable pedestal compartment underlying said top, said pedestal compartment having at least one drawer therein movable from a closed to an open position, suspension means mounting said pedestal compartment for movement from an inoperative position in which said

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pedestal compartment is in general alignment with said extension to an operative position in which said pedestal compartment is displaced laterally with respect to said extension, whereby said pedestal compartment may be maintained in the inoperative position when not in use and moved to the operative position when access thereto is desired, and latch means operatively connected to said pedestal compartment for releasably securing it in its operative position, said latch means being movable from a release position to a locking position upon opening movement of said drawer, and returnable to the release position upon closing of said drawer.

7. In a desk or the like having a metallic top member provided with the usual metal stiffening flanges on the underside of at least the front and back edges thereof, a movable pedestal compartment underlying said top, and mounting means on said pedestal compartment movably suspending said pedestal compartment from said stiffening flanges, said stiffening flanges serving as tracks for the movement of said pedestal compartment from a storage position to a position of use, said pedestal compartment having at least one drawer movable from a closed to an open position, and latch means operatively connected to said pedestal compartment for releasably securing it in its position of use, said latch means being movable

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from a release position to a locking position upon opening movement of said drawer and returnable to the release position upon the closing of said drawer.

8. The structure claimed in claim 7, wherein one of said stiffening flanges is provided with a slot and said latch means has a portion thereof adapted to engage in said slot and another portion thereof positioned to be engaged by said drawer, said drawer acting to move said latch member to cause said first named portion to engage in said slot when said drawer is opened and to withdraw said first portion from said slot when said drawer is closed.

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