



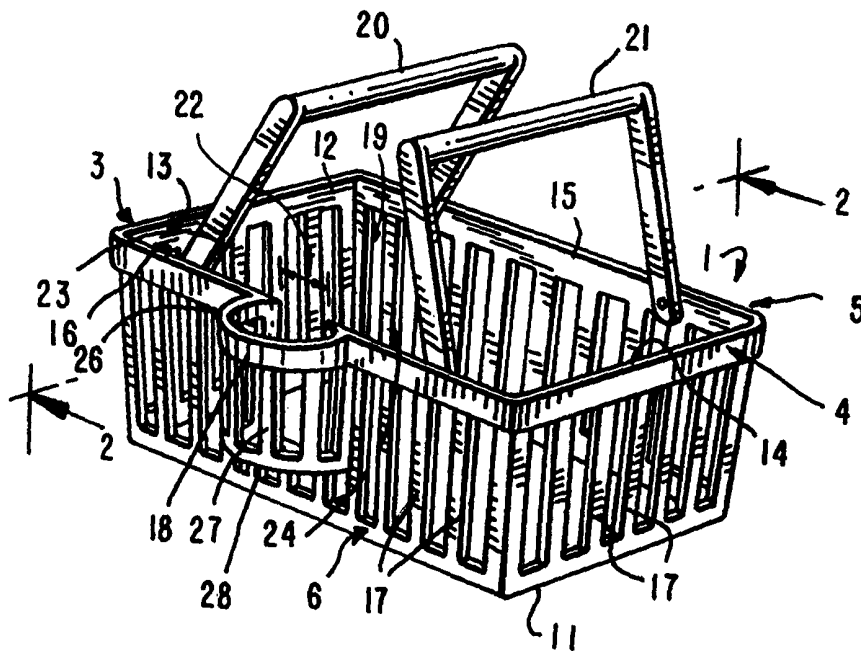
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<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98/24054</p> <p>(22) International Filing Date: 12 November 1998 (12.11.98)</p> <p>(30) Priority Data: 60/091,739 6 July 1998 (06.07.98) US</p> <p>(71)(72) Applicant and Inventor: WESHLER, Benjamin, S. [US/US]; 43 Rolling Hill Lane, Old Westbury, NY 11568 (US).</p> <p>(74) Agents: WARREN, Daniel, J. et al.; Jones & Askew, LLP, 2400 Monarch Tower, 3424 Peachtree Road, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30326 (US).</p>	<p>(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).</p> <p>Published <i>With international search report.</i></p>	

(54) Title: BASKET WITH INTEGRALLY-FORMED RECEPTACLE

(57) Abstract

A shopping basket (1) has four walls (3-6), a bottom (11) and handles (20, 21) for allowing the basket to be carried, and one wall (6) of the basket is provided with a section (25) that projects either outwardly from or inwardly into the shopping basket and is adapted to serve as a receptacle for a bottle or can. This projecting section (25) is integrally formed with the shopping basket wall (6), is cylindrically shaped with a radius slightly larger than that of a typical can or bottle, and has a flat bottom retaining wall (28) so that it is suited to securely hold an open, fluid-filled can or bottle without spilling its contents. The walls (3-6) of the basket and of the section are slightly sloped outward in order to enable more than one basket to be stacked, one within another.



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BASKET WITH INTEGRALLY-FORMED RECEPTACLE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to receptacles that are used during retail shopping and, more particularly, to shopping receptacles that allow a shopper to conveniently carry an open fluid bottle simultaneously with the shopping basket.

Individuals who shop in retail stores, such as in supermarkets, generally use some sort of receptacle in which to place and carry the items that they wish to purchase until such time as purchase is actually made. The shopper carries these items within the receptacle until he or she has collected all items desired for purchase at that time, at which point the shopper brings the items within the receptacle to a checkout counter for payment. The most commonly-used such receptacles are the shopping basket, which is used to hold smaller or fewer items prior to purchase, and the shopping cart or wagon, which is used to hold larger or more items prior to purchase.

Because shopping is an activity that often takes quite some time, especially in this age of large retail stores and supermarkets, a shopper will often get thirsty during shopping or will otherwise have a need for refreshment. It has, there-fore, become a common practice for a shopper to select a cold drink, generally in a can or bottle, from one of the shopping displays at the outset of the shopper's route, drink that refreshment during the shopping activity and then pay for that drink at the checkout counter along with the rest of their shopping items.

However, drinking from an open container while shopping can be inconvenient and often difficult to manage, particularly for a shoppers using a shopping basket to hold the chosen items prior to purchase. Because a shopper generally requires only one hand to carry a shopping basket, the shopper will have at most one free hand for taking items from the store shelf and placing them into the shopping basket and for holding and drinking from the drink

container. A shopper who attempts to use the same hand for holding the drink and taking items off the shelves faces the risk of many undesirable results. One such undesirable result is spilling of the drink, either on the shopper, on one or more of the chosen shopping items or elsewhere within the store. Another undesirable result is dropping of either the drink or one or more of the chosen shopping items, thereby possibly breaking packages or other containers and potentially causing injury. Therefore, a shopper who is carrying an open, fluid-filled bottle or can in one hand and a shopping basket in the other hand would be required to set the drink aside when taking items off the shelves. Unfortunately, this may result in the drink being misplaced by the shopper or forgotten on the floor or shelves, thereby raising the possibility of the drink container later broken or its contents spilled either at that time or later, thereby potentially causing injury. Thus, it is inconvenient for the shopper to carry and drink from an open, fluid-filled bottle or can while carrying a shopping basket.

It is, therefore, an object of the current invention to provide a shopper using a shopping basket with a convenient way to enjoy a drink while shopping.

It is another object of this invention to provide a shopper carrying a shopping basket with a convenient receptacle in which to temporarily place the drink when using his or her hands for shopping, without having to set aside or place either the drink or the shopping basket on the floor.

It is yet another object of this invention to provide a shopping basket that is able to securely hold an open, fluid-filled bottle or can without spillage so that a shopper using the basket will be able to actively drink from the bottle while shopping without having to set down either the basket or the drink in order to lift items from the shelves.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

These and other objects of the current invention are accomplished by providing, in accordance with the preferred embodiment of the invention, a shopping basket that has four
5 walls, a bottom and handles for allowing the basket to be carried. A section of at least one wall of the basket projects either towards the outside or the inside of the shopping basket and is adapted to serve as a receptacle for a bottle or can. This projecting section is integrally
10 formed with the shopping basket wall, is cylindrically shaped with a radius slightly larger than that of a typical can or bottle and has a flat bottom retaining wall. This projecting section is suited to securely hold an open, fluid-filled can or bottle without spilling its contents.
15 Thus, a shopper using the shopping basket will be able to drink from a can or bottle and then place it within the receptacle formed from the shopping basket wall. The shopper can easily remove the can or bottle from the receptacle and replace it as desired so that the shopper can
20 conveniently and selectively shop and drink from the can or bottle as desired. The walls of the section are slightly sloped outward in order to enable more than one basket to be stacked one within another.

25 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above and other objects of the invention will be apparent upon consideration of the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which the reference characters refer to like
30 parts throughout and in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the first embodiment of a shopping basket with a receptacle of the current invention;

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the first
35 embodiment of the shopping basket with receptacle shown in FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the shopping basket of the current invention;

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of the third embodiment of the shopping basket of the current invention;

5 and

FIG. 5 is a partial top plan view of an alternate form of attachment of the receptacle to the shopping basket in the first embodiment.

10

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, FIG. 1 shows a shopping basket of the current invention, designated generally with reference numeral 1. As with prior art shopping baskets of the kind most commonly used in retail stores and
15 supermarkets, basket 1 is preferably a four-sided, rectangularly-shaped basket with a flat bottom. Basket 1 has four walls 3-6, which include opposite end walls 3,4 and opposite side walls 5,6 between end walls 3,4. Of course, basket 1 may have alternate arrangements, such as having
20 more or fewer walls or having only partial walls, in some instances. Basket 1 may be made from any of the materials of which shopping baskets are commonly made, such as a hard, injection-molded plastic, provided that the material provides the basket with the required strength and
25 durability criteria.

Walls 3-6 have upper edges 13-16 that form the boundaries of the opening 12 of basket 1 and have lower edges that form the boundaries of bottom 11 of basket 1. Walls 3-6 can be formed without openings therethrough in
30 order to prevent items that the shopper has chosen for purchase from falling through the sides or walls 3-6 of basket 1. However, walls 3-6 need not be formed without openings and can be formed of a ribbed or a lattice structure, as long as the gaps or openings in walls 3-6 are
35 sufficiently small or narrow so as to prevent items from falling therethrough. Each of walls 3-6 can be formed by any of the standard constructions in the prior art for

shopping baskets that would prevent items from falling through the sides of basket 1 while still providing sufficient strength and structure for basket 1 and saving on material costs. For example, in a first embodiment, as shown in FIG. 1, walls 4,6 are shown as being formed of vertical ribs 17. Ribs 17 have sufficient strength to prevent deformation of basket 1 during use or during stacking and have sufficiently narrow gaps between them to prevent items from falling through the sides of basket 1 during use of basket 1.

Walls 3-6 of basket 1 are preferably gently sloped outward from their bottom edges to their top edges 13-16 such that the dimensions of opening 12 of basket 1 are larger than the dimensions of bottom 11 of basket 1. The outward slope of walls 3-6 and the fact that opening 12 is larger than bottom 11 allows bottom 11 of one basket 1 to fit within the opening 12 of another basket 1 so that baskets 1 may be neatly stacked one within another for storage.

As with standard prior art shopping baskets, shopping basket 1 may also have one or more handles 20,21 that are rotatably mounted to the top edges 15,16 of walls 5,6 of basket 1, with one handle being fixed on either end of basket 1. Handles 20,21 are arranged in this fashion so that they can be rotated upwards and be held together in order to fully support basket 1 and its contents. Handles 20,21 can also be rotated downward and laid flat against top edges 15,16 of basket 1 in order to allow one or more baskets 1 to be stacked for storage.

In order to accomplish the objects of this invention, basket 1 is also provided with a receptacle 25, as shown in its first embodiment in FIGS. 1 and 2. Receptacle 25 is shown in FIG. 1 as being an integral extension of wall 6 that protrudes outward with respect to basket 1. In the preferred embodiment, receptacle 25 is integrally formed with shopping basket wall 6. Receptacle 25 is shaped to be able to receive a drink container such as a cup, can or

bottle (referred to hereinafter simply as a drink), and retain said drink therein without spilling. Receptacle 25, therefore, may have any cross-sectional shape, but is preferably cylindrically shaped, and should have a radius slightly larger than that of a typical cup, can or bottle such that it can retain such a container. Receptacle 25 also has a flat bottom retaining wall 28 for supporting a drink or other item placed within receptacle 25.

In order for receptacle 25 to properly retain a drink therein while preventing the drink from spilling into the inside 19 of basket 1, there must be a sufficient barrier between the inside 18 of receptacle 25 and the inside 19 of basket 1 so that the drink retained within receptacle 25 does not fall into the interior 19 of basket 1. In general, in one embodiment, shown in FIG. 5, the inside 18 of receptacle 25 may be completely distinct from the inside 19 of basket 1, such that wall 6 of basket 1 extends completely and uninterrupted from one end at wall 3 to the other end at wall 4. As such, wall 27 of receptacle 25 abuts wall 6 and may be integrally formed therewith at region 30 but does not interfere with the continuous definition of the opening 12 of basket 1 as defined by wall 6.

In an alternative embodiment of the abutment of basket walls 6 and receptacle wall 27, as shown in FIG. 1, receptacle 25 is not merely an extension of or a protrusion from wall 6 of basket 1, but instead an extension of wall 6 serves as a partial barrier between the inside 18 of receptacle 25 and the inside 19 of basket 1. Top edge 16 of wall 6 extends across the top of wall 6 and terminates at edges 23,24, leaving opening 22 in wall 6, across which neither wall 6 nor top edge 16 extend. At edges 23,24, top edge 16 of wall 6 curves outward of basket 1 in a circular shape to form the top edge 26 of wall 27 of receptacle 25. Each of edges 23,24 forms a return by extending first in the direction of top edge 16 of wall 6 and reversing direction to form the top edge 26 of wall 27 of receptacle 25.

In this fashion, receptacle 25 is formed as a portion of wall 6 of basket 1, as wall 6 of basket 1 extends downward from top edge 16, and wall 27 of receptacle 25 extends downward from top edge 26, and a return is formed at the meeting of walls 6 and 27, i.e., at edges 23,24. As shown in FIG. 1, the width of opening 22 between edges 23,24 should preferably be smaller than the diameter of receptacle 25 and also than the diameter of any drink that is retained within receptacle 25. Thus, any drink that is retained within receptacle 25 will not be able to fit through opening 22 between edges 23,24 and will not thereby be spilled into the interior 19 of basket 1. Accordingly, the drink will be retained safely within receptacle 25.

As with walls 3-6 of shopping basket 1 and with the walls of shopping baskets in general, wall 27 of receptacle 25 is gently sloped outward from its bottom surface 28 to its top edge 26 such that the dimensions, in particular the diameter, of the opening made by top edge 26 is larger than the diameter of its bottom surface 28. The outward slope of wall 27 and the larger diameter of receptacle 25 at its opening than at its bottom allows bottom 28 of one receptacle 25 to be placed within the receptacle 25 of another basket 1 when baskets 1 are stacked for storage. In this way, receptacle 25 does not interfere with the ability of one or more of shopping basket 1 to be stacked for storage.

As discussed above regarding the structure of walls 3-6, wall 27 of receptacle 25 can be formed without openings therethrough in order to prevent any articles that are placed therein from falling through wall 27 of receptacle 25. Wall 25 can also be formed of a ribbed or a lattice structure, as long as the gaps or openings in wall 27 are sufficiently small or narrow so as to prevent the drink in receptacle 25 from falling through these openings. As shown in the first embodiment of FIG. 1, wall 27 is shown as being formed of vertical ribs 17, in order to match the construction of walls 3-6 of basket 1.

Although the first, preferred embodiment of this invention is to locate receptacle 25 at the side 6 of basket 1, some shoppers may find it more desirable to locate receptacle 25, not at the side of basket 1, but rather at the end of basket 1. For some shoppers, this orientation may simply be more comfortable during shopping. In an alternative embodiment of this invention, as shown in FIG. 3, receptacle 25 projects outwardly from end wall 4; instead of from side wall 6, as shown in FIG. 1. This embodiment is similar in all other aspects of construction to the embodiment described above and as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, except that the user's drink is retained by receptacle 25 at one of ends 3,4 of basket 1 rather than at one of sides 5,6.

In a third embodiment of the invention, shown in cross-section in FIG. 4, receptacle 125 could be formed, as in either of the first or second embodiments, at either one of side walls 5,6 or one of end walls 3,4 of shopping basket 1. However, in this third embodiment, receptacle 125 protrudes internally into basket 1 rather than outwardly from basket 1. Comparing the cross-sectional view in FIG. 2 of the first embodiment with the cross-sectional view in FIG. 4 of the third embodiment, one can see that wall 127 of receptacle 125 in FIG. 4 is disposed within the air space of basket 1, rather than being disposed outside the airspace of basket 1 as in FIG. 2. Thus, receptacle 125 could still be formed integrally with the corresponding wall 3-6 of shopping basket 1 and with each of the constructions described above, except that the arrangement of cylindrical wall 127 of receptacle 125 and the corresponding wall of shopping basket 1 from which it is formed is reversed from that described above with respect to the first and second embodiments, wherein receptacle 25 protrudes outwardly with respect to basket 1. Accordingly, a user would be able to drink from a can or bottle while shopping and place it into receptacle 125 that is disposed within shopping basket 1. Thus, in this embodiment, there is no protrusion from any of the walls 3-6 of basket 1.

Thus, a shopping basket with an integrally-formed bottle or can holder is provided. One skilled in the art will appreciate that, while preferred embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated and described, the present invention can be practiced by other than the described embodiments, which are provided for purposes of illustration and not limitation, and that that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

I CLAIM:

1. An improved basket comprising:
walls defining an interior space for carrying items;
a bottom;
- 5 a receptacle having at least one wall defining an interior space of said receptacle and having a bottom, wherein said receptacle at least one wall and bottom are integrally formed with a first wall of said basket.
2. The basket of claim 1 further comprising at least
10 one handle for allowing said basket to be carried.
3. The basket of claim 2, wherein each of said walls comprises a top portion and wherein said at least one handle is attached to said top portion of at least one wall.
4. The basket of claim 3 wherein said at least one
15 handle is rotatably mounted to said top portion of at least one wall.
5. The basket of claim 1 wherein said first wall of said basket and said at least one wall of said receptacle are integrally formed and are complete such that the
20 interior space of said receptacle is distinct from the interior space of said basket.
6. The basket of claim 5 wherein said receptacle has a substantially cylindrical cross-sectional shape.
7. The basket of claim 5 wherein said receptacle
25 protrudes outwardly with respect to said first wall of said basket.
8. The basket of claim 7 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define said interior space for carrying items and
30 wherein said receptacle is situated along one side wall of said basket.
9. The basket of claim 7 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define an interior for carrying items and wherein said
35 receptacle is situated along one end wall of said basket.
10. The basket of claim 5 wherein said receptacle protrudes inwardly into said interior space of said basket.

11. The basket of claim 10 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define said interior space for carrying items and wherein said receptacle is situated along one side wall of
5 said basket.

12. The basket of claim 10 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define said interior space for carrying items and wherein said receptacle is situated along one end wall of
10 said basket.

13. The basket of claim 1 wherein said first wall of said basket and said at least one wall of said receptacle are integrally formed and are incomplete such that the interior space of said receptacle is at least partially open
15 to the interior space of said basket.

14. The basket of claim 13 wherein said first wall of said basket comprises two end portions having facing edges, and wherein said at least one wall of said receptacle has end portions that have facing edges, such that said facing
20 edges of said first wall of said basket abut and are integrally formed with said facing edges of said at least one wall of said receptacle.

15. The basket of claim 13 wherein said receptacle has a substantially cylindrical cross-sectional shape.
25

16. The basket of claim 13 wherein said receptacle protrudes outwardly with respect to said first wall of said basket.
30

17. The basket of claim 16 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define said interior space for carrying items and wherein said receptacle is situated along one side wall of
35 said basket.

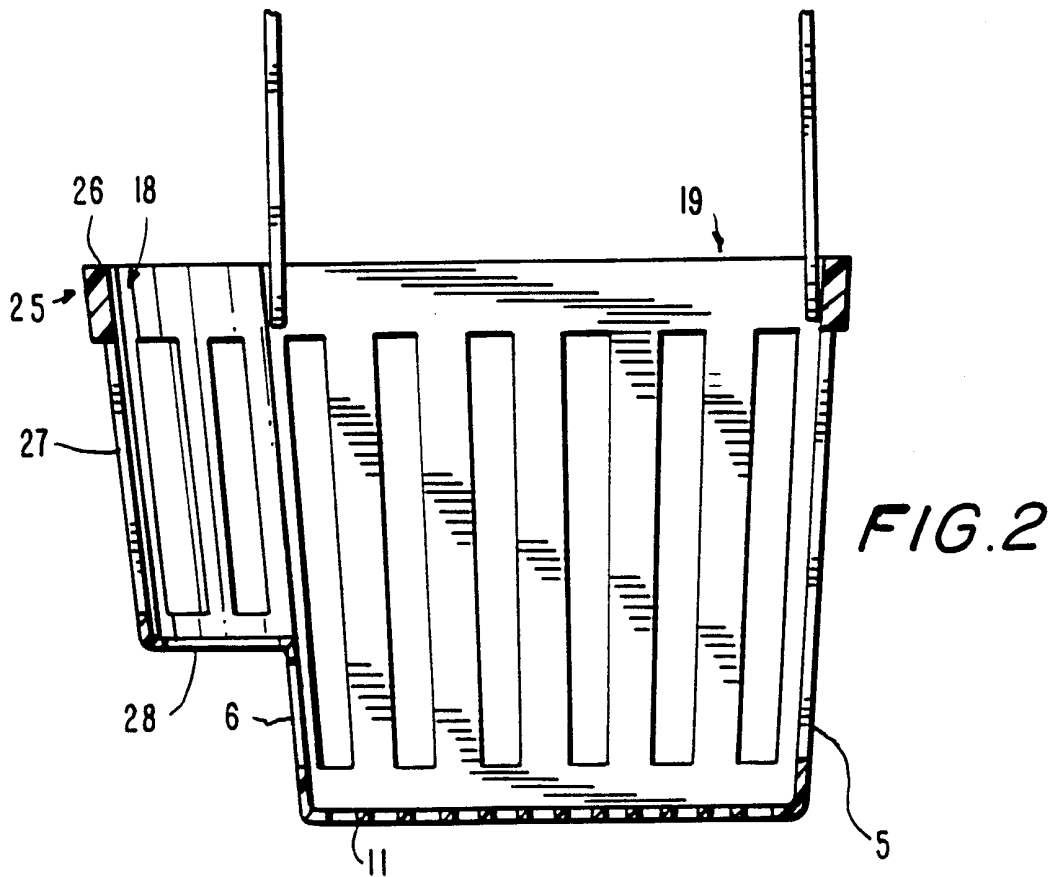
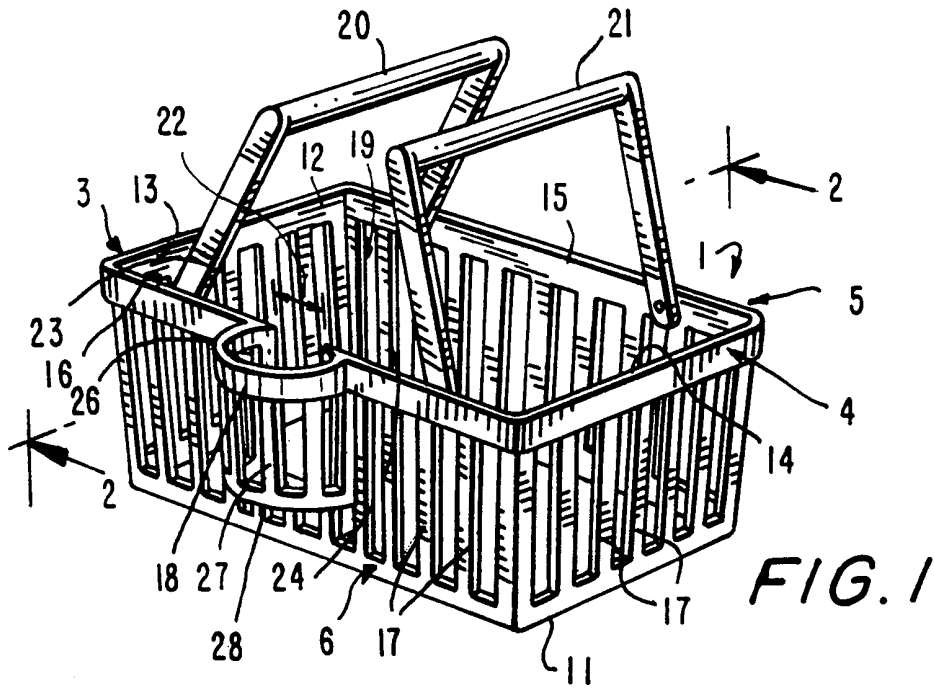
18. The basket of claim 16 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls that define an interior for carrying items and wherein said
receptacle is situated along one end wall of said basket.
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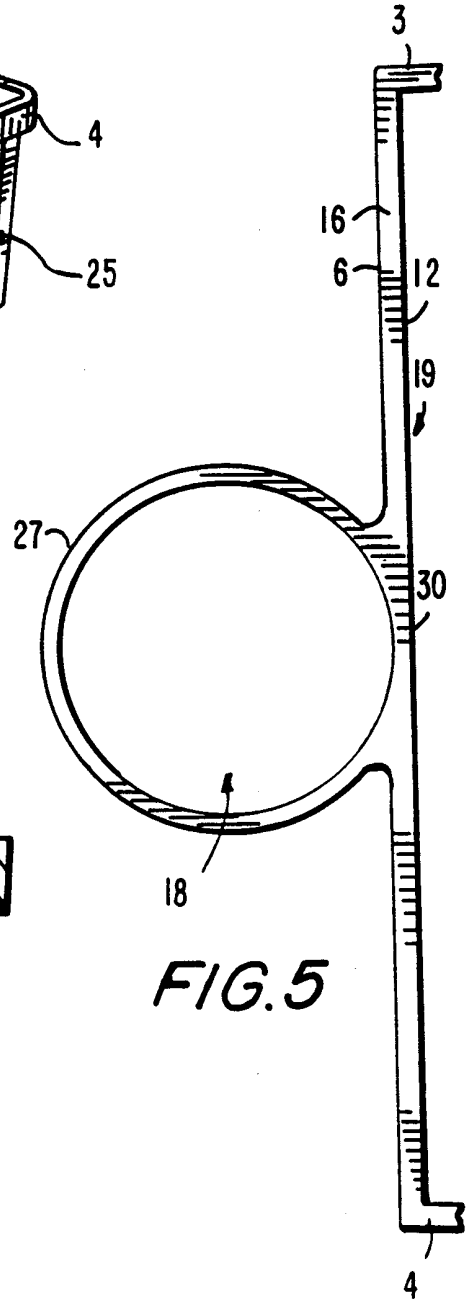
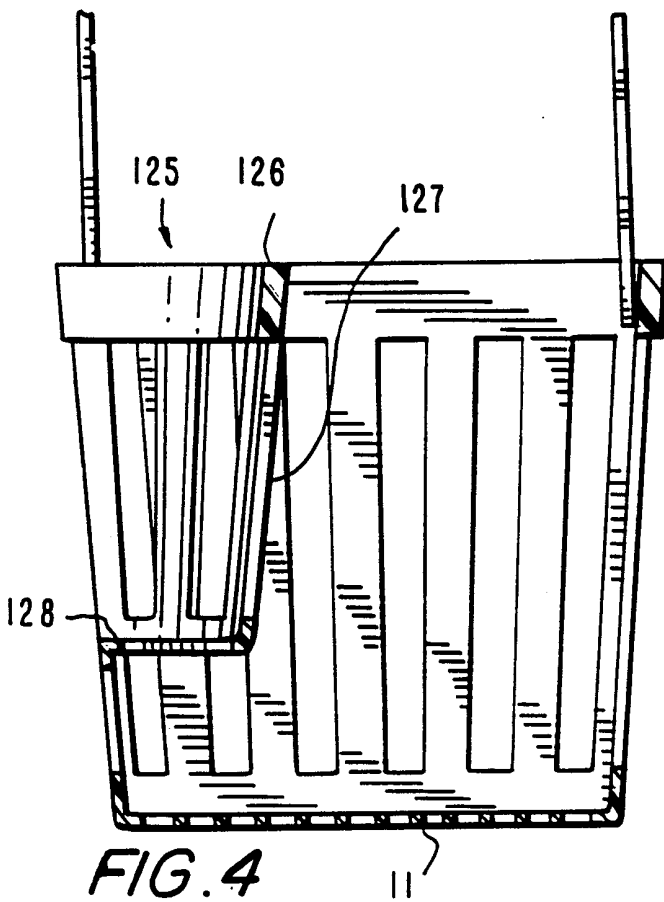
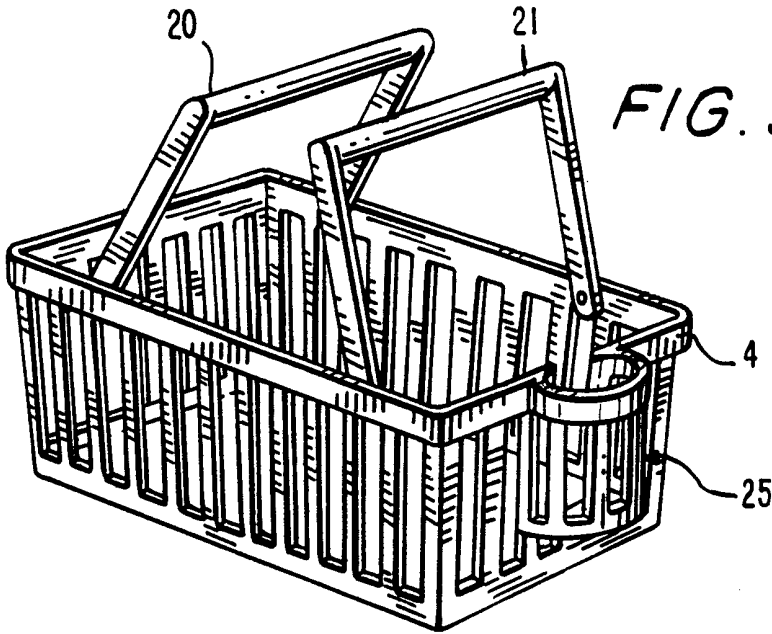
19. The basket of claim 13 wherein said receptacle protrudes inwardly into said interior space of said basket.

20. The basket of claim 19 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls
5 that define said interior space for carrying items and wherein said receptacle is situated along one side wall of said basket.

21. The basket of claim 19 wherein said basket further comprises two longer side walls and two shorter end walls
10 that define said interior space for carrying items and wherein said receptacle is situated along one end wall of said basket.

22. The basket of claim 1 wherein said walls of said basket and said at least one wall of said receptacle are
15 sloped outward such that one such said basket can be placed within another such said basket.





INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US98/24054

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC(6) :B35D 1/24, 1/38 US CL :220/668, 669, 675; D3/304 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) U.S. : 220/486, 491, 501, 668, 669, 675, 915.1, 23.4, 23.83, 23.87, dig. 10, dig. 13; D3/304, 305, 313		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
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C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 4,989,742 A (POWELL) 05 February 1991, See figures 1 and 6.	1-12, 15, 19-22
Y	US 4,981,232 A (WYNN) 01 January 1991, See entire document.	1-22
Y,P	US 5,810,196 A (LUNDY) 22 September 1998, See entire document.	1-4, 13-22
Y	US 3,611,450 A (BOST) 12 October 1971, See entire document.	1, 13, 14, 16-18
Y	US 4,941,586 A (TARNA) 17 July 1990, See element 11.	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
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