

Aug. 16, 1949.

G. J. BROWN

2,479,203

PLAY MAT

Filed Jan. 31, 1947

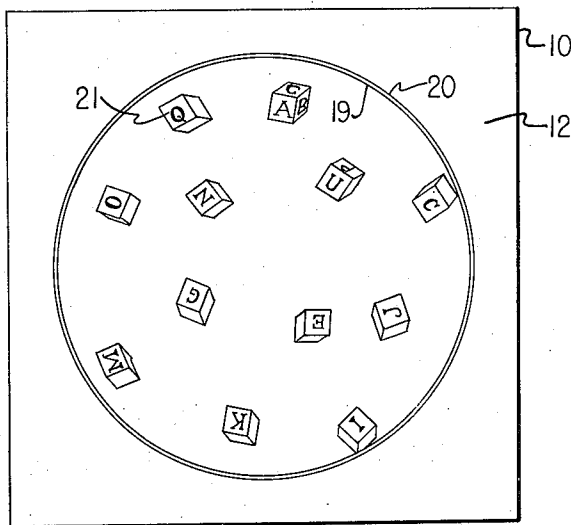


FIG. 1

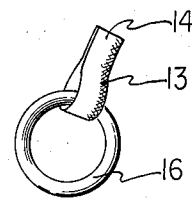


FIG. 3

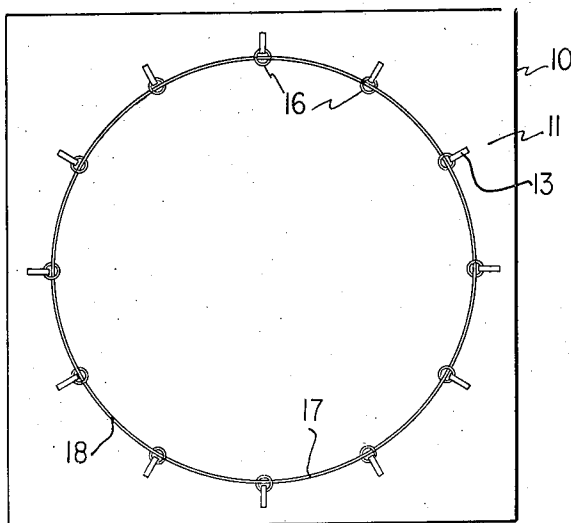


FIG. 2

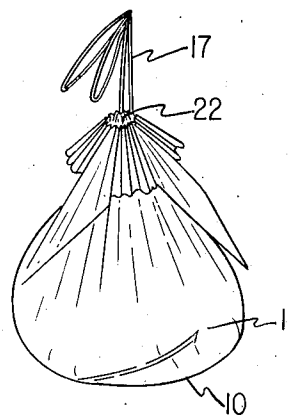


FIG. 4

INVENTOR.

GUY J. BROWN

BY

Davis, Lindsey, Smith & Shonts
Attorneys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,479,203

PLAY MAT

Guy J. Brown, Chicago, Ill., assignor of one-half
to Irvin E. Behrend, Chicago, Ill.

Application January 31, 1947, Serial No. 725,665

1 Claim. (Cl. 150—11)

1

This invention relates to play mats or pads and more particularly to a play mat or pad for children adapted to be spread out flat on a floor or other like surface and having means by which it may be drawn up into the form of a storage bag for children's playthings.

Heretofore, play mats or pads have been devised and used which were adapted to be spread out on the floor of a room or on the floor of a play pen in order to provide a sanitary area for a child's play and a protective covering for the floor carpeting or rugs. These mats or pads for the most part comprised fabric material which was washable and enabled the pads to be folded up when not in use. Before the pads or mats were in condition for folding, however, it was necessary to remove all the toys and other playthings with which the child had been playing and to then place the toys or playthings in their proper containers. Similarly, when it was desired to restore the play area for the child, it was first necessary to unfold the mat and then locate the containers of the respective playthings, remove them from the containers and place them on the mat with the child. Such a procedure was not only time consuming, but it also entailed considerable stooping and other physical effort. Also, many of the playthings lacked the proper storage containers and consequently they were placed in any temporarily convenient place or places giving a room an untidy appearance and tending to scatter the playthings.

It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide an improved play mat or pad for children.

Another object of the invention is to provide a play mat for children adapted to be spread out flat on a floor or other like surface and having means by which the mat may be drawn up into the form of a storage bag in which playthings may be transported or stored when not in use.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a child's play mat having a bottom surface adapted to engage a floor or other flat surface, an upper surface upon which a child may play and upon which playthings may be supported out of contact with the floor and means for drawing the outer portions of the mat inwardly to form a storage bag in which playthings may be transported or stored when not in use, the drawing means comprising a draw cord and cord engaging means positioned in spaced relation on the bottom surface of said mat and being inaccessible to the child playing on the top surface thereof.

Other and further objects and advantages of

2

the present invention will become apparent as this description progresses, reference being had to the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of the play mat comprising a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a bottom plan view of the same;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of one of the tabs and rings comprising the cord engaging means secured on the bottom surface of the mat; and

Fig. 4 is a perspective view illustrating the mat as it appears when drawn up in the form of a storage bag with a child's playthings therein.

The play mat or pad 10 shown in the drawing may be comprised of a sheet of fabric or other flexible material that is washable and suitable for the intended purposes of the invention. The mat may be composed of one single thickness of heavy cotton twill or may be quilted in the form of a pad having a thin layer of padding material between two sheets of fabric. The mat 10 is illustrated in the drawing as being of square design but it is to be understood that it may also be circular or in other desired outlines. It is adapted to be spread out flat indoors on a floor of a room or on the floor of a play pen, or even used outdoors on the grass or on the sand at the beach.

The bottom surface 11 of the mat, shown in Fig. 2 of the drawing, is adapted to be placed in engagement with the surface upon which it is laid out, and the top surface 12, shown in Fig. 1, is adapted to provide the play area for a child and to support a child's playthings. The top surface 12 may be printed, painted or otherwise decorated with various symbols, letters, animals and other objects or insignia attractive to children, but for the purposes of the present description the top surface 12 has been shown as decorated with concentric circular lines 19 and 20 within which are illustrated a plurality of blocks 21 bearing certain letters of the alphabet. It is to be understood that the upper surface 12 of the mat 10 has nothing projecting upwardly therefrom so that it is free and unobstructed, and presents no engaging elements or projections which would become entangled with a child's garments or toys or which would trip the child or an adult in walking thereover.

As shown more particularly in Fig. 2 of the drawing, the bottom surface 11 of the mat 10 is provided with a plurality of flexible fabric tabs 13 which may be secured to the mat by stitching (not shown) at their outer ends 14 only so that their inner ends are free for limited movement relative to the under surface 11. The tabs 12

which are in the form of loops and extend inwardly from their stitched ends 14 in a radial direction, are disposed in spaced relationship in a circular arrangement, their stitched ends 14 being secured to the mat a short distance from the marginal edges thereof. Each of the looped tabs 13 loosely engage and support a flat ring 16 which may be composed of metal, plastic or other material of strength sufficient to withstand the stresses and strains of the cord when the mat is opened or closed.

A draw cord 17 passes through each of the rings 16 and its free ends are tied or spliced together as at 18 so as to form an endless cord. The cord 17 is of such length that the mat 10 may be opened to its fullest extent and spread down flat without causing any wrinkling or drawing of the material and without causing the rings 16 to be drawn out of their flat position so as to cause bulges and irregularities in the mat. At the same time, the cord 17 is not of such undue length as to extend beyond the marginal edges of the mat 10, when the mat is in open position, where it would be accessible to the child and likely to become entangled with toys or the child's clothing or to trip anyone walking near the mat.

By the foregoing arrangement of the parts, the tabs 13, the rings 16 and the draw cord 17 are all concealed in flat condition on the under surface 11 of the mat 10 at points removed from the marginal edges thereof. They are thus not only eliminated as hazards and nuisances as above described, but the likelihood of their destruction or damage by the child is materially reduced. Also, the tabs 13, rings 16 and cord 17 are caused to assume a flattened position when the mat is open, as shown in Fig. 2, so as not to interfere with the comfort of the child sitting on the upper surface 12 of the mat 10.

After a child has completed his play and it is desired to put away the mat 10 and also any toys or playthings that may be on the mat or scattered on the floor thereabout, the child's parent or guardian may simply toss or place the various toys or playthings into the large central portion of the upper surface 12 and then reach under the mat and grasp the draw cord 17. As the draw cord 17 is pulled, the outer portions of the mat 10 to which the tabs 13 are secured move inwardly in a radial direction and also upwardly relative to the plane of the inner central portion of the mat, so as to form a storage bag shown in Fig. 4, the under surface 11 of the mat 10 forming the outer surface of the bag. When the bag is formed by the drawing of the cord 17, the sides of the mat 10 are drawn up and over the toys and playthings within the central portion of the mat with the result that none are spilled out on the floor, the weight of the playthings tending to hold down the central portion during the drawing action. After the mat is completely drawn up with all the playthings therein, it may be picked up and placed away in an obscure corner or hung on a hook in a closet.

It is apparent that the foregoing process of putting away the mat 10 and the toys may be readily and easily accomplished with the expenditure of very little effort and in a very few seconds. As a further aid to putting away the toys and the mat 10, the upper surface 12 of the mat may be provided with some indicating means es-

tablishing the approximate position of the draw cord and cord engaging means concealed below on the lower surface 11. Thus, as shown in Fig. 1, the circular decorative lines 19 and 20 also serve the additional purposes of indicating the approximate location of the rings 16, the draw cord 17, and the tabs 13 and define the central area into which the scattered playthings must be placed prior to drawing up the mat.

When it is desired to restore the play area for the child, the bag of toys may be removed from its storage position, placed in the desired location and quickly opened by pulling it apart at its top opening 22. The outer portions of the mat 10 then are pulled outwardly to their fullest extent until the mat is in smooth, flat condition, the cord 17 freely slipping through the rings 16 as the space therebetween is increased and the playthings in the central area being made available to the child in the same operation.

Although there has been illustrated in the drawing and described above a preferred embodiment of the invention, it is to be understood that modifications and changes may be made in details of structure and operation without departing from the spirit and scope of the appended claim.

I claim:

A play mat adapted to be spread out flat on a floor or other horizontal surface comprising a sheet of flexible material having a bottom surface adapted to engage a floor or other horizontal surface and an upper surface upon which a child may play and upon which playthings may be supported out of contact with the floor, and means for drawing the outer portions of said sheet inwardly over playthings on the central portion of the upper surface comprising an endless draw cord, a plurality of flexible tabs secured in spaced relation on the bottom surface of said sheet a short distance from the marginal edges thereof and extending inwardly therefrom whereby to be inaccessible from the upper surface of said sheet when the latter is in flat open position, and a ring secured to the inner end of each of said tabs and through which said cord extends for movement therethrough, said draw cord being of sufficient length to extend from one ring to the other when said sheet is in flat open position without wrinkling said sheet, and to hold said rings and tabs in their inward positions to prevent their projection beyond the marginal edges of said sheet.

GUY J. BROWN.

REFERENCES CITED

The following references are of record in the file of this patent:

UNITED STATES PATENTS

Number	Name	Date
355,361	Walsh	Jan. 4, 1887
791,677	Dowling	June 6, 1905
837,570	Jackson et al.	Dec. 4, 1906
1,683,678	Kitterman et al.	Sept. 11, 1928
2,144,439	Duffy	Jan. 17, 1939

FOREIGN PATENTS

Number	Country	Date
390,920	France	Aug. 12, 1908