Abstract: A refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain a cartridge, which finds particular use as a dispenser for elongate smoking articles such as cigarettes, comprises: an outer sleeve (2) having opposed first (20) and second (38) open ends; an inner sleeve (4) having opposed first (36) and second (66) open ends; the inner sleeve (4) being mounted within the outer sleeve (2) for movement between a cartridge loading position, in which the second open end (66) of the inner sleeve (4) is proximate the second open end (38) of the outer sleeve (2), and a dispensing position, in which the first open end (36) of the inner sleeve (4) is proximate the first open end (20) of the outer sleeve (2); and a lid (16) mounted for pivotal movement relative to the outer sleeve (2) between a closed position, in which the lid (16) covers the first open end (20) of the outer sleeve (2), and an open position, in which the first open end (20) of the outer sleeve (2) is at least partially exposed; wherein the inner sleeve is adapted to receive and retain a cartridge through the second open end (66) thereof in the cartridge loading position.
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CARTRIDGE DISPENSING SYSTEM

The present invention relates to a novel refillable dispensing system and a refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain a cartridge for use in such a system and finds particular application in the dispensing of elongate smoking articles such as cigarettes.

To obviate the need for a consumer to transfer cigarettes individually by hand from their original disposable packaging, it is known to provide refillable cigarette cases that are adapted to receive a conventional disposable soft or hard pack of cigarettes. One such known refillable cigarette case comprises a carrier adapted to receive a conventional soft pack of cigarettes, a cover pivoted to the top of the carrier, and an outside member surrounding the carrier and reciprocable relative thereto. In use, in order to place a soft pack of cigarettes in the carrier it is necessary for the consumer to first raise the carrier relative to the outside member in order to open the cover.

According to the present invention there is provided a refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain a cartridge, the dispenser comprising: an outer sleeve 2 having opposed first 20 and second 38 open ends; an inner sleeve 4 having opposed first 36 and second 66 open ends, the inner sleeve 4 being mounted within the outer sleeve 2 for movement between a cartridge loading position, in which the second open end 66 of the inner sleeve 4 is proximate the second open end 38 of the outer sleeve 2, and a dispensing position, in which the first open end 36 of the inner sleeve 4 is proximate the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2; and a lid 16 mounted for pivotal movement relative to the outer sleeve 2 between a closed position, in which the lid 16 covers the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2, and an open position, in which the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 is at least partially exposed; wherein the inner sleeve is adapted to receive and retain a cartridge through the second open end 66 thereof in the cartridge loading position.

In contrast to the known cigarette cases referred to above, a cartridge of cigarettes or other consumer goods may be advantageously inserted into the refillable dispenser according to the invention without the consumer having to first open the dispenser.
Preferably, movement of the inner sleeve from the cartridge loading position to the dispensing position moves the lid from the closed position to the open position. Preferably, the lid is hingedly mounted on the outer sleeve. The lid may, however, be mounted on the inner sleeve. Preferably, where the lid is hingedly mounted on the outer sleeve, the inner sleeve is provided with a longitudinally extending flange that protrudes beyond the first open end thereof.

Preferably, a slot extends through the outer sleeve and a stud is secured to the inner sleeve and slidably mounted within the slot for movement relative to the outer sleeve, such that movement of the stud within the slot moves the inner sleeve between the cartridge loading position and the cigarette dispensing position. The inner sleeve may, however, be moved between the cartridge loading position and the cigarette dispensing position by a consumer in other ways, such as, for example, by pushing on the base of a cartridge received and releasably retained therein.

Preferably, the outer sleeve is adapted to receive the lid so that in the closed position the lid is substantially flush with the first open end of the outer sleeve. By receiving the lid so that it is substantially flush with the first open end thereof in the closed position, the outer sleeve advantageously helps to prevent the lid from being accidentally prised open by, for example, the movement of other items held together with the dispenser in a consumer’s bag or purse.

The outer sleeve, inner sleeve and lid of the refillable dispenser may be formed from any suitable material including, but not limited to, for example, metal, plastic, wood, fibreglass and/or cardboard.

To facilitate movement of the inner sleeve between the cartridge loading position and the dispensing position within the outer sleeve, the outer sleeve and the inner sleeve preferably do not comprise any right-angles or sharp corners in cross-section. More preferably, the outer sleeve and the inner sleeve are substantially oval, elliptical or “stadium-shaped” in cross-section. In the context of the present invention the term “stadium-shaped” is used to describe a shape comprising a pair of opposed parallel straight sides joined by a pair of opposed curved ends.

Preferably, the outer surface of the outer sleeve is ergonomically profiled or contoured to fit the hand of a consumer.
According to the invention there is further provided a cartridge of elongate smoking articles adapted to be received and releasably retained by a refillable dispenser according to the invention, the cartridge comprising: a base member; an elongate housing mounted on the base member, a portion of the housing distant from the base member being separable from the remainder of the housing along a line of weakening; and a bundle of elongate smoking articles supported by the base member and at least partially surrounded by the housing, wherein the cartridge is dimensioned to be received in the inner sleeve of a refillable dispenser according to the invention and the base member is provided with means for, in use, cooperating with the refillable dispenser to releasably retain the cartridge in the inner sleeve.

The housing and base member of the cartridge may be formed from any suitable material, including, but not limited to, for example, metal, plastic, cardboard, metallised paper, metallised cardboard, metallised plastic foil, metal/plastic laminate, plastic/metal/plastic laminate, metal/paper laminate, paper/metal/paper laminate, metal/cardboard laminate, cardboard/metal/cardboard laminate and/or opaque plastic foil laminate.

Preferably, the bundle of elongate smoking articles is completely enclosed by the housing. Preferably, the housing is substantially moisture impermeable, light impermeable and/or air impermeable to preserve the freshness of the elongate smoking articles. The line of weakening provided in the housing may, for example, be a conventional tear tape or may be a frangible line formed using other suitable known techniques such as, for example, laser perforation.

The base member and the housing may be integrally formed, or may be formed separately and the housing then mounted on the base member.

According to the invention there is also provided a refillable dispensing system including: a cartridge; and a refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain the cartridge, the refillable dispenser comprising: an outer sleeve having opposed first and second open ends; an inner sleeve having opposed first and second open ends, the inner sleeve being mounted within the outer sleeve for slidable movement between a cartridge loading position and a dispensing position; and a lid mounted for pivotal movement relative to the outer sleeve between a closed position, in which the lid covers the first open end of the outer sleeve, and an open position, in which the first open end of the outer
sleeve is at least partially exposed, wherein the inner sleeve of the refillable dispenser is adapted to receive and releasably retain the cartridge through the second open end thereof in the cartridge loading position.

Preferably, the inner sleeve of the refillable dispenser is provided with first retention means, which, in use, cooperate with second retention means provided on the cartridge to releasably retain the cartridge in the inner sleeve.

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

Figure 1a is a front perspective view of an empty dispenser according to the invention in the closed position;

Figure 1b is a front perspective view of the empty dispenser of Figure 1 in the open position;

Figure 2 is a front perspective view of the inner sleeve of the dispenser of Figures 1a and 1b; and

Figure 3a is a front plan view of a cartridge adapted for insertion into the dispenser of Figures 1a and 1b.

Figure 3b is a side plan view of the cartridge of Figure 3a with the upper portion of the housing thereof removed.

The empty dispenser shown in Figures 1a and 1b generally comprises an open-ended elongate rectangular outer sleeve 2 and an open-ended elongate rectangular inner sleeve 4. The inner sleeve 4, which is adapted to receive a cartridge of, for example, cigarettes or other elongate smoking articles, is slidably mounted within the outer sleeve 2 for longitudinal movement relative thereto.

The outer sleeve 2 includes a front wall 6, a rear wall 8 and a pair of opposed side walls 10. An elongate slot 12 with curved upper and lower ends extends longitudinally through a central portion of the front wall 6 and a pair of opposed transverse rectangular notches 14 are provided in the centre of the lower edges of the side walls 10. A lid 16 is mounted to the upper edge of the rear wall 8 of the outer sleeve 2 along a transverse hinge 18 for pivotal movement between a closed position and an open position. In the closed position, shown in Figure 1a, the lid 16 is perpendicular to the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2 and the open upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 is covered by the lid 16. In the open position, shown in Figure 1b, the lid 16 is substantially parallel to and coplanar with the rear
wall 8 of the outer sleeve 2 and the open upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 is accessible. In the closed position, the underside of the lid 16 rests on an elongate narrow transverse lip provided on the inner surface of the front wall 6 proximate the upper edge thereof, so that the outer surface of the lid 16 is flush with the upper edges of the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2, as shown in Figure 1a. In order that the outer surface of the lid 16 is flush with the upper edges of the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2, the upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 may alternatively be provided with, for example, an inner rim on which the periphery of the underside of the lid 16 rests in the closed position.

With reference to Figure 2, the inner sleeve 4 includes a front wall 22, a rear wall 24 and a pair of opposed side walls 26. A transverse rectangular notch 28 is provided in the centre of the upper edge of the front wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4 and an upwardly extending protrusion 30 is provided in the centre of the upper edge of the rear wall 22 thereof, opposite the transverse rectangular notch 28. A pair of opposed transverse rectangular slots 32 extend through the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 above a pair of opposed transverse rectangular notches 34 provided in the centre of the lower edges thereof.

To erect the empty dispenser of Figures 1a and 1b, the inner sleeve 4 is inserted longitudinally, open upper end 36 first, into the outer sleeve 2 through the lower open end 38 thereof. The transverse dimensions of the inner sleeve 4 are preferably chosen so that the inner sleeve 4 fits snugly within the outer sleeve 2, with the front wall 22, the rear wall 24 and the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 adjacent to the front wall 6, the rear wall 8 and the side walls 10, respectively, of the outer sleeve 2, whilst still being slidable longitudinally therein. Once the inner sleeve 4 has been inserted in the outer sleeve 2, a circular button 40 is secured by means of, for example, adhesive to the front wall of the inner sleeve 4, through the longitudinal slot 12 in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2. The thickness or height of the circular button 40 is preferably sufficiently greater than the thickness of the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2 that, once secured to the front wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4, the circular button 40 projects above the outer surface of the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2 through the longitudinal slot 12 therein. The diameter of the circular button 40 is
preferably approximately equal to the width of the longitudinal slot 12, as shown in Figures 1a and 1b.

The longitudinal position at which the button is secured to the front wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4 is such that when the dispenser is in the closed position shown in Figure 1a, with the circular button 40 resting against the lower edge of the longitudinal slot 12 in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2, the lower edges of the front wall 22, rear wall 24 and side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 are flush with or disposed slightly above the lower edges of the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2.

In use, to open the dispenser a consumer grasps the outer sleeve 2 in one hand and slides the circular button 40 upwards within the longitudinal slot 12 in the front wall 6 thereof, towards the upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 and the lid 16, using his or her thumb. To facilitate movement of the button 40 and hence opening of the dispenser by the consumer, the outer surface of the circular button 40 may be advantageously provided with, for example, a plurality of transverse ridges (not shown) or may be otherwise roughened or contoured. The upward movement of the circular button 40 within the longitudinal slot 12 by the consumer slides the inner sleeve 4, to which the circular button 40 is secured, longitudinally upwards within the outer sleeve 2 towards the upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 and the lid 16. As the upper end 36 of the inner sleeve 4 approaches the upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2, the outer end of the upwardly extending protrusion 30 provided on the rear wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4 comes into contact with the underside of the lid 16. The force exerted by the protrusion 30 on the lid 12 as a result of further upwards movement of the circular button 40 within the longitudinal slot 12 in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2 by the consumer, forces the lid 16 to pivot about the hinge 14 from the closed position shown in Figure 1a to the open position shown in Figure 1b, against the action of a helical spring (not shown) mounted about the hinge 14, which biases the lid 16 in the closed position. Further pivotal movement of the lid 16 about the hinge 14 beyond the position shown in Figure 1b is prevented by the action of the helical spring mounted about the hinge 14.

The consumer continues to slide the circular button 40 upwards in the longitudinal slot 12 provided in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2, and thereby to slide the inner sleeve 4 longitudinally upwards within
the outer sleeve 2, until the circular button 40 reaches the upper end of
the longitudinal slot 12 and an upper portion of the circumference of the
circular button 40 abuts the inner surface of the upper curved edge
thereof, as shown in Figure 1b, thereby preventing further upwards
movement of the circular button 40 and hence inner sleeve 4. The length
of the outer sleeve 2, the length of the longitudinal slot 12 provided in
the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2, the length of the inner sleeve 4
and the depth of the transverse rectangular notch 28 provided in the
upper edge of the front wall of the inner sleeve 4 are such that when the
dispenser is in the open position shown in Figure 1b, with an upper
portion of the circumference of the circular button 40 abutting the inner
surface of the upper curved edge of the longitudinal slot 12, the rear
wall 24, side walls 26, and outer portions of the front wall 22 of the
inner sleeve 4 distant from the transverse notch 28 project slightly
above the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve
2, and the transverse lower edge of the notch 28 provided in the upper
design of the front wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4 abuts the underside of
the elongate narrow transverse lip (not shown) provided on the inner
surface of the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2.

To subsequently re-close the dispenser and return the inner sleeve 4
to its original position, with the lower edges of the front wall 22, rear
wall 24 and side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 flush with or disposed
slightly above the lower edges of the front wall, rear wall, 8 and side
walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2, the consumer simply releases the circular
button 40. The inner sleeve 4 is thereby allowed to slide longitudinally
downwards within the outer sleeve 2, under the influence of gravity,
until the circular button 40 comes to rest at the bottom of the
longitudinal slot 12 in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2, with a
lower portion of the circumference of the circular button 40 abutting the
inner surface of the lower curved edge of the longitudinal slot 12, as
shown in Figure 1a. Depending upon the relative transverse dimensions of
the outer sleeve 2 and the inner sleeve 4, the consumer may alternatively
be required to actively slide the circular button 40 downwards within the
longitudinal slot 12 in order to return the inner sleeve 4 to its
original position.

In either case, once the inner sleeve 4 has slid longitudinally
downwards within the outer sleeve 2 by a sufficient extent that the upper
end of the protrusion 30 extending from the rear wall 24 thereof is below
the upper edge of the rear wall 8 of the outer sleeve 2, the helical spring acts to pivot the lid 16 about the hinge 18 from the open position shown in Figure 1b back to the closed position shown in Figure 1a, thereby closing the open upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2.

A cartridge adapted for insertion into the inner sleeve 4 of the empty dispenser of Figures 1a and 1b is shown in Figures 3a and 3b. The cartridge comprises an elongate rectangular housing 42 having a front wall, a rear wall, a top wall and a pair of opposed side walls 44. The housing 42 is separable into an elongate lower portion 46 and an upper portion 48 along a frangible line of weakening 50 (shown in Figure 3a by a dotted line), which extends transversely across the front wall, rear wall and side walls 44 thereof. The front wall, rear wall and side walls 44 of the housing 42 are mounted at their lower ends on a base member 52.

A pair of opposed elongate longitudinal flanges 54 extend upwardly from the base member 52 on either side thereof, parallel to the side walls 44 of the housing 42. The flanges 54 are of substantially the same transverse dimensions as the side walls 44 of the housing 42 and, as shown in Figure 3a, the inner surfaces thereof rest against the outer surfaces of the side walls 44 of the housing 42. As illustrated in Figure 3b, the cartridge may, for example, house a bundle of filter cigarettes 56 or other elongate smoking articles, mounted on the base member 54 with their longitudinal axes parallel to the longitudinal axis of the housing 44.

A pair of opposed, upwardly extending, elongate longitudinal notches 58 are provided in the centre of the lower edges of the flanges 54. A pair of opposed flexible elongate arms 60, having a pair of opposed transverse rectangular tabs 62 mounted centrally on the lower ends thereof, extend longitudinally downwards from opposed upper portions of the flanges 54, through the longitudinal notches 58 provided therein, to the lower surface of the base member 54. A pair of opposed transverse rectangular lugs 64 are provided on the outer surfaces of the flexible elongate arms 60 above the opposed transverse rectangular tabs 62.

In use, in order to fill the dispenser of Figures 1a and 1b, the cartridge shown in Figure 3a is inserted longitudinally, with the housing 42 uppermost, into the inner sleeve 4 of the closed dispenser shown in Figure 1a, through the lower open end 38 of the outer sleeve 2 and the lower open end 66 of the inner sleeve 4. The transverse dimensions of the base member 52 of the cartridge are such that as the cartridge is
inserted into the inner sleeve 4 of the dispenser, the transverse rectangular lugs 64 provided on the outer surface of the opposed flexible elongate arms 60 of the flanges 54 that extend upwardly from the sides of the base member 52 contact the inner surface of the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4. The force exerted on the lugs 64 by the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 causes the elongate arms 6 to flex inwardly until, as result of further longitudinal movement of the cartridge into the inner sleeve 4, the lugs 64 are brought into alignment with the pair of opposed transverse rectangular slots 32 extending through the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4. As the lugs 64 and slots 32 come into alignment, the force exerted on the lugs 64 by the inner surfaces of the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 is removed, allowing the elongate arms 60 to flex back outwardly to their original positions. The outward flexing of the elongate arms 60 back to their original positions pushes the lugs 64 mounted thereon into the slots 32 provided in the side walls of the inner sleeve 4, thereby preventing further longitudinal movement of the cartridge relative to the inner sleeve 4. The cartridge is thus “locked” into position within the inner sleeve 4 of the dispenser.

The longitudinal position at which the lugs 64 are mounted on the elongate flexible arms 60 of the upwardly extending flanges 54 of the base member 52 and the longitudinal position at which the transverse rectangular slots 32 are provided in the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 are preferably such that when the lugs 64 are brought into alignment with the slots 32, the lower edges of the front wall 22, rear wall 24 and side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 are flush with or disposed slightly below the lower edges of the flanges 54 of the base member 52. In addition, the length of the cartridge and the length of the inner sleeve 4 are preferably such that the transverse frangible line of weakening 50 provided in the housing 42 of the cartridge is approximately level with the upper edges of the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 when the lugs 64 and the slots 32 are brought into alignment.

Once the cartridge has been “locked” in position within the inner sleeve 4 by the cooperation between the lugs 64 provided on the upwardly extending flanges 54 of the base member 52 thereof and the slots 32 provided in the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4, the consumer may open the dispenser in order to remove cigarettes or other consumer goods housed within the cartridge by sliding the circular button 40 secured to
the front wall 22 of the inner sleeve 4 upwards within the longitudinal slot 12 extending through the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2 using his or her thumb, as previously described above.

When the dispenser is in the open position shown in Figure 1b, the consumer pulls on the upper portion 48 of the housing 42 to separate the upper portion 48 of the housing 42 from the lower portion 46 thereof along the frangible line of weakening 50 and so expose, for example, the upper end of a bundle of cigarettes 56 housed therein. The force exerted on the upper portion 48 of the housing 42 by the consumer causes the housing 42 to rupture or tear along the frangible line of weakness 50, thereby separating the upper portion 48 of the housing 42 from the lower portion 46 of the housing 42. The upper portion 48 of the housing 42 may then be discarded to allow, for example, one or more cigarettes 56 to be removed from the lower portion 46 of the housing 42, by their filter end, through the uncovered open upper end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 of the dispenser.

Where the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 of the dispenser project slightly above the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2 in the open position, as shown in Figure 1b, and the transverse frangible line of weakening 50 provided in the housing 42 of the cartridge is approximately level with the upper edges of the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4, the upper end of, for example, a bundle of cigarettes 56 or other elongate smoking articles contained in the cartridge may be advantageously elevated above the front wall 6, rear wall 8 and side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2 when the dispenser is in the open position shown in Figure 1b, facilitating the removal of the cigarettes or other elongate smoking articles from the dispenser by the consumer.

Once the consumer has removed a desired number of cigarettes 56 or a desired quantity of other consumer goods housed in the cartridge from the lower portion 46 of the housing 42 thereof, the dispenser may be returned to the closed position shown in Figure 1a by either simply releasing the circular button 40 or by sliding the circular button 40 downwards within the longitudinal slot 12 provided in the front wall 6 of the outer sleeve 2 of the dispenser as previously described above. The processes of opening the dispenser, removing cigarettes or other consumer goods from the lower portion 46 of the housing 42 of the cartridge and then re-closing the dispenser are repeated periodically by the consumer until all
the cigarettes 56 or other consumer goods housed in the cartridge have
been removed therefrom.

After, for example, the last cigarette 56 has been removed from the
cartridge and the dispenser has been returned to the closed position
shown in Figure 1a, the empty cartridge is removed by the consumer
pressing, through the aligned transverse rectangular notches 34 and 14
provided in the lower edges of the side walls 10 of the outer sleeve 2
and the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4, respectively, of the
dispenser, on the pair of opposed transverse rectangular tabs 62 mounted
on the lower ends of the flexible elongate arms 60 of the upwardly
extending flanges 54 of the base member 52 of the cartridge. More
specifically, in order to remove the empty cartridge the consumer holds
the dispenser in one hand and grasps the opposed rectangular tabs 62
between the thumb and a finger of his or her other hand. Then, while
pressing the rectangular tabs 62 inwardly towards one another, the
consumer simultaneously pulls the rectangular tabs 62 longitudinally away
from the dispenser in order to slide the empty cartridge out of the inner
sleeve 4 and hence out of the dispenser through the open lower ends 38
and 66 of the outer sleeve 2 and inner sleeve 4, respectively. Pressing
the rectangular tabs 62 towards one another causes the opposed elongate
arms 60 of the upwardly extending flanges 54 of the base member 52 of the
empty cartridge, on the ends of which the rectangular tabs 62 are
mounted, to flex inwardly thereby releasing the pair of lugs 64 mounted
on the outer surface of the elongate arms 60 from the opposed rectangular
slots 32 provided in the side walls 26 of the inner sleeve 4 and allowing
the cartridge to be moved longitudinally relative to the inner sleeve 4
towards the lower end 66 thereof.

Once the empty cartridge has been removed, the consumer may refill
the dispenser by inserting another full cartridge into the inner sleeve 4
of the closed, empty dispenser in the manner previously described.

The dispensing system of the present invention has been exemplified
above with reference to a refillable dispenser having an inner sleeve
provided with opposed slots, which, in use, cooperate with a pair of
opposed lugs provided on a cartridge adapted for insertion therein in
order to releasably retain the cartridge in position with the dispenser.

It will be appreciated, however, that the inner sleeve of the refillable
dispenser according to the invention may be adapted to releasably retain
a cartridge of elongate smoking articles such as cigarettes and/or of
other consumer goods therein in a variety of ways. For example, the outer surface of the inner sleeve may be provided with one or more longitudinally extending channels, which, in use, receive and frictionally engage one or more resilient tongues or ridges mounted on the outer surface of a cartridge adapted for insertion therein. Alternatively, a cartridge adapted for insertion into the inner sleeve of the dispenser may be releasably retained therein by means of cooperating magnetic catches provided on the cartridge and the inner sleeve.

While the invention has been exemplified above with reference to the dispensing of elongate smoking articles such as cigarettes, it will be appreciated that dispensing systems according to the invention may be advantageously employed to dispense a variety of other consumer goods such as, for example, cosmetics, confectionery products and other foodstuffs.
CLAIMS

1. A refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain a cartridge, the dispenser comprising:

an outer sleeve 2 having opposed first 20 and second 38 open ends;

an inner sleeve 4 having opposed first 36 and second 66 open ends,

the inner sleeve 4 being mounted within the outer sleeve 2 for movement between a cartridge loading position, in which the second open end 66 of the inner sleeve 4 is proximate the second open end 38 of the outer sleeve 2, and a dispensing position, in which the first open end 36 of the inner sleeve 4 is proximate the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2; and

a lid 16 mounted for pivotal movement relative to the outer sleeve 2 between a closed position, in which the lid 16 covers the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2, and an open position, in which the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 is at least partially exposed;

wherein the inner sleeve is adapted to receive and retain a cartridge through the second open end 66 thereof in the cartridge loading position.

2. A refillable dispenser according to claim 1 wherein movement of the inner sleeve 4 from the cartridge loading position to the dispensing position moves the lid 16 from the closed position to the open position.

3. A refillable dispenser according to claim 2 wherein the lid 16 is hingedly mounted to the outer sleeve 2 and the inner sleeve 4 is provided with a longitudinally extending flange 30 that protrudes beyond the first open end 36 thereof.

4. A refillable dispenser according to any of claims 1 to 3 further comprising:

a slot 12 extending through the outer sleeve 2; and

a stud 40 secured to the inner sleeve 4 and slidably mounted within the slot 12 for movement relative to the outer sleeve 4,

wherein movement of the stud 40 within the slot 12 moves the inner sleeve 4 between the cartridge loading position and the dispensing position.
5. A refillable dispenser according to any of claims 1 to 4 wherein the outer sleeve 2 is adapted to receive the lid 16 so that in the closed position the lid 16 is substantially flush with the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2.

6. A cartridge of elongate smoking articles adapted to be received and releasably retained by a refillable dispenser according to any preceding claim, the cartridge comprising:
   a base member 52;
   an elongate housing 42 mounted on the base member 52, a portion of the housing distant from the base member being separable from the remainder of the housing along a line of weakening 50; and
   a bundle of elongate smoking articles 56 supported by the base member 52 and at least partially surrounded by the housing 42,
   wherein the cartridge is dimensioned to be received in the inner sleeve 4 of a refillable dispenser according to any preceding claim and the base member 52 is provided with means for, in use, cooperating with the refillable dispenser to releasably retain the cartridge in the inner sleeve 2.

7. A refillable dispensing system including:
   a cartridge; and
   a refillable dispenser adapted to receive and releasably retain the cartridge, the refillable dispenser comprising:
   an outer sleeve 2 having opposed first 20 and second 38 open ends;
   an inner sleeve 4 having opposed first 36 and second 66 open ends,
   the inner sleeve 4 being mounted within the outer sleeve 2 for slidable movement between a cartridge loading position and a dispensing position; and
   a lid 16 mounted for pivotal movement relative to the outer sleeve 2 between a closed position, in which the lid 16 covers the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2, and an open position, in which the first open end 20 of the outer sleeve 2 is at least partially exposed,
   wherein the inner sleeve 2 of the refillable dispenser is adapted to receive and releasably retain the cartridge through the second open end 66 thereof in the cartridge loading position.
8. A cigarette dispensing system according to claim 7 wherein the inner sleeve 2 of the refillable dispenser is provided with first retention means 32, which, in use, cooperate with second retention means 64 provided on the cartridge to releasably retain the cartridge in the inner sleeve 2.