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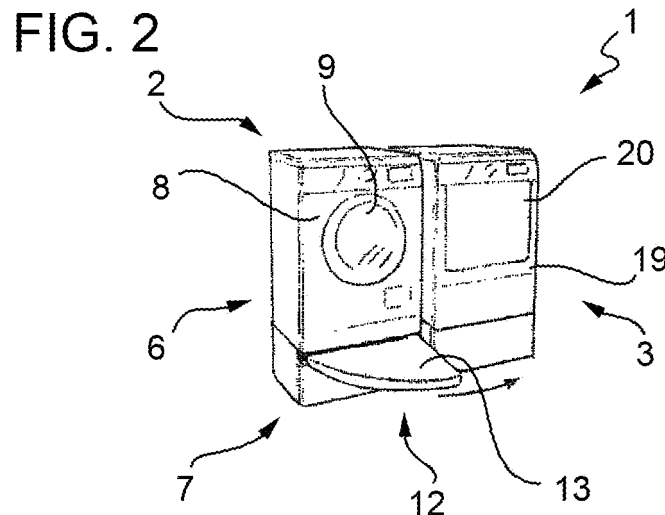
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(54) **Laundrying machine with an extractable laundry supporting accessory**

(57) A laundering machine (2, 3) having an external wall (8) provided with a slit (10); an internal seat (11) communicating with the outside through the slit (10); and an extractable laundry supporting accessory (12) movable between a stowed rest position within the seat (10) and an extracted work position and having a platform

(13), which is designed to support laundry and is rotatable between the stowed and extracted positions about an axis (14) of rotation, which extends at right angles to the platform (13), and is arranged in a vertical position when the laundering machine (2; 3) is arranged, in use, in a vertical working position.



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a laundering machine with an extractable laundry supporting accessory.

[0002] To load or unload laundry in or out of a laundering machine, such as a preferably front-loading washing machine or drier, the user normally employs a laundry basket placed on the floor close to the machine loading/unloading door; and, to do which, the user is forced to bend down into awkward positions, possibly performing movements that may result in injury.

[0003] To eliminate these drawbacks, some laundering machines are equipped with an accessory in the form of a drawer, which is housed inside a seat formed at a predetermined height inside a pedestal, and is extractable from the seat to support the laundry in a raised position facing the machine, and so enable the user to load and unload the machine comfortably, with no potentially harmful movements involved. Accessories of this type are known, for example, from US2005178165 and DE9013620; with particular reference to US2005178165, the laundering machine disclosed therein comprises a shelf provided in a pedestal or in a drawer and the shelf can be moved or tilted relative to the pedestal or to the drawer to an extracted horizontal position to support a laundry basket.

[0004] Known accessories of the above type have several drawbacks, on account of the laundry deposited in the drawer in the extracted position making it relatively difficult to operate the machine loading/unloading door.

[0005] It is an object of the present invention to provide a laundering machine designed to eliminate the aforementioned drawbacks.

[0006] According to the present invention, there is provided a laundering machine as claimed in Claim 1 and, preferably, in any one of the Claims depending directly or indirectly on Claim 1.

[0007] The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

- Figure 1 shows a schematic view of a laundering unit including a first embodiment of the laundering machine according to the present invention;
- Figures 2 and 3 show the Figure 1 unit in another two distinct operating positions;
- Figure 4 shows a schematic plan view of the Figure 1-3 unit;
- Figure 5 shows a schematic side view of a particular of Figures 1-4.
- Figure 6 shows a second embodiment of the laundering machine according to the present invention.

[0008] In Figures 1 to 3 and 6, number 1 indicates a laundering unit comprising two machines 2 and 3 located side by side with two respective lateral walls 4 and 5 facing. More specifically, in the laundering unit 1 shown,

machine 2 is a front-loading washing machine, and machine 3 is a front-loading drier.

[0009] As shown in Figures 1 to 3, machine 2 comprises a cabinet 6 and a pedestal 7 integrated in the cabinet 2 and defining a lower part of the cabinet 6. The machine 2 has a front wall 8, provided with a laundry loading/unloading door 9, and a slit 10 located in the pedestal 7 beneath door 9 and communicating with a seat 11 formed inside the pedestal 7 to partly house an extractable accessory 12 for supporting laundry (not shown) in the extracted position.

[0010] In the embodiment of Figure 6, number 2 indicates a laundering machine comprising a cabinet 6 and a pedestal 7, which is separated from the cabinet 6; and cabinet 6 supported by, and fixed on pedestal 7. In this case, laundering machine 2 has a front wall 8 which extends along the front of both the cabinet 6 and the pedestal 7.

[0011] In a variation not shown, accessory 12 is housed inside a seat 11 formed in machine 3.

[0012] Accessory 12 is movable between a stowed position, shown in Figure 1, in which accessory 12 is housed inside seat 11 in machine 2 and a fully extracted position, shown in Figure 3, in which accessory 12 is positioned in front of machine 3 to support laundry (not shown) when loading and unloading machine 3. Accessory 12 may also be set to an intermediate extracted position, shown in Figure 2, in which accessory 12 is positioned in front of front wall 8 of machine 2 to support laundry when loading/unloading machine 2.

[0013] As shown in Figures 4 and 5, extractable accessory 12 comprises an at least 90° sector-shaped platform 13 fitted to machine 2 to rotate, with respect to machine 2 and between the stowed and extracted positions, about an axis 14 through the centre of the sector of platform 13. Axis 14 is parallel to front wall 8 and lateral wall 4 of machine 2, is located close to front wall 8 and, preferably, substantially at the intersection edge between front wall 8 and lateral wall 4, is crosswise to a top surface 15 and bottom surface 16 of platform 13, and is defined by a pin 17 integral with platform 13.

[0014] Accessory 12 comprises a scale 18 which, in the example shown, is housed inside platform 13 to weigh the laundry on platform 13.

[0015] In use, when set to the stowed rest position, accessory 12 is housed inside seat 11 in machine 2; and, when pressure is applied by the user on front edge 19 of platform 13, accessory 12 rotates at least 90° into the intermediate extracted position, in front of front wall 8 of machine 2, in which laundry for loading or unloading through door 9 can be placed on platform 13. When laundry is unloaded from machine 2 onto platform 13, the user can rotate platform 13 further (to a total of about 180°) into the fully extracted position, in front of a front wall 19 of machine 3, to load machine 3 through a loading/unloading door 20 of machine 3 above platform 13.

[0016] The above only applies when the laundry on platform 13 does not obstruct the movement of door 9

and door 20. If the laundry on platform 13 obstructs the movement of door 9 and door 20, the user, once the laundry is placed on platform 13, may rotate accessory 12 about axis 14 into a position between the intermediate and fully extracted positions to clear the obstruction and open door 9 or door 20.

[0017] In a further embodiment, not shown in the figures, the pedestal 7 is provided with a drawer at its front side.

[0018] Accessory 12 may also be used to advantage, as described above, in the event (Figure 6) machine 2, which, in this case, can be either a washing machine or a drying machine, is on its own.

Claims

1. A laundering machine comprising an external wall (8) provided with a slit (10); an internal seat (11) communicating with the outside through the slit (10); and an extractable laundry supporting accessory (12) movable between a stowed rest position within the seat (11) and an extracted work position; the laundering machine (2; 3) being **characterized in that** the extractable laundry supporting accessory (12) comprises a platform (13) rotatable, about an axis (14) of rotation extending at right angles to the platform (13), between the stowed and extracted positions; the platform (13) being designed to support laundry, and the axis (14) of rotation being a vertical axis when the laundering machine (2; 3) is arranged, in use, in a vertical working position.
2. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 1, and comprising a pedestal (7); the slit (10) and the seat (11) being provided at the pedestal (7).
3. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 2, and comprising a cabinet (6); the pedestal (7) defining a lower part of the cabinet (6); and said external wall (8) being a front wall of the cabinet (6).
4. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 2, and comprising a cabinet (6); the pedestal (7) being a self-standing pedestal (7); the cabinet (6) being positioned on the pedestal (7) and being supported thereby; and said external wall (8) being a front wall of both the cabinet (6) and the pedestal (7).
5. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 3 or 4, and comprising a further external wall (4); said axis (14) being arranged substantially at an intersection edge between said external wall (8) and said further external wall (4).
6. A laundering machine as claimed in any one of Claims 2 to 5, wherein the pedestal (7) comprises a

drawer mounted for movement through said external wall (8); the slit (10) being provided above the drawer.

7. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein a laundry loading door (9) is provided at said external wall (8); the slit (10) being located beneath the door (9).
8. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein the axis (14) of rotation is defined by a pin (17) fitted through said internal seat (11).
9. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the pin (17) is integral with the platform (13).
10. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein the platform (13) comprises a scale (18) for the laundry.
11. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein the platform (13) is mounted to rotate at least 90°, about the axis (14) of rotation, between said stowed and extracted positions.
12. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein the platform (13) is mounted to rotate at most 180°, about the axis (14) of rotation, between said stowed and extracted positions.
13. A laundering machine as claimed in one of the foregoing Claims, wherein the platform (13) is in the form of a sector; the axis (14) of rotation extending through the centre of the sector.
14. A laundering machine as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the sector is at least 90°.
15. A pedestal (7) for supporting a laundering machine (2, 3) and comprising an external wall (8) provided with a slit (10); an internal seat (11) communicating with the outside through the slit (10); and an extractable laundry supporting accessory (12) movable between a stowed rest position within the seat (11) and an extracted work position; the pedestal (7) being **characterized in that** the extractable laundry supporting accessory (12) comprises a platform (13) rotatable, about an axis (14) of rotation extending at right angles to the platform (13), between the stowed and extracted positions; the platform (13) being designed to support laundry, and the axis (14) of rotation being a vertical axis when the pedestal (7) is arranged, in use, in a working position to support the laundering machine (2, 3).

FIG. 1

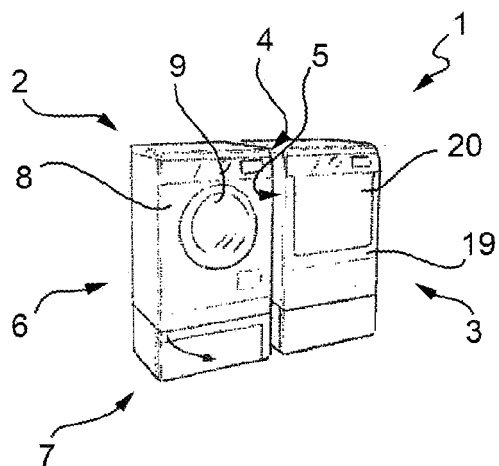


FIG. 2

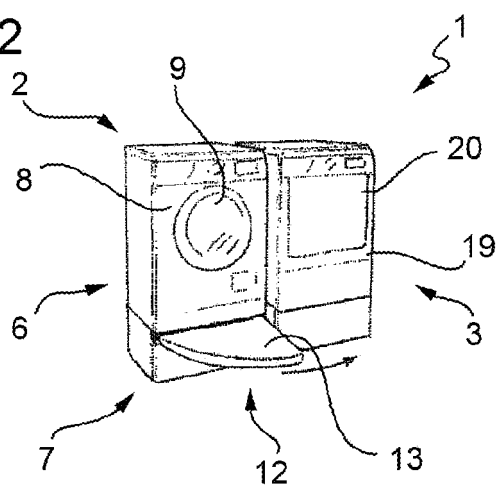


FIG. 3

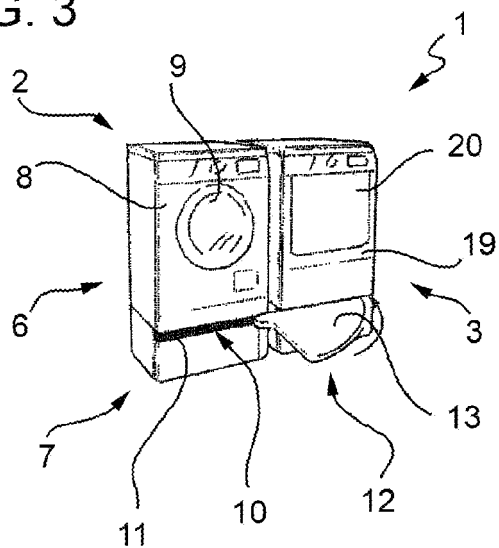


FIG. 4

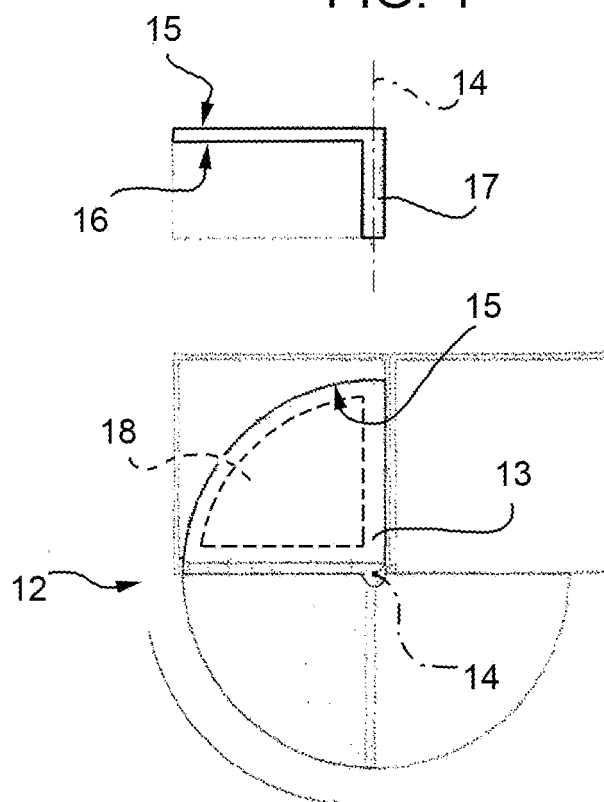
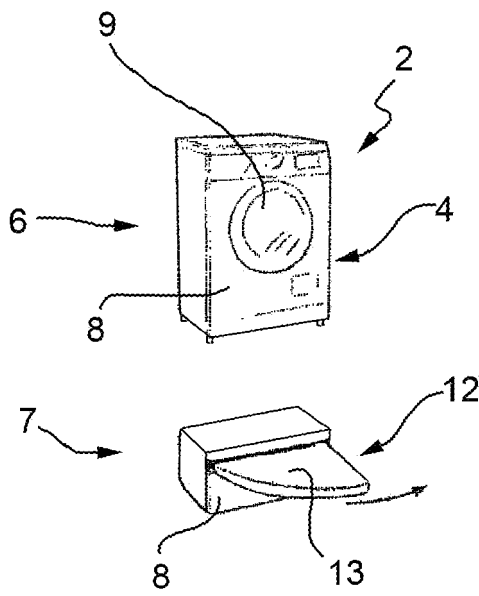


FIG. 5

FIG. 6





EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 08 15 8290

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
D,A	DE 90 13 620 U1 (LICENTIA PATENT-VERWALTUNGS-GMBH, 6000 FRANKFURT, DE) 8 May 1991 (1991-05-08) * claims 1-3; figure 2 *	1-15	INV. D06F39/12
A	US 5 778 573 A (NOTTINGHAM JOHN R [US] ET AL) 14 July 1998 (1998-07-14) * abstract; figures 1,4 *	1-15	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			D06F A47L A47B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 19 November 2008	Examiner Westermayer, Wilhelm
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 08 15 8290

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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19-11-2008

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
DE 9013620	U1	08-05-1991	NONE	
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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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