July 20, 1965 H. DOHERTY 3,195,966

STEP-UP FILE CABINETS

Filed May 13, 1963 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

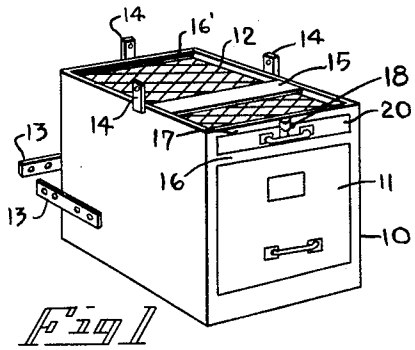


Fig 1

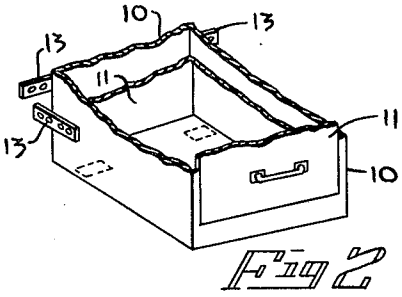


Fig 2

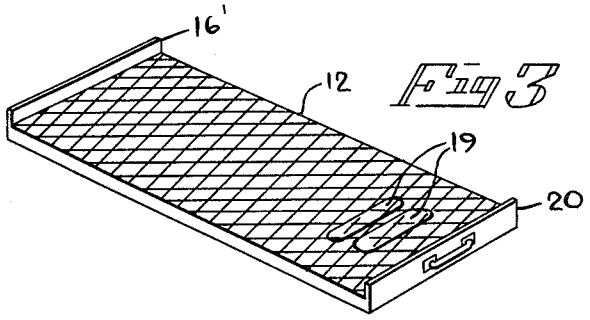


Fig 3

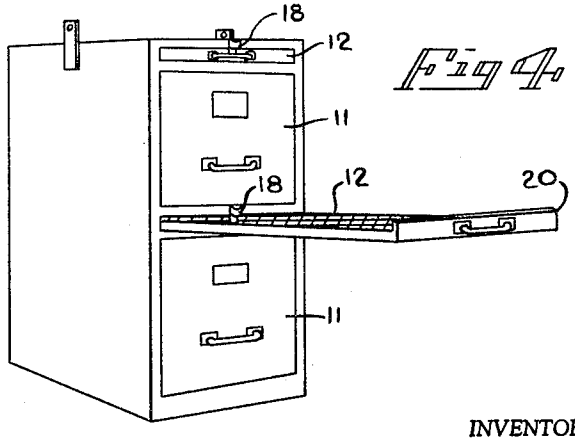


Fig 4

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STEP-UP FILE CABINETS

Filed May 13, 1963 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

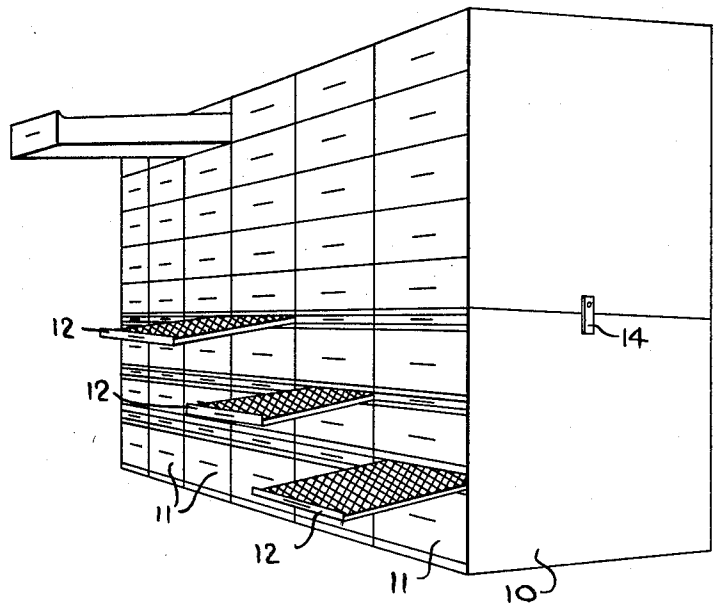


Fig 5

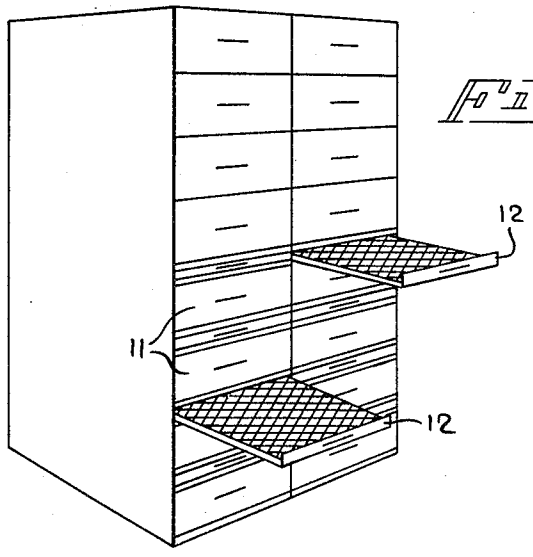


Fig 6

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STEP-UP FILE CABINETS

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8 Claims. (Cl. 312—111)

This invention relates to filing cabinets, and more particularly to step-up filing cabinets, and especially step-up sections for use with standard filing cabinets and the like.

While other kinds of office furniture and equipment have undergone vast changes during the past decades to better adapt them to modern requirements, and especially space saving requirements, steel filing cabinets have not shared in the progress and today command as much floor space as did their wooden predecessors a century ago. Office rents have skyrocketed since, however, and the amount of files kept on hand in most offices in our time, is also a multiple of what it used to be then.

It is a primary object of this invention to remedy this situation, and to provide the means for a better utilization of existing floor space for accessible file keeping purposes.

A further important object of the invention is the provision of unusually high filing cabinets, and means for rendering the same accessible, integrated with an adjacent filing cabinet.

Another object of the invention is to provide extensions for standard filing cabinets which combine the addition of more filing cabinet drawers, with the preservation of accessibility of the standard filing cabinets in conjunction with which they are employed.

It is a further object of the invention to preserve the compactness of a battery of filing cabinets, and to greatly increase their capacity, thus reducing, if not eliminating entirely, the displacement of clerks from room to room.

Another object of the invention is consolidation of filing cabinets to gain floor space.

It is yet another object of the invention to permit keeping files instead of prematurely sending them to storage or destruction, at no increase in floor space, and to save the cost and inconvenience of microfilming where this was resorted to for spacesaving reasons.

A still further object of the invention is the better utilization of floor space for file-keeping purposes in a simple and highly flexible manner so it can be adapted to changing requirements, and at so little extra cost that it becomes negligible when compared with the saving accomplished.

Other objects, and the manner in which they are attained, will become apparent as this specification proceeds.

Regarded in its broader aspects, the invention contemplates a filing cabinet including a file drawer and arranged for sliding horizontal displacement above said file drawer, a step portion designed to render accessible a file drawer in an adjacent filing cabinet disposed too high above the floor to be readily accessible from the floor.

The step-up filing cabinets of the invention may be extra-tall single frame units, or, according to the preferred embodiment of the invention, step-up sections or bases adapted to be placed underneath conventional filing cabinets.

Viewed somewhat more specifically, the invention contemplates a filing cabinet or step-up section including at least one filing cabinet drawer and disposed above the same, a relatively flat step portion of about the same length and width as said drawer, and arranged for sliding horizontal displacement partly out of, or entirely into said step-up section, part of said step portion remaining

inside said section on outward displacement of the step portion to abut against a cross bar or similar abutment extending across the section so the step portion will support the weight of the clerk standing thereon. In addition, the invention provides for means for arresting the step portions in their extreme "in" or "out," retracted or projected positions, and in the case of step-up sections for means for securing the step-up sections to the floor, to filing cabinets supported on the step-up sections, and to adjacent step-up sections, to lend stability to the assembly of step-up sections and standard filing cabinets and to ensure the safety of the clerk climbing up the steps.

In order to facilitate a more complete understanding of the invention, reference is had to the accompanying drawings which illustrate several embodiments of the invention diagrammatically by way of example, and with illustrative rather than any limitative intent.

In the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a perspective showing, with the top removed for clarity, of a one-drawer, one-step section according to the invention;

FIG. 2 is a similar showing of part of the section of FIG. 1, with the top part and side walls broken away for clarity;

FIG. 3 is a perspective showing of a step portion removed from the cabinet section;

FIG. 4 shows in perspective a two-drawer, two step section according to the invention, with one of the steps shown in its outwardly extended, operative position;

FIG. 5 illustrates a battery of three-drawer, three-step step-up sections supporting an equal number of five-drawer filing cabinets and showing successively higher steps of adjacent step-up sections extended to form readily built and readily removed stairs facilitating access to the upper drawers of the assembly, and

FIG. 6 is a perspective showing of two adjacently disposed, single frame "extra-tall" filing cabinets including step-portions for rendering neighboring high drawers accessible.

Referring to the drawings, wherein like elements are denoted by identical reference numerals, and first to FIGS. 1, 2, and 3, the housing **10** of a one-drawer, one-step step-up filing cabinet section according to the invention is seen to be provided with a drawer **11** and a step **12** which are arranged for sliding inward and outward displacement in the housing **10** and above the drawer **11**.

The housing **10** is constructed of sheet steel of slightly heavier gauge than the standard steel filing cabinet, as it must support the weight of a standard cabinet placed on it.

Adjustable brackets **13** are mounted on the sides, the rear, and at the bottom of the housing **10** to permit bolting the step-up section to the floor, to the wall to another step-up section placed below it, and to adjacent sections. At the top of each section holding brackets **14** are mounted on the sides and in the rear which in conjunction with correspondingly disposed holes near the bottom of the housing **10**, may serve to bolt two sections together, but which may also serve as guides or abutments for a standard filing cabinet placed on top of the step-up section.

The drawer **11** may be of any conventional type and as usual, may slide on rollers, ball bearings, etc.

The step **12** should be heavy; it may be one inch thick and made of laminated hardwood with top and sides made of e.g. 3/16 inch sheet steel. The total length of the step is the same as that of a standard file drawer, e.g. 25 inches. The tread part extends e.g. 19 inches outward; the remaining portion of e.g. 6 inches, acts as a brace

against a heavy, e.g. ½ inch cross-bar **15** made of steel which extends from one side of the housing **10** to the other, above the step **12**.

A flange **16**, e.g. of 3/16 inch thickness extends along the top rear edge of the step portion **12** to abut against the cross bar **15** and thus, prevent the step from being pulled out for more than the desired length, e.g. about 19 inches.

The transverse housing portions **16** and **17** define a slot in which the step **12** moves in and out; a spring catch **18** mounted on portion **17**, holds the step **12** in its retracted position inside the housing but when released by hand, permits the step to be pulled out and will now lock it in its extended position, until it is again released by hand to free the step **12** for its return into housing **10**.

The step **12** slides outward and inward by means of rollers as is customary with filing cabinet drawers; for example, two rollers may be mounted on each side of the step inside the housing, and a track may be provided inside each side edge of the step, for engagement by said rollers. These tracks should be extra heavy and therefore, may be made of 3/16 inch steel, and a sill plate of the same thickness is provided at the bottom edge of the slot for the step in the front of the cabinet section, i.e. on the transverse housing portion **16**.

Two inlaid brass oval designs **19** are stamped into the face of step **12** to indicate the proper location for foot placement. These tapered designs are located from 2 to 6 inches, and from 6 to 10 inches, respectively, from the front edge of the step. The front edge of the step is provided with a raised flange **20**, as an additional safety measure which in conjunction with the oval indentations in the face of step **12**, permits a clerk to climb a series of these steps without looking down.

The sides of the steps may be painted with luminous paint to render the steps readily visible except in complete darkness; inch-wide vertical stripes of red and yellow have been found to be particularly effective in preventing office personnel passing cabinets where steps have not as yet been slid back into the cabinets, from walking into the extended steps.

The steps are about 13 inches from the floor or, in the case of two- or multiple step sections, from one another. They are climbed sideways, across the front of the filing cabinets, and the file drawers are looked into, and files are removed or replaced, from the side.

If only enough elevation is required to look into a file drawer just higher than eye level, the step in an adjacent step-up section is pulled out and stepped on. In this case, two adjacently disposed one-drawer, one-step sections as shown in FIG. 1, may be provided. If one section and the standard filing cabinet placed thereon, define column A, and the adjacent section and the standard filing cabinet it supports, define column B, in order to consult a high drawer in column A, the step in section B will be pulled out and stepped on, whereas consultation of a high drawer in column B requires the use of the step in section A.

FIG. 4 illustrated a two-drawer, two-step filing cabinet section according to the invention which is effectively utilized when four such sections disposed one next to the other, support four standard filing cabinets. If the four assemblies of sections and standard filing cabinets mounted thereon, are taken as defining columns A, B, C, and D, consultation of a high drawer in filing cabinet C requires recourse to the bottom step in column A, and the top step in column B; if the high drawer to be consulted is in column D, the bottom step in column B, and the top step in column C are employed. Similarly, the use of the bottom step in column D and the top step in column C gives access to a high drawer in column B, and the use of the bottom step in column C and the top step in column B renders accessible a high drawer in column A.

FIG. 5 illustrates a three-drawer, three-step filing cabinet section according to the invention which is effectively utilized when six such sections are employed in a row, to support six standard filing cabinets, the number of steps provided in each section, multiplied by two, yielding the number of step-up sections and standard cabinet assemblies which are required for an effective use of the sections in rendering accessible drawers of the standard filing cabinets which are no longer within reach of a person standing on the floor of the office.

As shown in FIG. 6, single-frame step-up filing cabinets may be designed as units containing 6, 7, 8, 9 or even more file drawers and an adequate number exceeding 3, pull-out steps, omitting only brackets or attachments as are employed in securing conventional filing cabinets to the low type of step-up filing cabinet described above; these tall step-up filing cabinets only require brackets and attachments for securing the same to one another, as well as to the floor.

The invention is susceptible of numerous modifications and changes of detail. Magnetic arresting devices, for example, may be preferred to the spring catches described above.

Step-up filing cabinets, of course, are to be manufactured in different widths to contain letter or legal size drawers, as well as to accommodate, as bases, letter or legal size conventional filing cabinets.

The non-sectional, tall filing cabinets of the invention have all the manifest advantages of the invention, except for the utilization of existing, normal size filing cabinets.

The step-up sections according to the preferred embodiment of the invention, in addition, have the signal advantage of the dual function of the novel step-up section units. On the one hand, these units add drawer space to existing filing cabinets without requiring any additional floor space; on the other hand, they preserve the accessibility of the standard filing cabinets.

The saving of valuable floor space obtained by the invention may be spectacular; theoretically, the height of the extra-tall filing cabinets, or the step-up base and standard cabinet assemblies, is limited only by the height of the ceiling; in actual practice, an extension of filing space per unit of floor space, of from 60 to 90 percent will be perfectly convenient. In lending a third dimension to the office installation, its compactness is increased; files can be kept in proximity to desks and phones; horizontal traffic through the office, and traffic into other offices or rooms is cut down or eliminated. Files can be kept longer and in greater quantity at no extra cost; space formerly preempted by filing facilities can be utilized for more profitable purposes, such as private office space yielding enhanced productivity, and the irreplaceable advantages of a file over modern substitutes can be preserved without incurring antiquated costs. Flexibility and adaptability to varying requirements is another signal advantage of the novel units which can be added to a standard installation as requirements increase, which can be added to basic units to further expand the overall assembly, and which can be disassembled and transferred elsewhere whenever changes in space allocation render this desirable. All this and more is accomplished by the extra-tall filing cabinets, and quite particularly by the step-up base and extension units of the invention at little extra cost at the time of installation, and at a very substantial saving if the saving in floor space is taken into account.

I wish it to be understood that I do not desire to be limited to the exact details of construction, design, and operation shown and described herein, as modifications within the scope of the appended claims which do not involve a departure from the spirit of the invention nor a sacrifice of any of the advantages thereof, may occur to workers in this field.

I claim:

1. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in

the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion.

2. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and a cross-bar in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion.

3. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion, said step portion being provided with a non-skid surface.

4. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion, said step portion being provided with indentations to indicate the proper foot placement on said portion.

5. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing

and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion, said step portion being provided with a front flange to indicate to the user of the step, by touch, the outer boundary of the step.

6. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet, and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion, and means associated with said housing and disposed in the front of said step portion for temporarily arresting said displaceable step portion in either one of its extreme positions.

7. A step-up section for standard filing cabinets and the like, comprising a housing, a file drawer disposed for sliding horizontal displacement in said housing, a slot in the front of said housing and lateral horizontal tracks inside said housing and above said file drawer, and a step portion including means engaging said tracks adapted for sliding horizontal outward displacement in said housing and above said file drawer, said step-up section being adapted to support a standard filing cabinet and said step portion being adapted to render accessible a high file drawer in an adjacent, similarly supported standard filing cabinet, said step portion further including a rear flange, and means in said housing adapted to serve as an abutment for said flange whereby to limit the outward displacement of said step portion, and to brace the same so it will support the weight of a person standing on the step portion, and a manually releasable spring catch mounted on said housing and disposed in the front of said step portion whereby to arrest the same in either one of its extreme positions.

8. A step-up section for filing cabinets according to claim 1, which comprises a plurality of file drawers, and a plurality of step portions, each step portion being disposed above one of said file drawers.

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