The present invention relates to a novel toy including a unique set of building blocks and storage container therefor, capable of providing an educational means of amusement with a wide variety of play activities. A survey of toys today readily reveals that a great many offer only a limited variety of play activity. For example, the well-known Jack-in-the-Box provides only one "surprise" and fails to stimulate thereafter. On the other hand, many toys are so complicated that they leave little room for the child's imagination. Basically, children enjoy constructive play, resulting in an accomplishment while requiring well-constructed devices which will withstand the rugged handling. Large blocks are easier to handle and also to share, and they stimulate the child's creative imagination.

The basic elements have been kept as simple as possible to provide a maximum of imagination on the user's part. This objective is also compatible with compactness and initial low cost, without maintenance requirements.

The particular configuration or shape of the elements have been found to be readily understood, as to their intended function, as well as being holdable by the young users with ease of maneuverability in developing block structures, particularly of the tall or building variety.

The essential storage configuration is that of the basic rectangle in patterns constituting the four (4) basic elements. Several rectangular assemblies, primarily of duplicated elements, are adapted to fit within a rectangular box, as layers. The box includes casters and a draw string.

Each layer is made up of configurations of the same pattern. The purpose of this lay-out is for storage of the blocks in accordance with the pattern outlined on the hingable top of the box, thereby enabling orderly storage, which in and of itself is a function of building with the blocks, similar to assembling a large three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle.

The elements fit well, one with the other, and permit a wide variety of uses, serving as: construction toys, a puzzle; for fabrication of: a doll-house, a doll bed, a seat; and it provides a ride toy, a push toy, and a pull toy, and can be used in playing with other toys.

The preferred embodiment includes four (4) basic elements with a total of 36 elements to provide for maximum play variations. This includes unique configurations which conform, in orderly fashion, to avoid wasted storage space for both educational and amusement purposes.

Each block is comprised of one or more rectangles or cubes but all rectangular sections have common cross-sectional side dimensions, being preferably 1.83 inches (or 1 unit) to a side, in the form of one or more modular units of a square 1.83 inches by 1.83 inches.

The first element is, in fact, a cube having preferably 1.83 inch edge dimensions.

The second element is in the form of a modified arch or bridge-like shape which has dimensions of preferably 5.49 inches (3 units) in overall width, the same measurement in overall height and a common thickness of 1.83 inches (1 unit). These particular measurements permit an interior recess capable of accommodating, precisely, the first element. It should also be noted that the arch or bridge-like element includes an upwardly extending projection directly above the recess, having the dimensions of the recess.

The third element or block is a modified U-shape having arms preferably 3.66 inches (2 units) in length and a base or common section of 7.32 inches (4 units) in height. It measures the standard dimensions of 1.83 inches (1 unit) by 1.83 inches (1 unit) for all arm and base cross-sections, thereby leaving an opening of 3.66 inches (2 units) in width, having a depth and thickness of the standard measurement.

The fourth basic element is in the form of a rectangle 7.32 inches (4 units) in height with a square cross-section of 1.83 inches (1 unit) on the sides.

It will now be clear that each of the basic elements is made up of modules of the first element and therefore each includes a cubular multiple of the initial element with respect to every reference, recess or projection thereof.

Expressed in another way, it may be observed that the basic dimensions include single units, double units, triple units and quadruple units.

With the foregoing in mind, it is among the objects of this invention to provide a set of interfitting blocks, particularly intended to offer a child the maximum play activity without limiting the imagination.

It is a further object of the invention to provide a container adapted snugly to contain several layers of the elements, in predetermined configuration.

Another object of the invention is to provide such a toy having the preferred storing configuration outlined on its top or cover. It is another object of the invention to provide a toy with wheels and drawstring, with the aforementioned characteristics.

The invention will next be described in detail in connection with the drawings, which show a preferred embodiment and in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the toy;
FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the toy with the cover removed and one side open;
FIG. 3 depicts the individual building elements in perspective;
FIGS. 4 and 5 indicate construction built from the units; and
FIGS. 6 and 7 shows the toy with wheels and exemplary uses thereof.

In FIG. 1 the container 11 includes a removable cover or top 13 which is outlined in accordance with one common surface view of the elements to be stored therein. The cover 13 fits snugly within the top opening of container 11, formed by the end walls 15 and 17 (FIGS. 6 and 7) and the side walls 19 and 20. The wall 19 is hinged to the bottom 21, by hinges 23 and 25, and the corresponding side wall 20 is fixed into the bottom, and set with cement. The end walls 15 and 17 are similarly affixed to the bottom 21 and a set of four
casters, such as casters 31 and 33 are screwed onto the bottom to serve as wheels. The basic elements of the invention are shown in FIG. 3, with the first element 35 being depicted as a tubular-shaped block, the second element 36 being the arch-like or bridge-like element, the third element 37 being the U-shaped block and the fourth element 38 being the rectangular block with square cross-section. The preferred materials of the elements are wood, but plastic or other materials will suffice.

From FIG. 2 it will be seen that such elements interfit to make each of the four layers 40 through 43 in the same configuration as the outlined picture on the top 13, and substantially fill the interior of the container 15. A flange or rim 46 is formed by the top portions of the four walls to receive the top 13, thereby presenting a smooth external surface.

Each row is comprised of four of the elements 38, two of the elements 37, one element 36 and two elements 35.

Thus, a complete set of elements for the size of container depicted consists of 36 elements.

The elements 35 through 38 have been assembled into the structures 51, 52 and 53. It may be seen from structure 51 that tall constructions are readily facilitated through the use of a relatively few elements, and that considerable imagination can be exercised in building such structures, as is also shown by structure 53. Structure 52 indicates the versatility of the elements to substitute for common building blocks.

FIGS. 6 and 7 show the portable toy and illustrates its use as a pull toy, through the provision of a drawstring 60, and its use as a sitting or riding toy, as in FIG. 6.

It may be obvious to those skilled in the art, from a reading of this description, that various modifications of the preferred embodiment may be readily made. For example, the container 11 may be shaped differently so that a different combination of elements is required to make up each layer. Also, other shaped containers will receive layers of configurations differing from each other and, of course, the container may have permanently incorporated therein a few blocks, such that the child must use further imagination in storing the blocks to fill the interior, as a three-dimensional jigsaw. Accordingly, it is intended that the invention be only limited by the appended claims wherein.

What is claimed is:

1. A set of building blocks comprising four basic interfitting and modularly related elements; a first element comprising a cube having cubic dimensions of one unit; a second element of arch-like configuration including a centrally located upriser of cubical dimensions conforming to a cubical recess in the opposite side of the second element; said arch-like configuration having a length of three units; a height, excluding the upriser, of two units, and a width of one unit; a third element having a U-shaped configuration with an overall length of four units, a height of two units, and a width of one unit; said third element, including a recess two units across and one unit deep; and, a fourth element of rectangular configuration having a base of one unit on each side and a height of four units, each element being adapted to interfit or extend each other element; whereby a plurality of such elements, consisting of two first elements, one second element, two third elements, and four fourth elements will interfit to build a rectangular solid layer having a width of four units, a length of nine units, and a depth of one unit.

2. A set of building blocks comprising at least four basic interfitting and modularly related elements; the first element comprising a cube having dimensions of one unit along all surfaces; a second element, of arch-like configuration, including an upriser of dimensions equal to the first element and a recess in the opposite side thereof conforming in size to the first element; said arch-like configuration having a length of three units, a height, excluding the upriser, of two units, and a width of one unit; a third element having a U-shaped configuration with an overall length of four units, a height of two units, and a width of one unit; said third element, including a recess two units across and one unit deep; and, a fourth element of rectangular configuration having a base of one unit on each side and a height of four units, each element being adapted to interfit or extend each other element; whereby a plurality of such elements will interfit to build a rectangular solid layer having a width of four units, a length of nine units, and a depth of one unit.

3. A toy, comprising in combination, a container and a set of elements, said set of elements comprising a plurality of modularly related elements, dimensioned to have all surfaces a predetermined number of common units of measurement; the first element comprising a cube having dimensions of one unit along one surface; a second element of arch-like configuration including a centrally disposed upriser of dimensions equal to the first element and a recess in the opposite side thereof conforming in size to the first element and opposite said upriser; said arch-like configuration having a length of three units, a height, excluding the upriser, of two units and a width of one unit; a third element having a U-shaped configuration with an overall length of four units, a height of two units, and a width of one unit; said third element including a recess two units across and one unit deep; a fourth element of rectangular configuration having a base of one unit on each side and a height of four units; said container comprising a top, a bottom, two ends and two sides, connected together to form a hollow interior having orthogonal rectangular cross-sections with dimensions of said units; said top including an outline for assembling a plurality of said elements to form a layer, one unit in height and of the dimensions of the orthogonal cross-sections, whereby a plurality of said elements can be assembled into said container in like layers to fill said hollow interior with the top closing the container.

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