Nov. 5, 1940. G. B. HANSBURG 2,220,238

BABY WALKER

Filed April 8, 1938

Fig. 1.

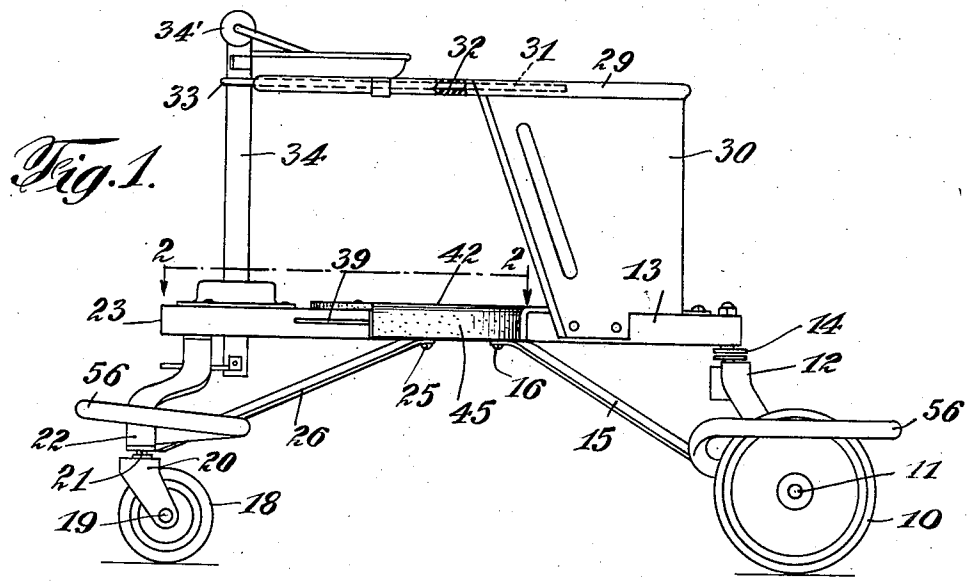


Fig. 2.

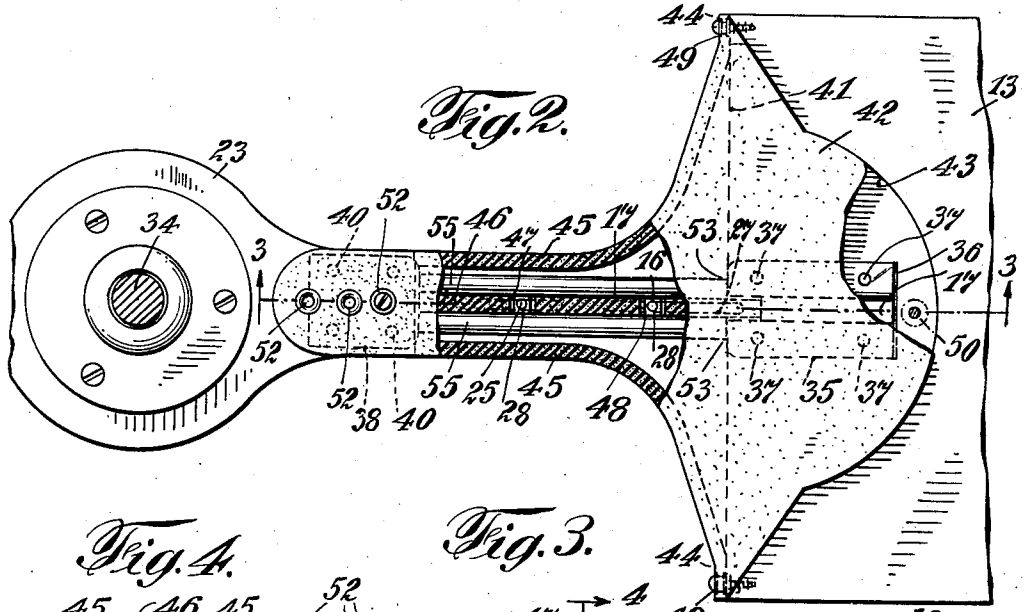


Fig. 4.

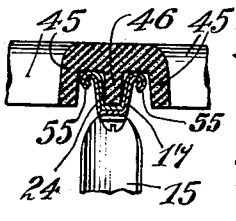
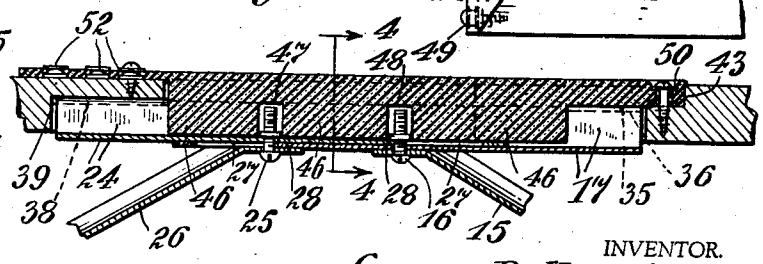


Fig. 3.



INVENTOR.
George B. Hansburg
BY Edward Thomas
his ATTORNEY.

Patented Nov. 5, 1940 2,220,238

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,220,238

BABY WALKER

George B. Hansburg, Brooklyn, N. Y., assignor to The Frank F. Taylor Company, Norwood, Ohio, a corporation of Ohio

Application April 8, 1938, Serial No. 200,934

6 Claims. (Cl. 155—22)

This invention relates to exercisers and is herein disclosed as embodied in the vehicle known as a baby jumper or baby walker.

Baby walkers have proved very helpful in training little children to walk and to give them needed exercise in a way that appeals to the child.

Usually these walkers have included a pair of rear wheels which, to a large extent carry the weight of the child by a seat above the wheels. They also usually include a pair of swivelled front wheels which give stable front support to the vehicle.

Usually the seat is a board which is narrowed in front to form a narrow board constituting a reach or chassis which extends to the front wheel mounting and the child sits or walks while straddling the narrowed front of the seat.

Some health authorities have seriously objected to the usual baby walker because the narrowed board in front is insufficiently narrowed, with the result that the board forces the baby to walk with its legs spread apart, and, moreover, holds the baby too confined, overtiring the baby.

According to the present invention these and other difficulties and objections are overcome and a baby walker is provided which is satisfactory to the health authorities, economical to build, comfortable for the baby, and may be easily adjustable.

In the form disclosed, the usual seat may terminate where it narrows, and the narrow board is replaced by a metal stringer which is suitably connected to the front wheel mountings. The child in the walker in the form shown, generally sits on a thick pad or mat which covers much or all of the seat and extends out over the metal stringer to near the front wheel mountings.

In the form shown the rubber mat is about half an inch thick and soft, almost as soft as a soft rubber sponge. In this form of the invention, the stringer may be a U-beam made of thin metal, and the rubber mat may include a fin fitting in the open U and cut to rest against the ends of bolts therein, with the result that the U-beam holds the mat in position on the seat and keeps it from slipping sideways.

It will be noted that the present invention provides a construction which does away with the wasteful cutting away of overwide board hitherto needed, and does away with the need for building up a wide seat upon a narrow board, and at the same time gives a stronger structure, and a very sanitary one, since the rubber mat is easily removed and washed.

Other features and advantages will hereinafter appear.

Figure 1 is a side view partly diagrammatical showing a baby walker embodying the present invention.

Figure 2 is a fragmentary plan view taken on the line 2—2 of Figure 1.

Figure 3 is a vertical section on the line 3—3 of Figure 2, and

Figure 4 is a transverse vertical section on the line 4—4 of Figure 3.

One form of "baby walker" shown in Figure 1 includes rear wheels 10 journalled on an axle 11 which is carried by struts 12, which support a seat 13 by springs diagrammatically shown at 14.

The axle 11 is shown as held against moving backward or forward by a strut 15 which is shown as attached by a bolt 16 to a U-shaped member 17 forming part of a chassis or reach 17. In the form shown, the baby walker also includes front wheels 18 journalled on axles 19 which are carried in forks 20 mounted so as to swing on vertical pivots 21 on a transverse bar 22. In the form shown the transverse bar 22 is fixed to a front member 23 which carries a U-member 24, and to the U-member, is connected by a bolt 25, a strut 26 which goes down to the cross bar 22.

In the form shown the U-bar 24 telescopes into the U-bar 17 so that the effective length of the reach may be varied by releasing bolts 16 and 25 which are shown as passing through slots 27 in the U-members 17 and 24 and threaded into nuts 28 which lie within suitable openings in the inner U-member 24.

Such adjustment is possible because the side walls 29 of the seat back 30 are bent over to form hollows 31 into which the ends of the rods 32 telescope and are slidable, said rods 32 forming side members of a frame 33 which goes to the upright 34 of the handle bar 34'.

The U-bar 17 is shown as provided with wings 35 which may be formed by straightening out the sides of the U so they are flat, with the result that they lie on the bottom of a flat rabbet 36 in the flat top of the seat 13. The wings 35 are held to the seat by suitable screws 37.

The front U-bar 24 is shown as provided with similar wings 38, which enter a kerf or slot 39 cut into the end of the front member 23, and as held by screws 40 which pass through the front member 23.

The seat 13 is usually of wood and according to the present invention, may have a straight front 41 just protecting the edges of the wings 35.

Upon the front part of the seat 13, according

to the present invention, there is provided a mat **42**, lying within a rabbetted portion **43** of the seat **13**, and curving from each end **44** of the seat in a gradual sweep to about midway of the reach formed by the U-members **17** and **24** and thence extending straightforward, covering the U-members and overlying part of the front member **23**. In the form shown the mat **42** is nearly half an inch thick, and from the edges beginning at each end **44**, there depends a curtain **45** which may be somewhat thinner but is nevertheless preferably thick enough to form a considerable cushion, said curtain **45** extending preferably about as low as the bottom of the U-members **24** and **17**.

The mat has been found satisfactory if made of a rubber composition which resembles sponge rubber in its softness but absorbs almost no moisture. The mat **42** in the form shown includes a central fin **46** lying within the U of the inner U-member **24** and cut away at **47** and **48** to accommodate the long projecting ends of the bolts **25** and **16**, thus holding the mat seat on the U-member and limiting its backward and forward movement.

If desired, the mat may be cemented down to the seat **13** and the front member **23** but it is usually found more satisfactory to hold it in place by grommets **49** at each corner of the seat **13** through which pass screws, and by similar grommet **50** at the rear end of the rabbet **36** and behind the wings **35**.

To enable the same mat or cushion **42** to fit various lengths of the reach **17**, **24**, it is provided with more than one grommet **52** at its front end, three grommets **52** being shown, thus a screw may fit in a single screw hole for all the grommets.

It is found that a child using the seat of the present invention, finds the mat **42** and its curtains **45** comfortably rounding corners **53** where the reach springs from the seat **13**, and at the same time does not strain the child's legs so that the bones in them tend to bend, or the muscles tend to tire.

In the use of baby walkers in the past there has been some criticism on the part of doctors that a wide strip between the child's legs, tends to develop a bowlegged condition when the child is standing erect in walking position. With my new construction, since the soft flexible curtains **45** will flex, distort or compress inwardly, this tendency toward unnatural spreading of the child's legs in the crotch, in the walking position, is overcome. The legs of the child, in walking position, due to the inward flexing of the side edges of the soft curtains **45**, in response to pressure by the inner portions of the child's legs, is substantially the same as if no support was provided by the reach and inwardly compressible curtains.

It is found that a mat of the character described, provides an adequate width for comfort when fitted over a U-member having its maximum width of three quarters of an inch. To prevent the upper part of the U-members from cutting into the rubber, or making too sharp an angle, they are shown as turned over at **55**.

The device is shown with the usual rubber covered buffers **56**, and other parts may be rubber covered such as the rods **32**.

It will be noted that the fin **46** of the mat **42** prevents adjustment of the reach **17**, **24**, unless additional openings **47** and **48** are cut to fit around the new positions of the bolts **16** and **25**.

Having thus described certain embodiments of the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A vehicle having a broad wheel-supported seat and a wheel-supported front, a narrow metal U-bar forming a reach from the seat to the front, and a thick pad covering at least part of the seat and having a tongue lying within the U and which overlies the reach so that a child on the seat sits at least partly on the pad and straddles the pad on the reach.

2. A vehicle having a broad wheel-supported seat and a wheel-supported front, a narrow metal U-bar forming a reach from the seat to the front and including internal projections within the U, and a thick pad covering at least part of the seat and having a tongue with depressions to engage the projections and lying within the U and which overlies the reach so that a child on the seat sits at least partly on the pad and straddles the pad on the reach.

3. A baby walker having a broad wheel supported seating portion and a wheel supported front portion, a relatively rigid bar forming a reach from the seating portion to the front portion, and soft flexible cushioning means covering said reach and having side edges or curtains extending substantially out beyond the side edges of the covered relatively rigid bar, said side edges being distortable and inwardly compressible with the pressure of the inside portions of a child's legs thereagainst.

4. A baby walker having a broad wheel supported seating portion and a wheel supported front portion, a relatively rigid bar forming a reach from the seating portion to the front portion, and soft flexible cushioning means covering said reach and having side edges or curtains extending substantially out beyond the side edges of the covered relatively rigid bar, said side edges being distortable and inwardly compressible with the pressure of the inside portions of a child's legs thereagainst, and interengaging means on said reach bar and flexible cushioning means for maintaining the central portion of said cushioning means in position covering said reach.

5. A baby walker having a broad wheel supported seating portion and a wheel supported front portion, a relatively rigid bar forming a reach from the seating portion to the front portion and flexible rubber pad, extending from the seating portion to said front portion and covering said reach, said pad being substantially wider than said reach and having side portions which are inwardly compressible and distortable with pressure thereagainst of the inner portion of the child's legs in walking position.

6. A baby walker having a broad wheel supported seating portion and a wheel supported front portion, a relatively rigid bar forming a reach from the seating portion to the front portion and flexible rubber pad, extending from the seating portion to said front portion and covering said reach, said pad being substantially wider than said reach and having side portions which are inwardly compressible and distortable with pressure thereagainst of the inner portion of the child's legs in walking position, and means for retaining the flexible rubber pad in position covering the reach bar.

GEORGE B. HANSBURG.