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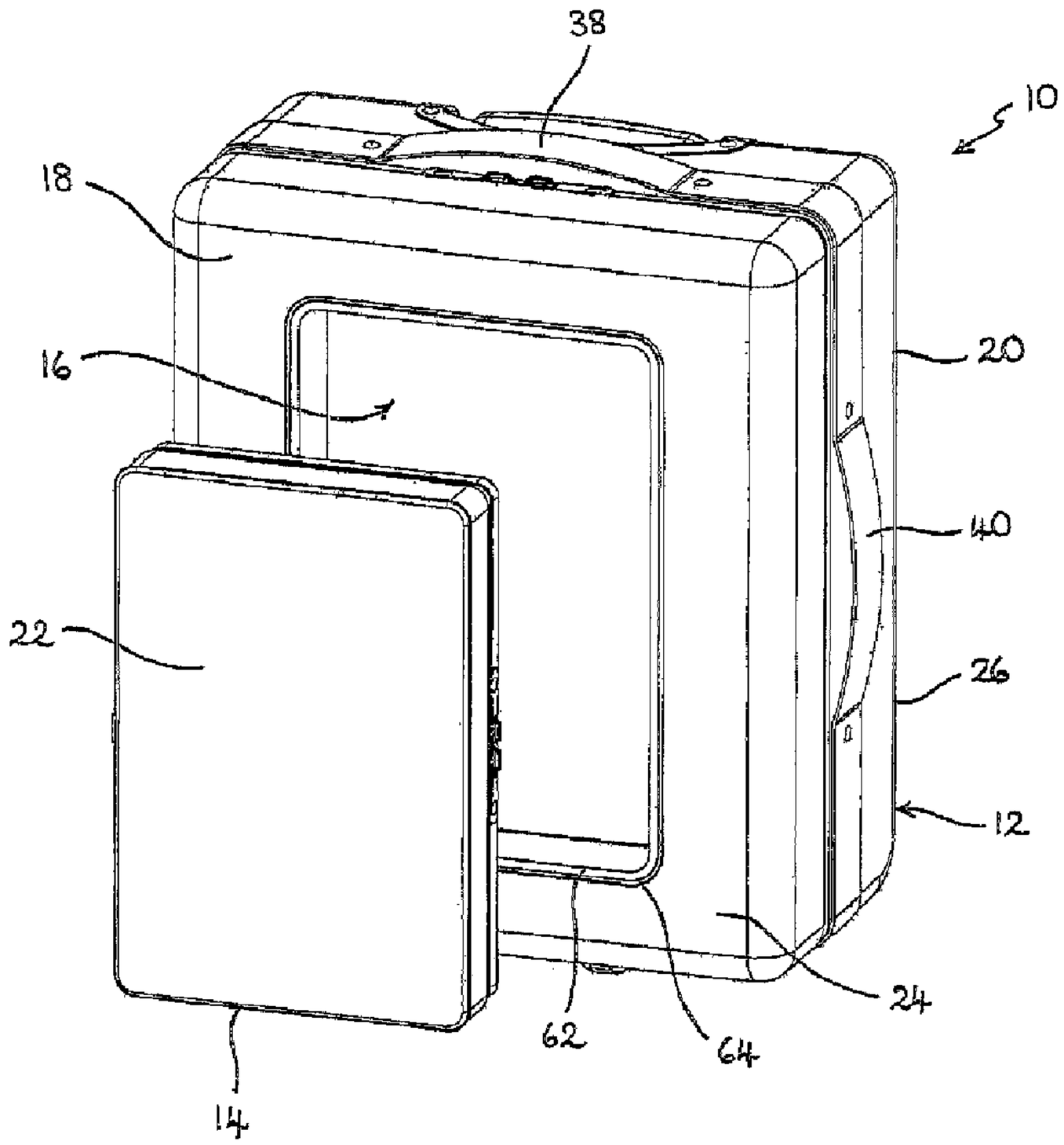
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(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
This invention relates to luggage, and in particular to suitcases incorporating a smaller removable case. A piece of luggage comprises a suitcase having a hinged base portion and lid portion, together defining an interior space of the suitcase, a recess

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(57) Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):
formed in the lid portion, the recess having sidewalls, a base and an opening, and an insert case securable within and removable from the recess, the insert case having a base, side walls and a lid, wherein the opening of the recess is in an exterior surface of the lid portion of the suitcase and the side walls and base of the recess extend into the interior space of the suitcase, and wherein the heights of the sidewalls of the insert case are not greater than 120% of the heights of respective sidewalls of the recess.

ABSTRACT

Luggage

This invention relates to luggage, and in particular to suitcases incorporating a smaller removable case. A piece of luggage comprises a suitcase having a hinged base portion and lid portion, together defining an interior space of the suitcase, a recess formed in the lid portion, the recess having sidewalls, a base and an opening, and an insert case securable within and removable from the recess, the insert case having a base, side walls and a lid, wherein the opening of the recess is in an exterior surface of the lid portion of the suitcase and the side walls and base of the recess extend into the interior space of the suitcase, and wherein the heights of the sidewalls of the insert case are not greater than 120% of the heights of respective sidewalls of the recess.

Figure 7

Luggage

BACKGROUND

a. Field of the Invention

This invention relates to luggage, and in particular to suitcases incorporating a smaller removable case.

b. Related Art

It is becoming increasingly common for children to take their own suitcases on holiday rather than adding their clothes and belongings to the parent's suitcase. This has been driven in part by the rules imposed by airlines, limiting each person to a single piece of luggage. In addition, many children like having their own suitcase which they can help to pack themselves.

Additionally, it is increasingly common for travellers to use small suitcases as hand luggage on flights. There are maximum dimensions to any bag to be used as hand luggage as it must fit within the overhead lockers. Increasingly, many suitcases are being designed having these dimensions so that the maximum volume of belongings can be packed into hand luggage.

In both of these situations it is often desirable to remove some of the contents from the case before it is stowed away; for example, children may wish to keep toys or books with them for entertainment during the flight.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a piece of luggage that fulfils these requirements.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention there is provided a piece of luggage comprising:

- a suitcase having a hinged base portion and lid portion, together defining an interior space of the suitcase;
- a recess formed in the lid portion, the recess having a sidewall, a base and an opening, the opening being in an exterior surface of the lid portion of the suitcase and the sidewall and base of the recess extending into the interior space of the suitcase; and
- an insert case securable within and removable from the recess, the insert case having a base, sidewall and a lid,

wherein the height of the sidewall of the insert case is not greater than 120% of the height of the respective sidewall of the recess and wherein dimensions of the recess are such that a peripheral region of the lid portion is defined around the full periphery of the recess.

Preferably a length and width of the recess is less than a height and width of the suitcase so that a peripheral region of the lid portion is defined around the full periphery of the recess.

The peripheral region defined around the full periphery of the recess means that the recess does not fill the whole of the internal space of the lid portion of the suitcase, or does not remove any of the side walls of the lid portion of the suitcase. In this way the rigidity of the suitcase is not compromised and the lid portion still includes a channel around the recess in the interior of the lid portion which a user may use to store belongings.

Preferably the height of the sidewall of the insert case is greater than 80% of the height of the respective sidewall of the recess. More preferably the height of the sidewall of the insert case is greater than 90% of the height of the respective sidewalls of the recess. Preferably the height of the sidewall of the insert case is less than 110% of the height of the respective sidewall of the recess. More

preferably the height of the sidewall of the insert case is substantially 100% of the height of the respective sidewall of the recess.

More preferably the heights of the sidewalls of the insert case are equal to the heights of respective sidewalls of the recess such that a front face of the insert case is flush with the external surface of a front face of the lid portion when the insert case is secured within the recess. In this way, the retention of the insert case in the recess does not increase the overall external dimensions of the piece of luggage.

Typically the recess and the insert case will have a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape, and the external dimensions of the suitcase will be such that the suitcase may be used as hand luggage on flights.

To secure the insert case within the recess, securing means are preferably provided around a peripheral edge of the opening of the recess and a peripheral edge of a front face of the insert case. Preferably the securing means comprises a zip.

In other embodiments a first part of a securing means is provided on the base of the insert case and a second part of a securing means is provided on the base of the recess, and engagement of the first and second parts of the securing means secures the insert case within the recess. In these embodiments the securing means preferably comprises a region of hook and loop material. Furthermore, the first part of the securing means preferably comprises an indentation and the second part of the securing means comprises a projection. The indentation may comprise a circular recess centrally located in the base of the insert case and the projection may comprise a complementary raised region having a circular periphery centrally located in the base of the recess.

Generally the insert case further comprises fastening means which secures the insert case closed and provides access to an interior space of the insert case.

Preferably, when the insert case is retained or secured within the recess, the fastening means of the insert case are concealed so that the insert case cannot be opened and the interior space of the insert case cannot be accessed without removing the insert case from the recess. Typically this is achieved by locating the fastening means on side walls of the insert case which lie against the side walls of the recess when the insert case is secured in the recess.

In a preferred embodiment the insert case comprises a hinged base section and lid section. More preferably the insert case comprises at least one strap extending between the base section and the lid section, the length of the at least one strap limiting the opening of the insert case.

The insert case is designed to contain a number of items to provide activities for a child, for example wipe-clean drawing boards, pens and small toys. In other embodiments the insert case may provide a vanity case or jewellery box, or the insert case may provide a space for documents and a laptop computer or similar portable device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be further described, by way of example only, with reference to the following drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a suitcase according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the suitcase of Figure 1 showing an insert case removed from the lid of the suitcase;

Figure 3a is a perspective view from the front of the suitcase of Figure 2 showing a recess in the lid of the suitcase;

Figure 3b is a perspective view from the rear of the suitcase of Figure 3a;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the suitcase of Figure 1 with the suitcase open;

Figure 5a is a cross-sectional view through the suitcase of Figure 5b along the line A-A;

Figure 5b is a plan view from the front of the suitcase of Figure 1;

Figure 5c is a cross-sectional view through the suitcase of Figure 5b along the line B-B;

Figure 6 shows a plan view from the side and from the front of the insert case of Figure 2;

Figure 7 is a perspective view of the suitcase of Figure 2 showing the insert case removed from the suitcase and opened;

Figure 8 is a perspective view of the insert case of Figure 7, opened and showing one alternative set of contents of the insert case;

Figure 9 is a perspective view of the insert case of Figure 8 with some of the contents removed;

Figure 10 is a perspective view of a box securable within the insert case of Figure 9; and

Figure 11 is a perspective view of a tray securable within the insert case of Figure 9;

Figure 12 is a perspective view of a suitcase according to a second preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 13 is a perspective view of the suitcase of Figure 12 showing an insert case removed from the lid of the suitcase and a recess in the lid of the suitcase;

Figure 14 is a perspective view from the rear of the suitcase of Figure 13 with the insert case removed, and showing the rear of the insert case;

Figure 15 is a perspective view of the suitcase of Figure 12 with the suitcase open;

Figures 16a and 16b are front and side views respectively of the suitcase of Figure 12 showing typical dimensions of the suitcase;

Figures 17a, 17b and 17c are front, side and rear views respectively of the insert case of Figure 13, showing typical dimensions of the insert case;

Figure 18 is a detailed view of a handle of the insert case of Figure 17;

Figure 19 is a perspective view of the insert case of Figure 7, opened and showing one alternative set of contents of the insert case; and

Figure 20 is an exploded view of the insert case of Figure 19.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Figure 1 shows a piece of luggage 10 comprising a suitcase 12 according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention. The suitcase 12 includes a removable insert case 14 that is securable within a recess 16 in a lid portion 18 of

the suitcase 12, as shown most clearly in Figure 2. The insert case 14 may include children's activities or games or other personal belongings that can be easily separated from the main body 20 of the suitcase 12.

The dimensions of the insert case 14 and recess 16 are such that when the insert case 14 is secured within the recess 16, the insert case 14 does not protrude significantly from the suitcase 12. Preferably, a front face 22 of the insert case 14 is flush with an external surface 24 of the lid portion 18 of the suitcase 12, so that the insert case 14 does not increase the external dimensions of the suitcase 12.

The suitcase 12 is generally cuboidal and comprises a base portion 26 and a lid portion 18 which are hinged together along an edge 28 to allow the suitcase 12 to open and close. The base and lid portions 26, 18 may be secured closed using a zip 30 that extends around the periphery of the suitcase 12 as is known in the art. References herein to lid portion and base portion are interchangeable, so that references to lid portion in this example may alternatively refer to a base portion and references to base portion in this example may alternatively refer to a lid portion. The suitcase may be rigid or semi-rigid, and may be a fabric suitcase or may be a hard-shelled suitcase, as is known in the art.

The base portion 26 and lid portion 18 together define an interior space 32 of the suitcase 12. An extendable handle 34 is housed within the base portion 26 of the suitcase 12 and is arranged to extend from a top wall 36a of the suitcase 12 to enable the suitcase 12 to be easily pulled along by a user, as is known in the art. Additional handles 38, 40 are formed by a strap 42 that extends around the four walls 36a-d of the suitcase 12, as shown in Figures 3a and 3b. One face of the strap 42 is in contact with an external surface of the walls 36a-d around the periphery of the suitcase 12 except for portions on the top wall 36a and one side wall 36b. These portions of the strap 42 are bowed away from the external surface of the suitcase 12 to provide portions of the strap 42 that may be gripped by a user.

The suitcase 12 also includes a plurality of wheels 44, in this example four, attached to a bottom wall 36c to allow the suitcase 12 to be wheeled along, typically by pulling it by one of the handles 34, 38, 40. In other embodiments, the suitcase 12 may include only two wheels 44.

As shown in Figure 3a, the recess 16 formed in the lid portion 18 of the suitcase 12 is substantially rectangular and is centrally located in a face 46 of the suitcase 12, thereby defining a peripheral region 48 around the recess 16. The recess 16 includes an opening 50 in the external surface 52 of the lid portion 18 and four sidewalls 54 and a base 56 that extend into the interior space 32 of the suitcase 12. The depth of the recess 16, or in other words the height of the sidewalls 54, is preferably not greater than the depth of the lid portion 18 of the suitcase, so that the recess 16 does not protrude into the base portion 26 of the suitcase 12 when the suitcase 12 is closed. This is shown most clearly in Figures 5a and 5c. Preferably the base of the recess is fixed, so that the dimensions of the recess 16 cannot be changed.

As shown in Figure 4, because the width and length of the recess 16 is typically less than the width and height of the suitcase 12, the interior space 32 of the lid portion 18 is in the form of an annular space or channel 58 extending around the periphery of the side walls 54 of the recess 16. This channel 58 may be filled with belongings so that there is no wasted space within the suitcase 12. Additionally, a screen or cover 60 may be provided that extends across the opening of the channel 58 so that any belongings are retained within the channel 58 when the suitcase 12 lid 18 is closed. In this example the cover 60 is designed to extend across the whole area of the lid portion 18.

To enable the insert case 14 to be secured within the recess 16, as will be described further below, a first part (not shown) of a securing means 64 is associated with the recess 16. In this embodiment, the first part of the securing means 64 comprises a first part of a zip 66 extending around the periphery of the opening 50 of the recess 16. In this example, the first part of the securing means

64 is covered by a flap of material 62, so that the securing means 64 is not visible. In other embodiments, the securing means 64 may comprise strips of hook and loop material or press studs, or any other suitable fastening or securing means that may be used to retain the insert case 14 within the recess 16.

The removable insert case 14 is substantially cuboidal and has external dimensions equal to the dimensions of the recess 16. In particular the height of sidewalls 68 of the insert case 14 is the same as the depth of the sidewalls 54 of the recess 16, and the length and width of the insert case 14 are substantially equal to the length and width of the recess 16. In this way, when the insert case 14 is retained fully within the recess 16, a front face 22 of the insert case 14 does not protrude out beyond a front face 46 of the suitcase 12, as shown most clearly in Figures 1, 5a and 5c. In this way, the front face 22 of the insert case 14 is substantially flush with the external surface 24 of the front face 46 of the lid portion 18 when the insert case 14 is secured within the recess 16.

The insert case 14 comprises a base section 70 and a lid section 72 as shown most clearly in Figures 6 and 8. The base section 70 and lid section 72 are both generally rectangular, having two longer edges 73 and two shorter edges 74. The base section 70 further comprises a rear face 76 of the insert case 14 and sidewalls 68a extending perpendicularly from the edges of the face 76. Similarly, the lid section 72 comprises the front face 22 of the insert case 14 and sidewalls 68b extending perpendicularly from the edges of the face 22. The sidewalls 68a of the base section 70 are preferably of minimal height and are primarily included to provide a means of fastening the lid 72 to the base 70.

The base and lid sections 70, 72 are preferably connected along a respective longer edge 73a by a hinge 78. In the preferred embodiment shown most clearly in Figure 9, the base and lid sections 70, 72 are integrally formed with the hinge 78 being created from a thinner, flexible section of material. Two straps 80 are connected between the base and lid sections 70, 72 to limit the opening of the insert case 14. The straps 80 are connected between respective shorter sidewalls

68a, 68b of the base and lid sections 70, 72, with a first end 81 of a strap 80 attached to a sidewall 68a of the base section 70 and a second end 82 of a strap 80 attached to a sidewall 68b of the lid section 72. The lengths of the straps 80 are preferably such that the maximum extent of opening of the insert case 14 is such that the lid section 72 is held at an angle of between 90° and 100° to the base section 70.

The insert case 14 is secured closed using fastening means 84 in the form of a zip 86 that extends around three edges 73b, 74a, 74b of the base and lid sections 70, 72, as shown most clearly in Figure 6. In other embodiments, the insert case 14 may be secured closed using any other suitable fastening means.

When the insert case 14 is secured within the recess 16, the fastening means 84 of the insert case 14 are preferably concealed, so that a user cannot open the insert case 14 while the insert case is retained within the recess 16. In this example, the fastening means 84 are provided around the sidewalls 68 of the insert case 14 which are located adjacent to respective sidewalls 54 of the recess 16 when the insert case 14 is secured within the recess 16.

The insert case 14 also comprises a second part 88 of the securing means 64 used to secure the insert case 14 within the recess 16. In this embodiment, the second part 88 of the securing means 64 comprises a second part of a zip 66 that extends around an external peripheral edge 90 of the front face 22 of the insert case 14.

When the insert case 14 is fully received within the recess 16, the two parts 62, 88 of the securing means 64 engage to secure the insert case 14 in position. In this preferred embodiment, respective ends of the zip 66 may be engaged and the zip 66 fastened around the complete periphery of the insert case 14.

In this position the front face 22 of the insert case 14 is flush with the external surface 24 of the lid portion 18 so that the insert case 14 does not increase the

overall dimensions of the suitcase 12. In this way, the maximum dimensions of the piece of luggage 10 is the same when the insert case 14 secured within the recess 16 and when the insert case 14 is removed from the recess 16. This is important when the suitcase 12 is to be made suitable for use as hand luggage on a flight and it is desirable to maximise the dimensions of the suitcase 12 while still complying with the dimensional limits imposed by the airlines.

In other embodiments the dimensions of the insert case 14 may vary slightly from the dimensions of the recess 16 such that the front face 22 of the insert case 14 protrudes slightly from the external surface 24 of the suitcase 12, or is recessed or set back from the external surface 24 of the suitcase 12. This difference may be due, for example, to the use of different fastening means or the curvature of the external surface 24 of the suitcase 12. Preferably, however, the heights of the sidewalls 68 of the insert case 14 are between 80% and 120% of the depth of the recess 16.

In this embodiment, the insert case 14 is designed to contain a number of items to provide activities for a child. It will be appreciated that the contents of the insert case 14 may be changed from what is described below and/or may be modified to more particularly suit either a boy or a girl.

Referring now to Figures 7 to 11, the insert case 14 comprises a tray 92 for holding sheets of paper or wipe-clean boards 94, a container or box 96 which may be used to store play figures or other small toys (not shown), a set of coloured pens or pencils 98 and a cloth 100 for wiping the wipe-clean boards 94 when included.

The tray 92 includes a generally square or rectangular base 102 and raised edges 104 that extend almost around the complete periphery of the base 102, as shown most clearly in Figure 11. A gap or cut-out 106 in the raised edge 104 along one side of the base 102 allows a user to grab an edge of a sheet of paper or a board 94 that is lying in the tray 92 below the level of the top 108 of the raised edges

104. A retaining strap 110 is attached at a first end 112 to one of the raised edges 104 and is releasably securable at a second end 114 to an opposite raised edge 104. In this way, the strap 110 can be used to hold any paper or boards 94 within the tray 92, even if the tray 92 is tipped upside down.

In a preferred embodiment the tray 92 holds at least two boards 94 having wipe-clean surfaces. Designs or pictures are printed on at least one surface of each board 94 so that the board 94 can act as a background against which, for example, a child can play with figures. The designs may illustrate, for example, the inside of a spaceship, a fairytale castle, a prehistoric landscape or the inside of a house.

The box 96 includes a rectangular base 116 and four walls 118, as shown in Figure 10. A lid 120 is hinged to a top edge 122 of one of the walls 118 and the lid 120 includes side portions 124 that extend down over the walls 118 of the box 96 when the lid 120 is closed. The side portions 124 extend a short distance down the walls 118 of the box 96, preferably less than one third of the height of the box 96, and are designed to have a frictional fit over the walls 118 to keep the box 96 sealed closed. The lid 120 preferably comprises a fabric or mesh cover 126.

The tray 92 and the box 96 are both designed to be securable within and removable from the insert case 14 and, as such, the box 96 and the tray 92 both include first securing means (not shown) on a bottom surface that interact with complementary second securing means 130 on the inside surface 132 of the base section 70 of the insert case 14. In this example, the first and second securing means 130 comprise strips of hook and loop material; however, in other embodiments other suitable securing means 130 may be used.

A pocket 134 is attached to an internal surface 136 of the lid section 72 of the insert case 14. The pocket 134 is attached to the lid section 72 around three edges 137a-c with the fourth free edge 137d defining an opening 138 of the pocket 134. A cut-out 140 is formed in the free edge 137d so that a user can grasp the

end of an object held within the pocket 134. The pocket 134 is preferably used to store a cloth 100 for wiping clean the boards 94 after use.

A pen holder 142 is also attached to the internal surface 136 of the lid section 72. The pen holder 142 comprises a band of material 144 formed into a series of semi-cylindrical receptacles 146, each receptacle 146 being designed to hold a single pen or pencil 98. In a preferred embodiment, the pen holder 142 contains a plurality of non-permanent felt tipped pens 98 suitable for writing and drawing on the wipe-clean boards 94.

In this way, the insert case 14 forms an activity centre that can be easily set up for example on a fold-down tray table on the back of a seat in a plane or train. The insert case 14 keeps all of the child's pens, paper and other playthings in a single container which may be easily carried and packed away when not in use.

Although this example has described the contents of the insert case 14 as providing activities and playthings for children, in other embodiments the contents of the insert case 14 may differ. For example, the insert case 14 may provide a vanity case or jewellery box that can be set up as a 'dressing table' at the user's destination. As such the internal surface 136 of the lid section 72 may comprise a mirror. Alternatively, the insert case 14 may provide space for documents and a laptop computer or similar portable device.

As previously described, when the insert case 14 is secured in a suitcase 12, the insert case 14 is accessible from an external surface 24 of the lid portion 18. This means that the suitcase 12 does not need to be opened to remove the items, and the contents of the main body 20 of the suitcase 12 do not need to be disturbed. The insert case 14 may be simply removed from the main body 20 of the suitcase 12.

Figures 12 to 20 show a suitcase and an insert case according to a second preferred embodiment of the present invention. The suitcase of the second

embodiment is substantially similar to the suitcase of the first embodiment, and like features have been indicated by reference number incremented by 300.

In this embodiment, the suitcase 312 is generally cuboidal with rounded corners and edges. The suitcase 312 comprises a base portion 326 and a lid portion 318 which are hinged together along one side or edge 328 of the suitcase, as most clearly seen in Figure 15. The base and lid portions 326, 318 are most preferably formed of a semi-rigid plastics material such as polycarbonate (PC) and/or acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS). The base and lid portions 326, 318 are secured closed using a zip that extends around the remaining three sides of the suitcase 312. Preferably the zip is covered by strips of flexible plastics material 150.

An extendable handle 334 is housed within the base portion 326 of the suitcase 312 and is arranged to extend from a top wall 336a of the suitcase 312. In this example the handle 334 comprises a single extendable bar 333 and a T-shaped grip portion 335 at the end of the bar 333. A further handle 338 is formed by a strap 342 that is attached at both its ends to the top wall 336a, as shown most clearly in Figure 15.

Figures 16a and 16b show typical dimensions of the suitcase 312. The dimensions are given in millimetres.

A recess 316 formed in the lid portion 318 of the suitcase 312 is substantially rectangular and is centrally located in a face 346 of the suitcase 312, thereby defining a peripheral region 348 around the recess 316.

To enable the insert case 314 to be secured within the recess 316 a first part of a securing means 364 is associated with the recess 316. In this embodiment, the first part of the securing means 364 comprises a layer of hook and loop material 156 on a base 356 of the recess 316.

The base 356 of the recess 316 further includes a raised region or projection 152, which is this example is a circular region 152 located centrally with respect to the dimensions of the base 356. In this example the layer of hook and loop material 156 is attached to the surface of the raised region 152. The raised region 152 projects in a direction towards a front face 346 of the suitcase 312. Preferably the diameter of the circular raised region 152 is about one third of the width of the base 356 of the recess 316, and the height of the raised region 152 is less than one quarter of the height of side walls 354 of the recess 316. This raised region 152 engages with a corresponding indentation or depression 154 in a rear face 376 of the insert case 314, as described in more detail below.

The removable insert case 314 is substantially cuboidal and has external dimensions substantially equal to the dimensions of the recess 316. In particular the height of sidewalls 368 of the insert case 314 is the same as the depth of the sidewalls 354 of the recess 316, and the length and width of the insert case 314 are substantially equal to the length and width of the recess 316. In this example the front face 346 of the suitcase 312 has a convex curvature. As such, the front face 322 of the insert case 314, which corresponds to a central region of the front face 346 of the suitcase 312 when the insert case 314 is engaged in the recess 316, also has a convex curvature. The front face 322 of the insert case 314 is, therefore, continuous with the external surface 324 of the front face 346 of the lid portion 318 when the insert case 314 is secured within the recess 316. The front face 322 of the insert case 316 is preferably substantially flush with the external surface of the front face 346 at least in a region adjacent the respective side walls 368, 354.

Figures 17a, 17b and 17c show typical dimensions of the insert case 314. The dimensions are given in millimetres.

The rear face 376 of the insert case 314 includes an indentation 154 that corresponds in size and shape to the raised region 152 in the recess 316 and forms a second part of the securing means 364. As such, in this example, the

indentation 154 is circular and is centrally located within the rear face 376 of the insert case 314. A base 158 of the indentation 154 is at least partially covered by a complementary layer of hook and loop material 160 that also forms a second part of the securing means 364. The second layer of hook and look material 160 engages with the first layer of hook and loop material 156 to secure the insert case 314 within the recess 316. Preferably the layer of hook and loop material 156 within the recess 316 comprises the hook material and the layer of hook and loop material 160 in the indentation 154 comprises the loop material.

When the insert case 314 is to be replaced or engaged in the recess 316 of the suitcase 312, the corresponding raised region 152 and indentation 154 enable the insert case 314 to be correctly aligned and oriented with respect to the recess 316 and further ensure that the securing means 364 is secured together over the full area of the securing means 364.

The insert case 314 further includes a cut out 162 in its front face 322 along a top edge 163 of the insert case 314. A handle 164 is mounted within this cut out 162, as shown most clearly in Figure 18, such that the handle 164 may be gripped by a user by passing their fingers and/or thumb around the handle 164 and into the cut out 162. The handle 164 comprises a strip of flexible material anchored at each end to opposing side walls 166 of the cut out 162. The handle 164 is preferably made from a webbing material encapsulating a layer of a foam material.

The insert case 314 comprises a base section 370 and a lid section 372 as shown most clearly in Figures 19 and 20. The base section 370 and lid section 372 are both generally rectangular, having two longer edges 373 and two shorter edges 374. The base section 370 comprises the rear face 376 of the insert case 314, and the lid section 372 comprises the front face 322 of the insert case 314.

The base and lid sections 370, 372 are preferably connected along a respective longer edge 373a by a hinge 378. Two straps 380 are connected between the base and lid sections 370, 372 to limit the opening of the insert case 314. The

straps 380 are connected between respective shorter sidewalls 368a, 368b of the base and lid sections 370, 372. In this example each of the two straps 380 is formed from two sections 380a, 380b. A first section 380a is attached at a first end 381 to a sidewall 368a of the base section 370 and the second section 380b is attached at a first end 382 to a sidewall 368b of the lid section 372. Fastening means 168 are provided proximate the second ends 170, 172 of the first and second sections 380a, 380b so that the two sections 380a, 380b may be fastened together. Preferably the fastening means comprises press studs or hook and loop material. The lengths of the straps 380, when the two section 380a, 380b are fastened together, are preferably such that the maximum extent of opening of the insert case 314 is such that the lid section 372 is held at an angle of between 90° and 120° to the base section 370. By unfastening the first and second sections 380a, 380b of the straps 380, the base and lid sections 370, 372 may be laid flat on a surface.

The insert case 314 is secured closed using fastening means in the form of a zip that extends around three edges of the base and lid sections 370, 372. Preferably the zip is covered, when the insert case 314 is closed, by strips of flexible plastics material. When the insert case 314 is secured within the recess 316, the fastening means of the insert case 314 are preferably concealed, so that a user cannot open the insert case 314 while the insert case is retained within the recess 316. In this example, the zip is provided around the sidewalls 368 of the insert case 314 which are located adjacent to respective sidewalls 354 of the recess 316 when the insert case 314 is secured within the recess 316.

The insert case 314 comprises a first organiser 174 secured within the base section 370 and a second organiser 176 secured within the lid section 372. The organisers 174, 176 may be secured within the base and lid sections 370, 372 using any suitable securing means such as press fasteners or hook and loop material. In some embodiments the organisers 174, 176 may be removable from the base and lid sections 370, 372, while in other embodiments the organisers 174, 176 are permanently attached to the base and lid sections 370, 372.

In this example the first organiser 174 comprises a region 178 for holding sheets of paper, wipe-clean boards or a book (not shown). A retaining strap 410 extends across the region 178 and is attached at a first end 412 to one edge 180 of the organiser 174. The second end 414 of the retaining strap 410 is releasably securable to a second region 182 on the opposite side of the region 178 to the edge 180. The second region 182 comprises a first part of a securing means and the second end 414 of the strap 410 comprises a second part of the securing means. Preferably the securing means comprises hook and loop material. The second organiser 176 comprises two pockets 184, 186 for holding pens, cloths, cards, play figures and the like.

The invention, therefore, provides a piece of luggage comprising a main body of a suitcase and an insert case which is securable within and removable from the main body without opening the suitcase. This allows selected or limited items held within the inset case to be separated from the suitcase without disturbing the contents of the main body of the suitcase and without needing to open the suitcase.

CLAIMS

1. A piece of luggage comprising:

- a suitcase having a hinged base portion and lid portion, together defining an interior space of the suitcase;

- a recess formed in the lid portion, the recess having a sidewall, a base and an opening, the opening being in an exterior surface of the lid portion of the suitcase and the sidewall and base of the recess extending into the interior space of the suitcase; and

- an insert case securable within and removable from the recess, the insert case having a base, sidewall and a lid,

wherein the height of the sidewall of the insert case is not greater than 120% of the height of the respective sidewall of the recess and wherein dimensions of the recess are such that a peripheral region of the lid portion is defined around the full periphery of the recess.

2. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the height of the sidewall of the insert case is between 80% and 120% of the height of a respective sidewall of the recess.

3. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the height of the sidewall of the insert case is equal to the height of the respective sidewall of the recess.

4. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 3, wherein a front face of the insert case is flush with the external surface of a front face of the lid portion when the insert case is secured within the recess.

5. A piece of luggage as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the recess and the insert case have a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape.

6. A piece of luggage as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein securing means are provided around a peripheral edge of the opening of the recess and a

peripheral edge of a front face of the insert case to secure the insert case within the recess.

7. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the securing means comprises a zip.

8. A piece of luggage as claimed in any of Claims 1 to 5, wherein a first part of a securing means is provided on the base of the insert case and a second part of a securing means is provided on the base of the recess, engagement of the first and second parts of the securing means securing the insert case within the recess.

9. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the securing means comprises a region of hook and loop material.

10. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 8 or Claim 9, wherein the first part of the securing means comprises an indentation and the second part of the securing means comprises a projection.

11. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the indentation comprises a circular recess centrally located in the base of the insert case and the projection comprises a raised region having a circular periphery centrally located in the base of the recess.

12. A piece of luggage as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the insert case further comprises fastening means providing access to an interior space of the insert case and wherein, when the insert case is secured within the recess, the fastening means of the insert case are concealed so that the interior space of the insert case cannot be accessed without removing the insert case from the recess.

13. A piece of luggage as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the insert case comprises a hinged base section and lid section.

14. A piece of luggage as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the insert case comprises at least one strap extending between the base section and the lid section, the length of the at least one strap limiting the opening of the insert case.

15. A piece of luggage substantially as herein described, with reference to, or as shown in, Figures 1 to 11.

16. A piece of luggage substantially as herein described, with reference to, or as shown in, Figures 12 to 20.

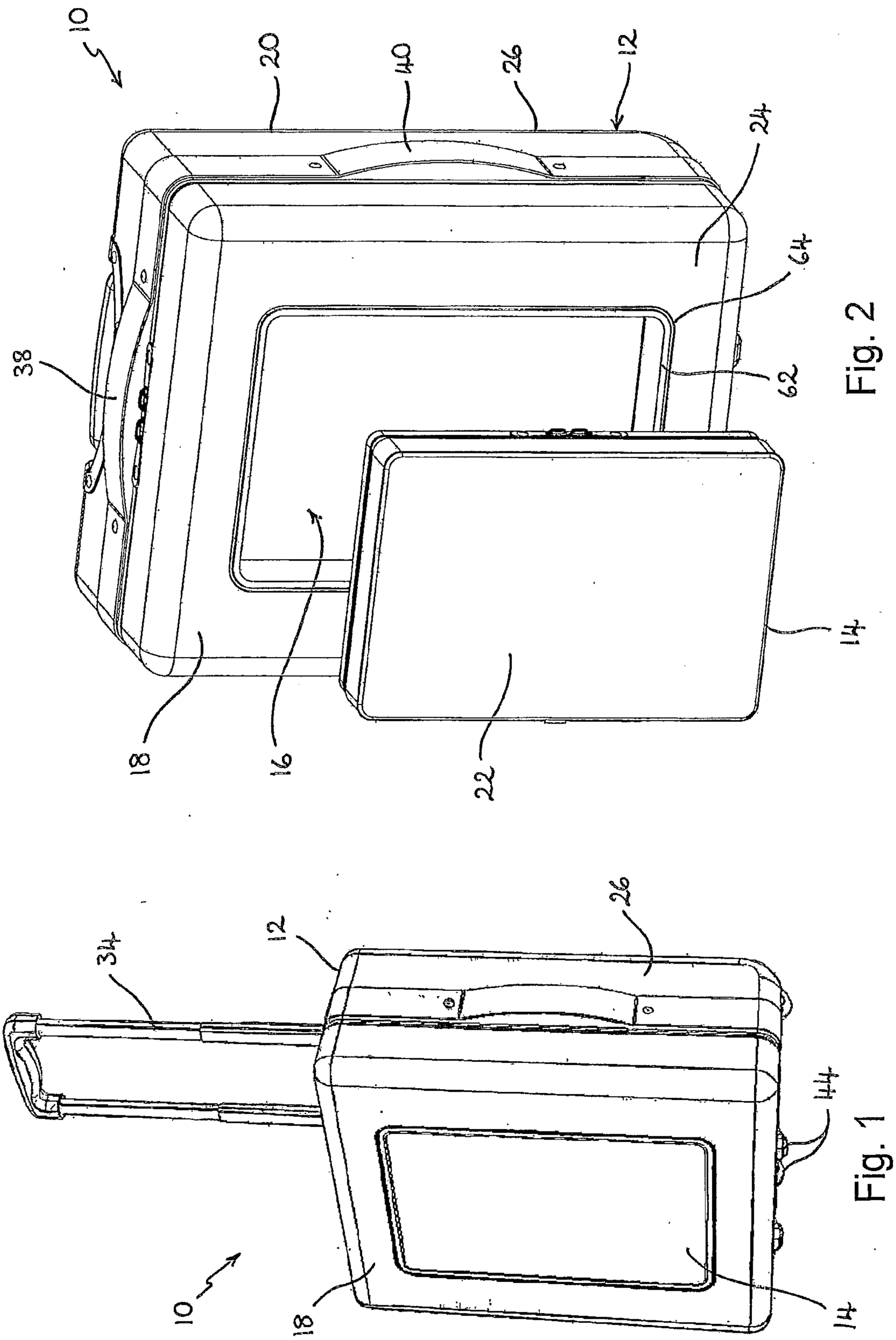


Fig. 2

Fig. 1

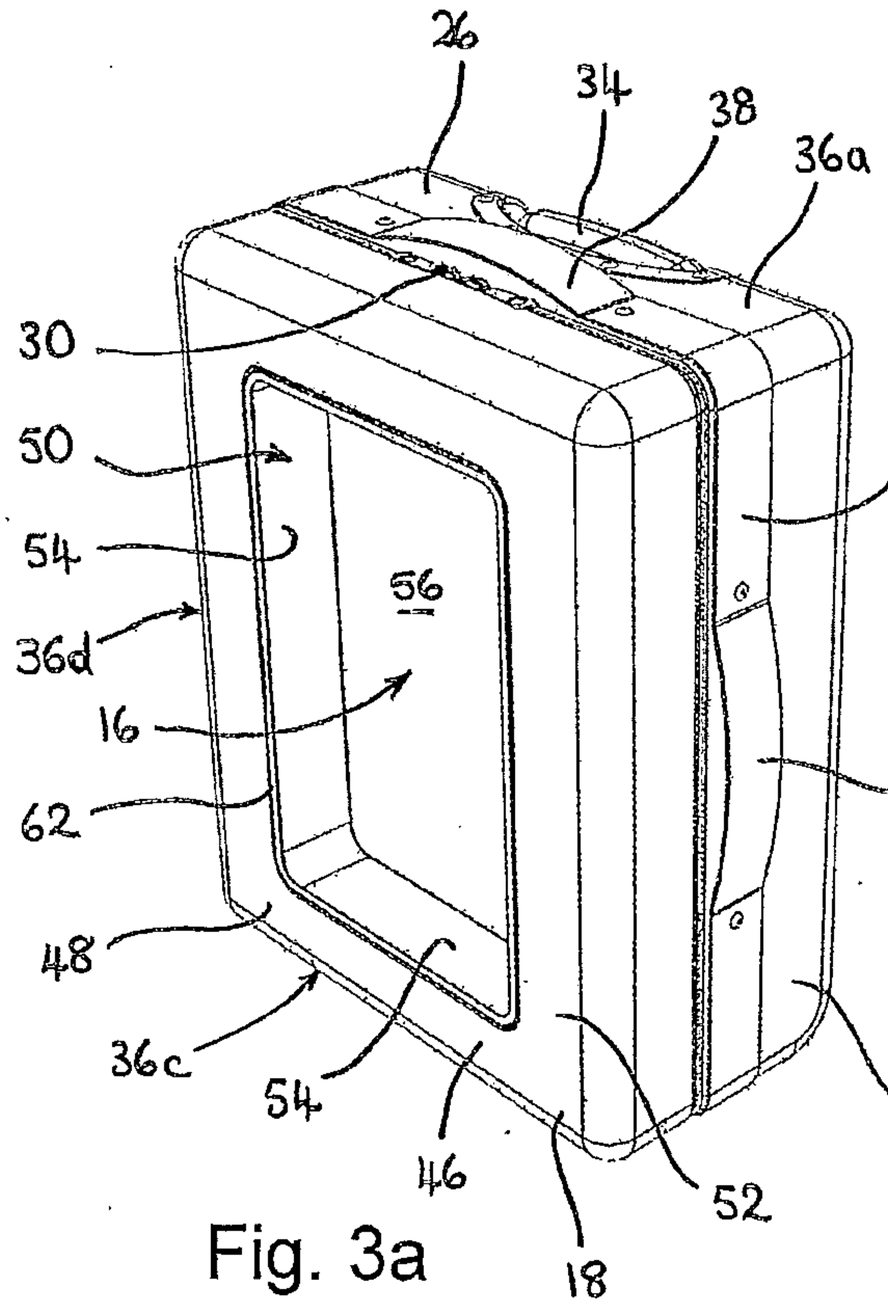


Fig. 3a

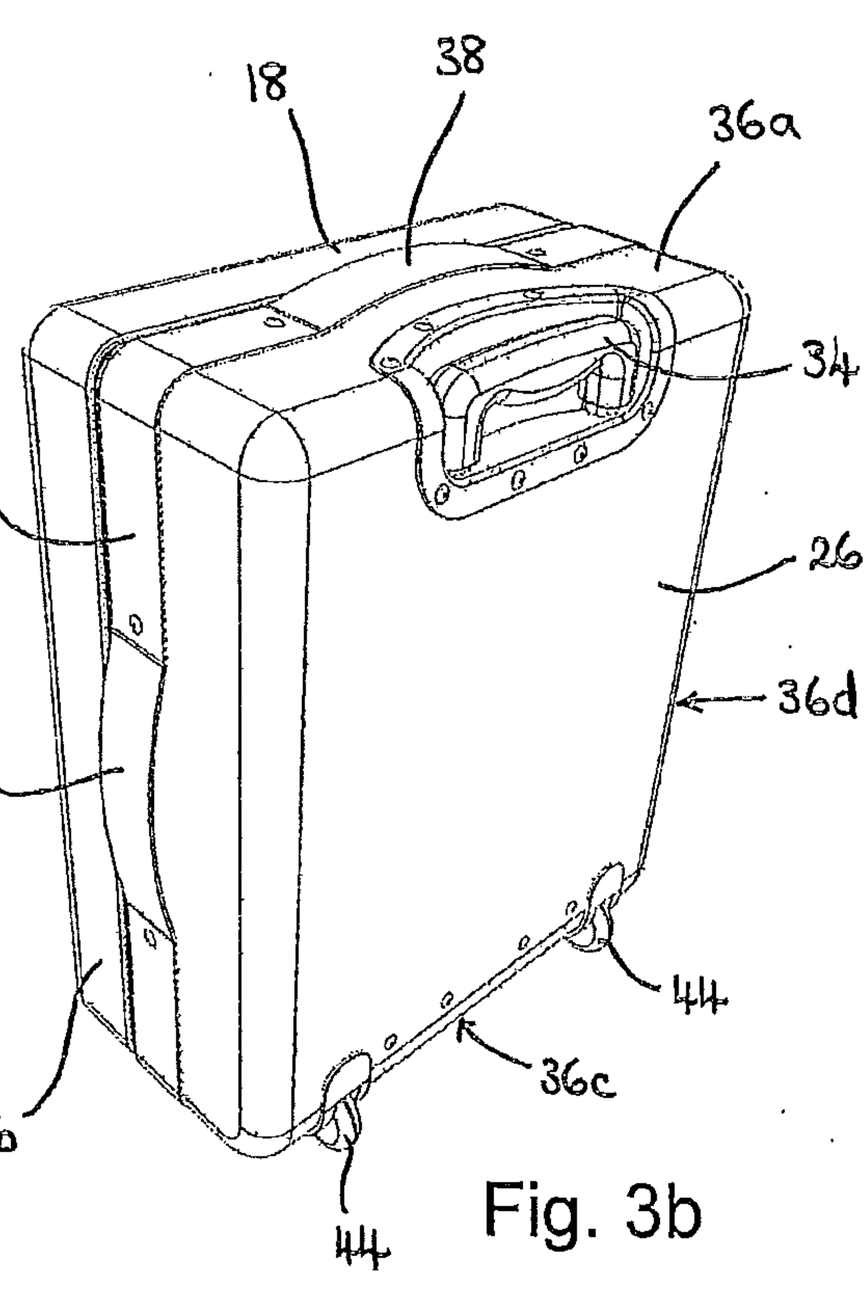


Fig. 3b

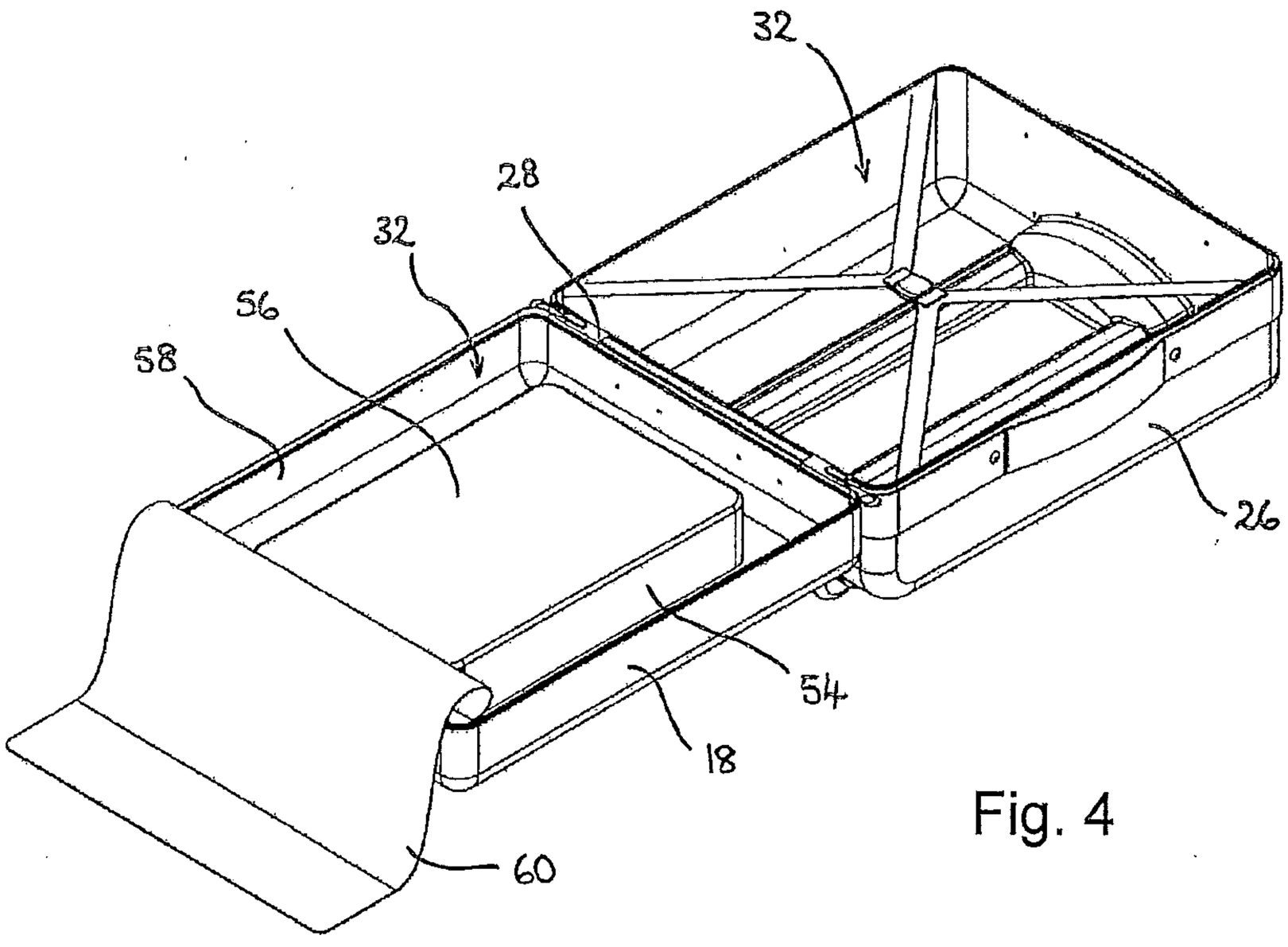


Fig. 4

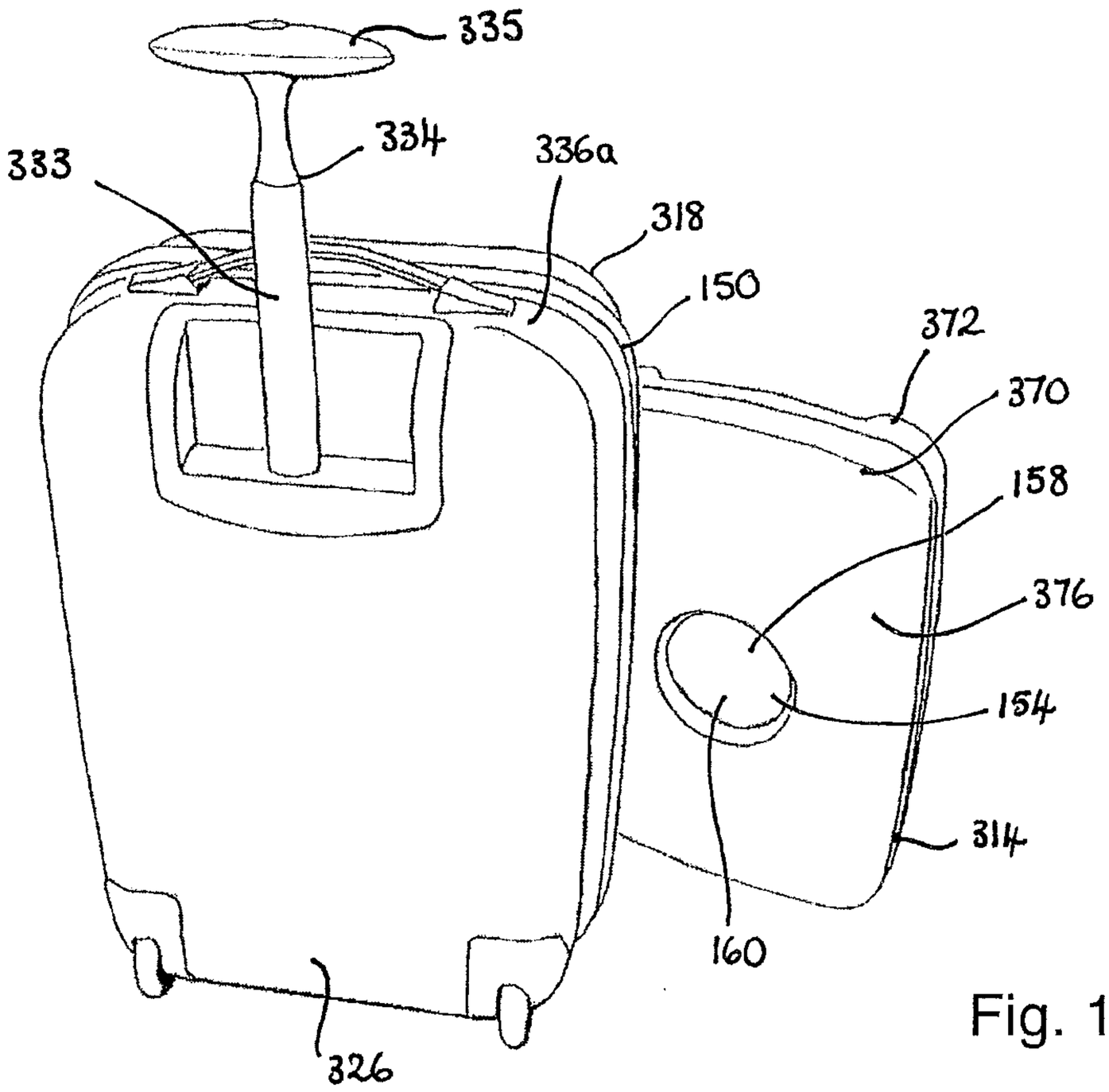

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Fig. 14

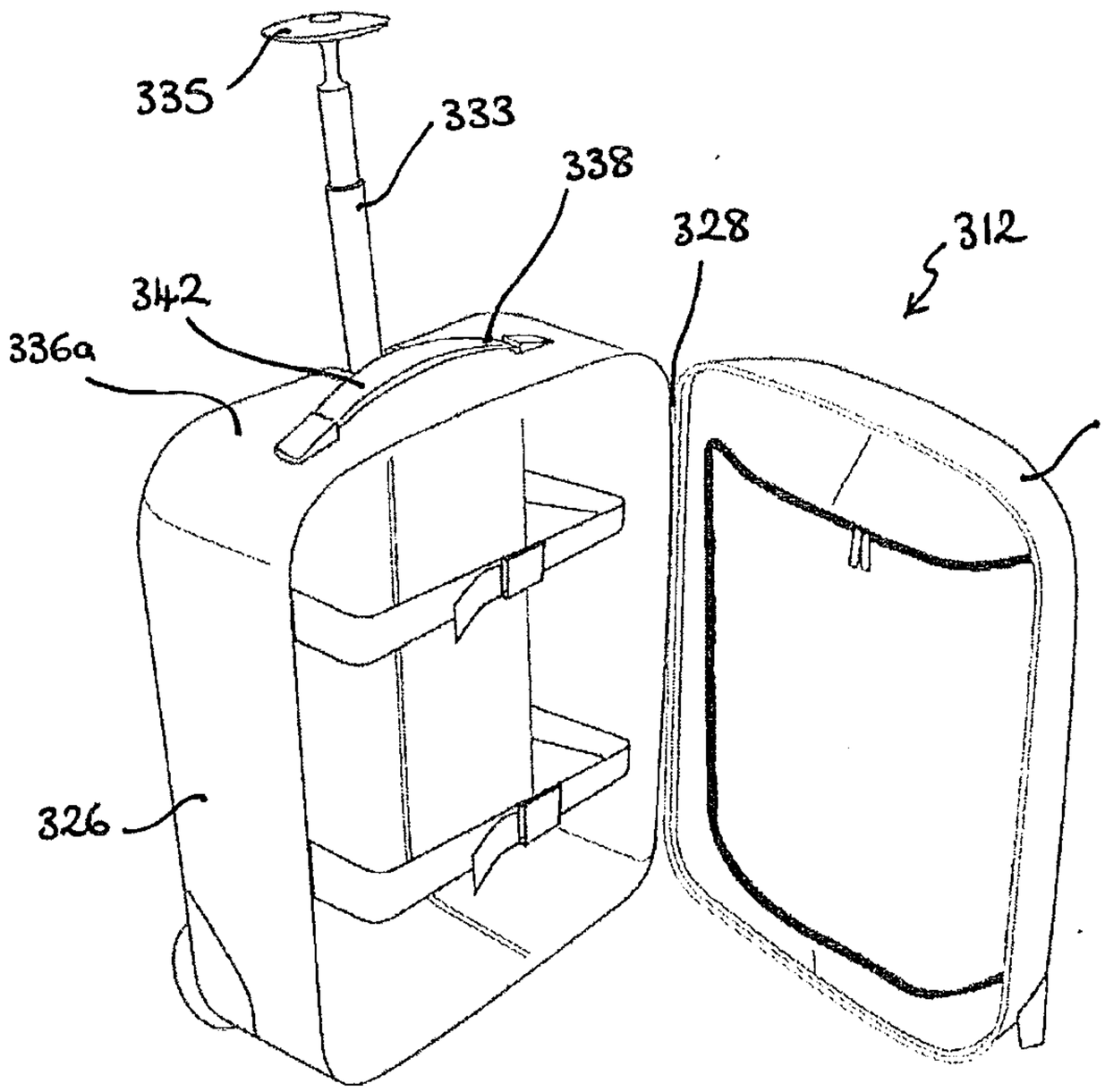

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Fig. 15

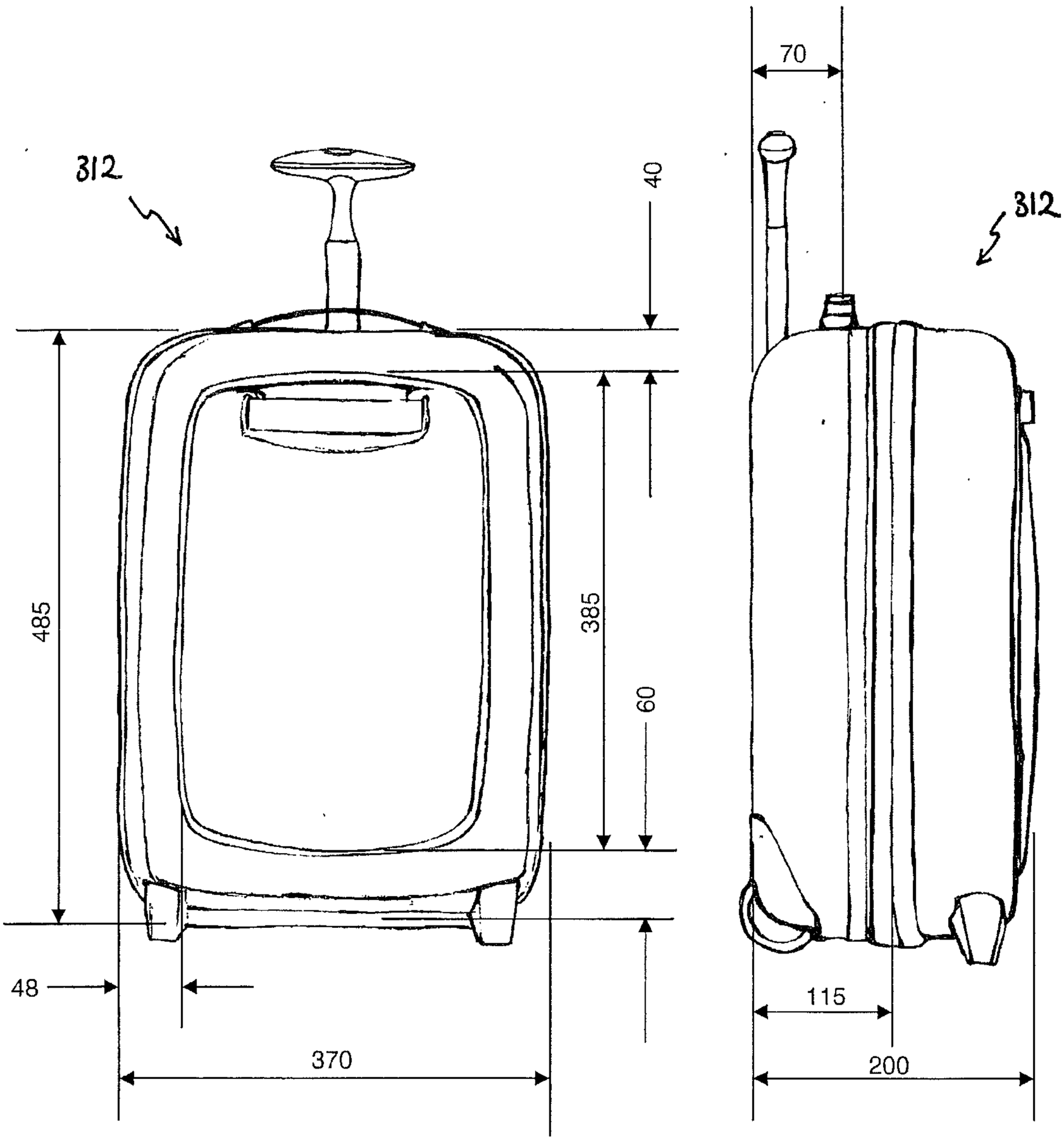


Fig. 16a

Fig. 16b

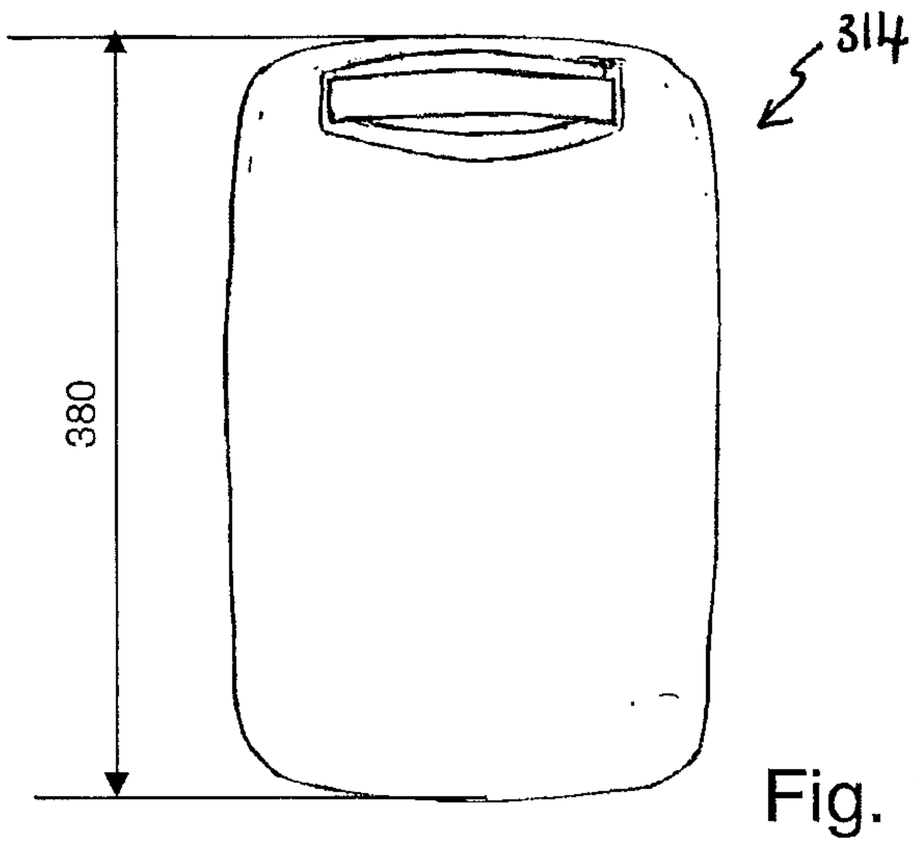


Fig. 17a

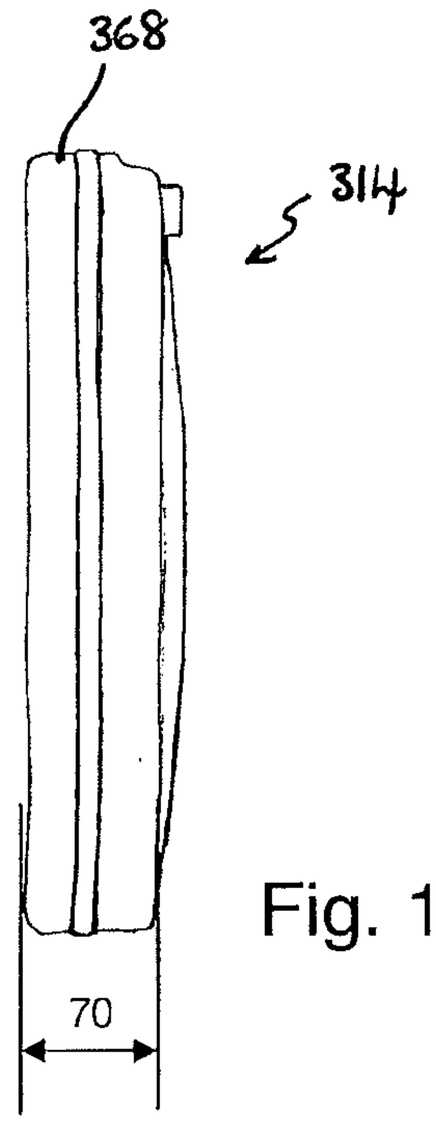


Fig. 17b

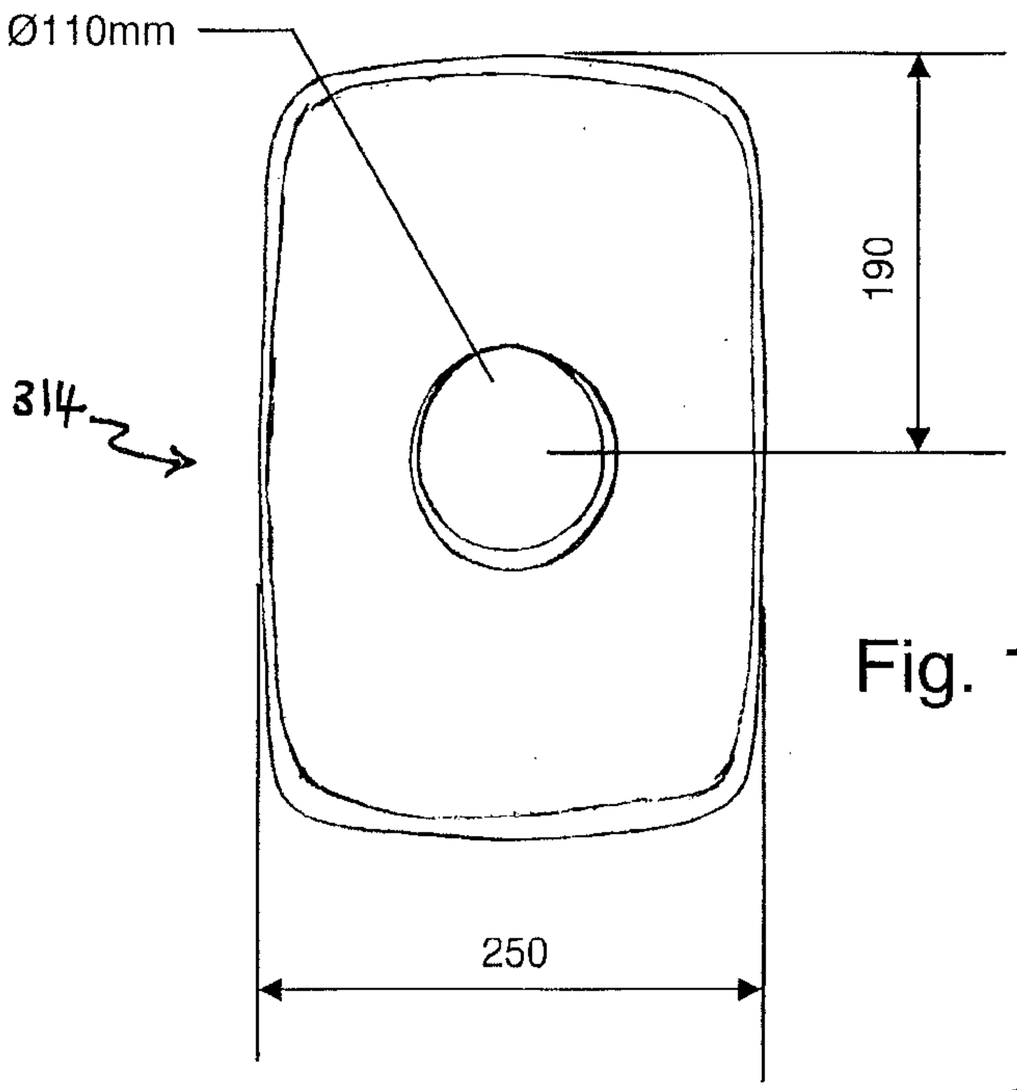


Fig. 17c

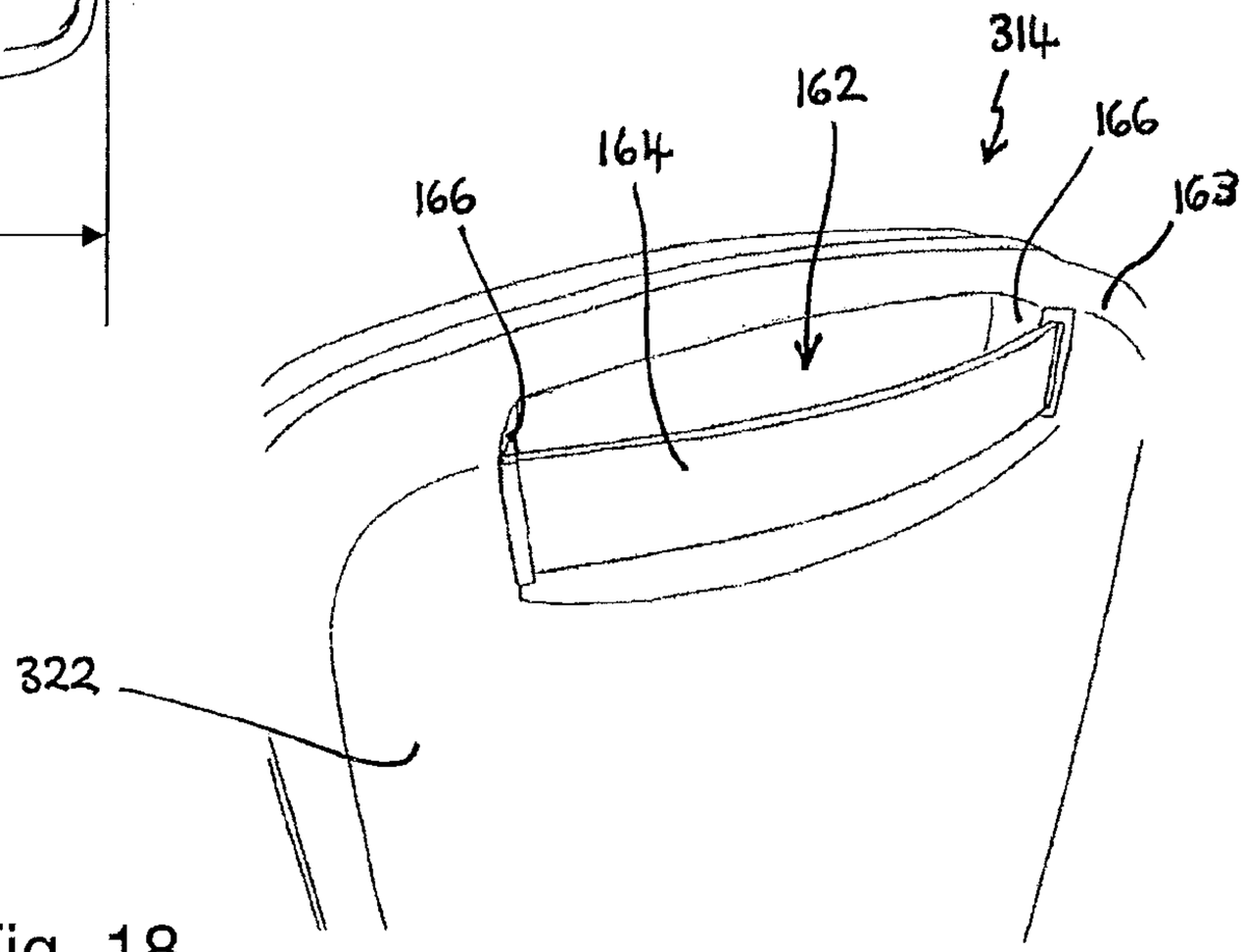


Fig. 18

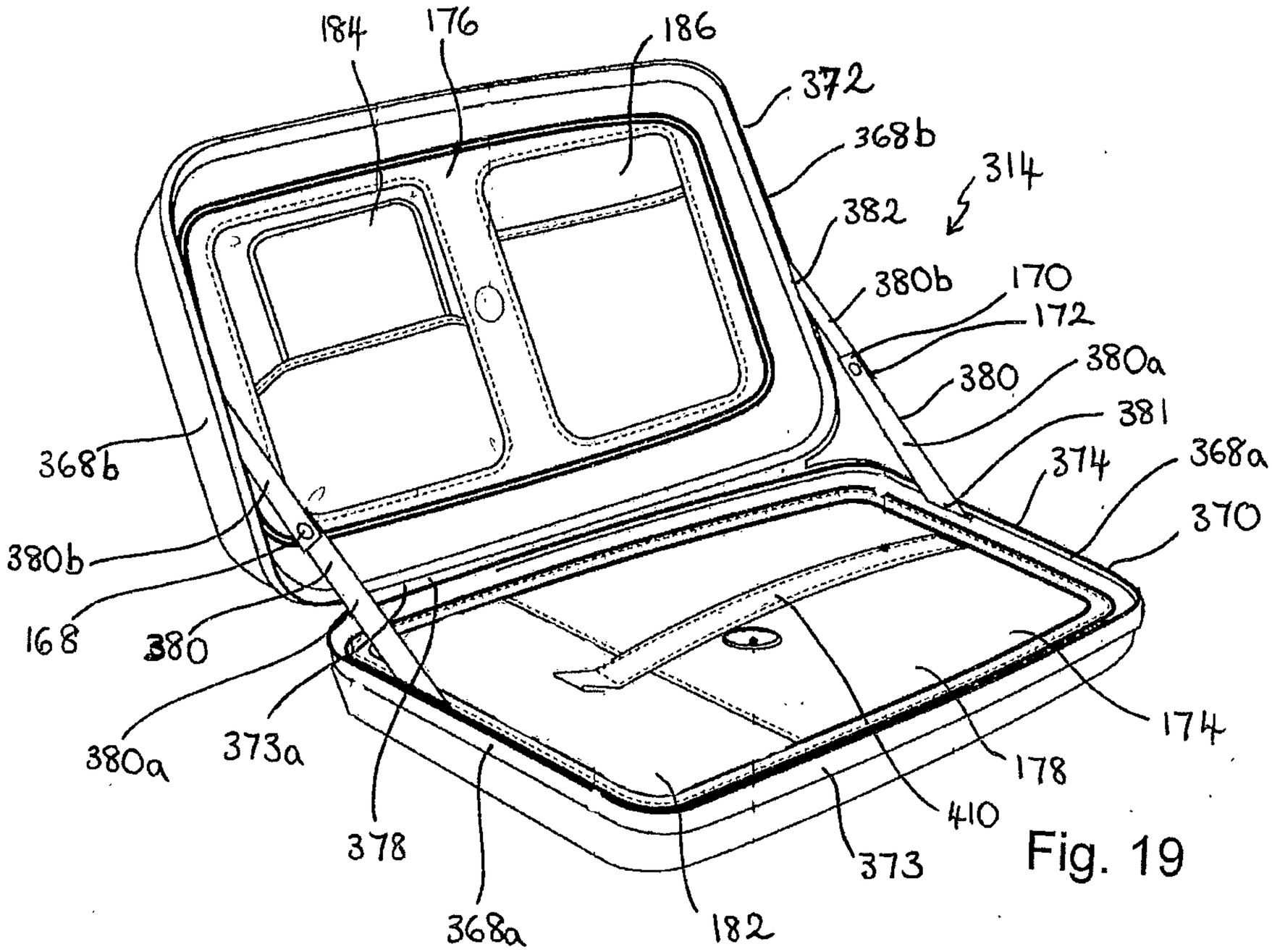

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Fig. 19

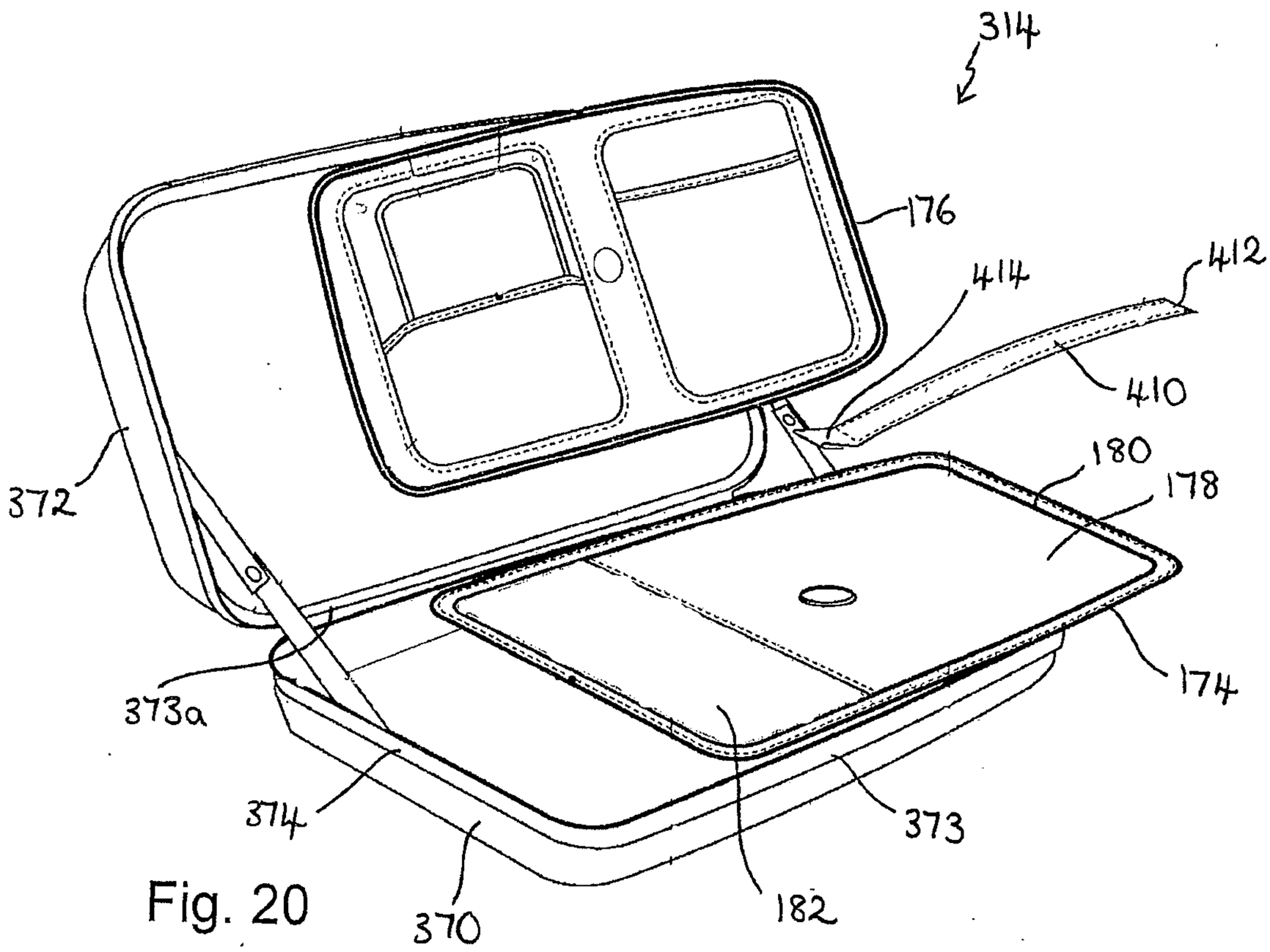
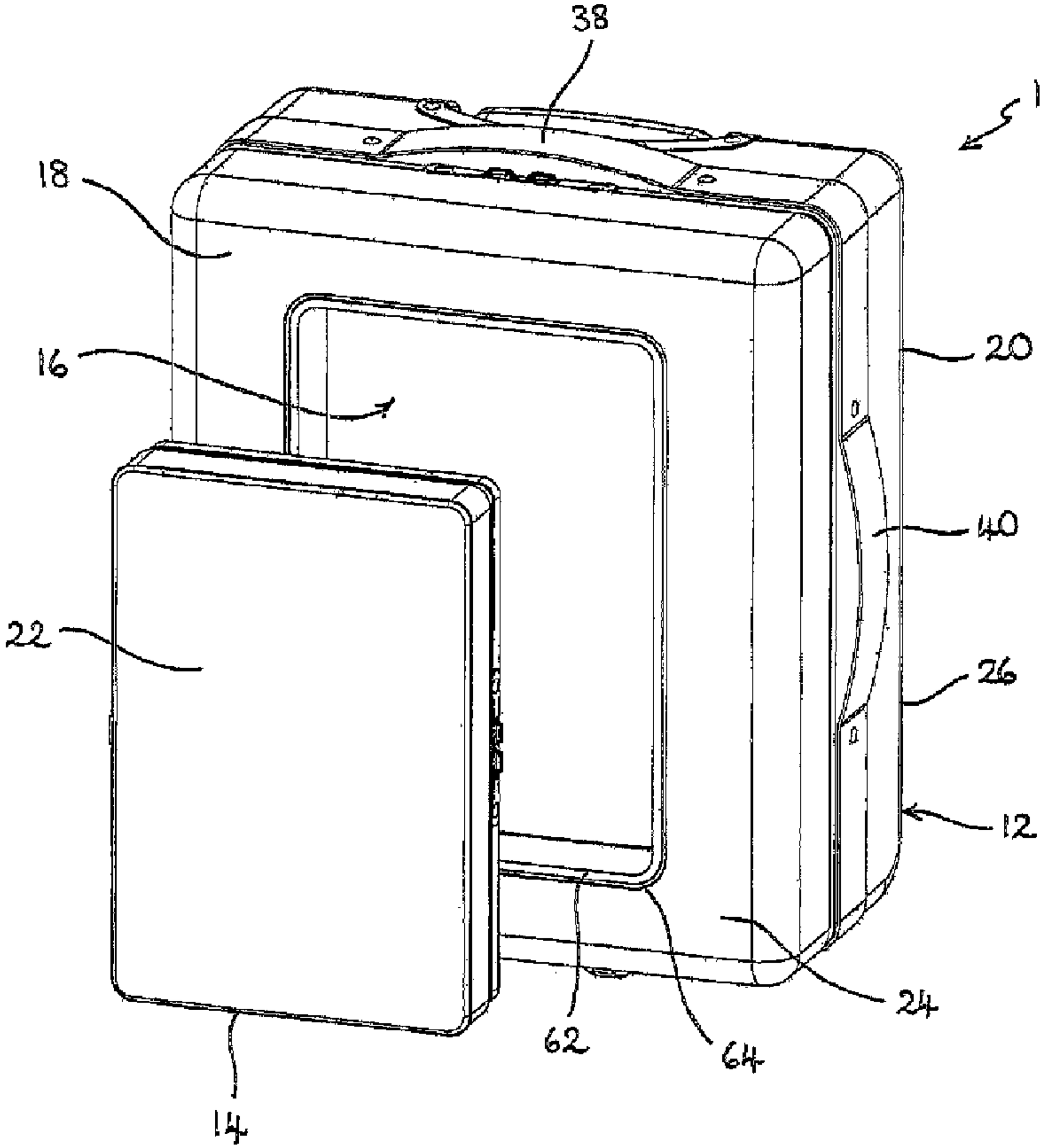

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Fig. 20


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