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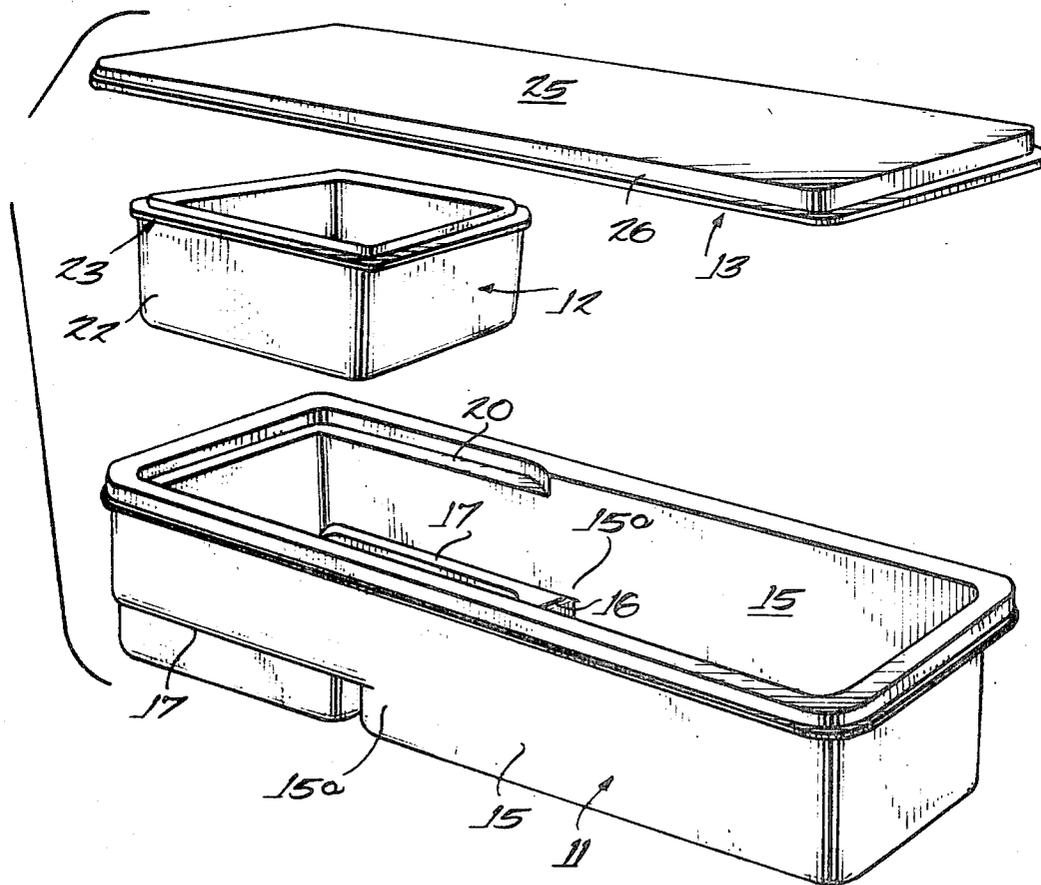
[54] **COMPOSITE PACKAGE**
6 Claims, 11 Drawing Figs.

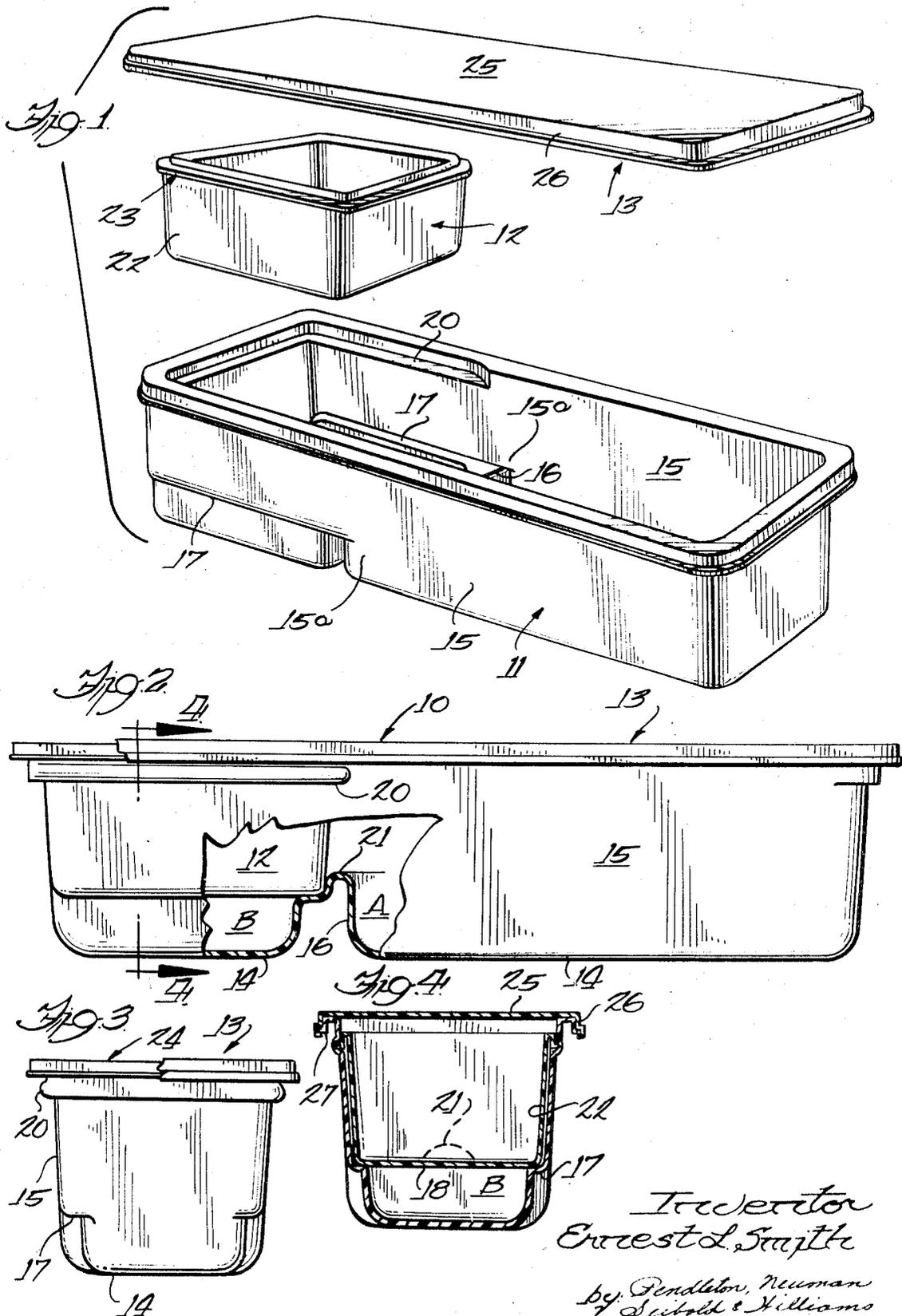
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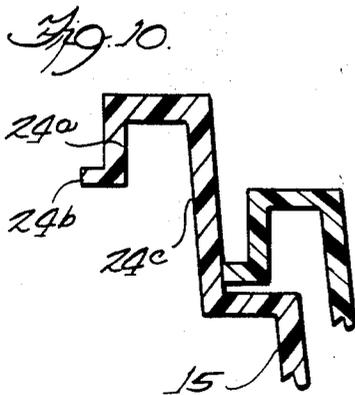
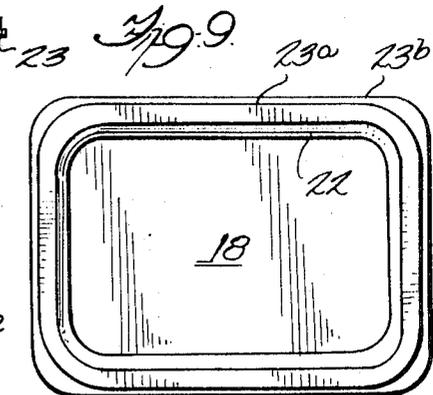
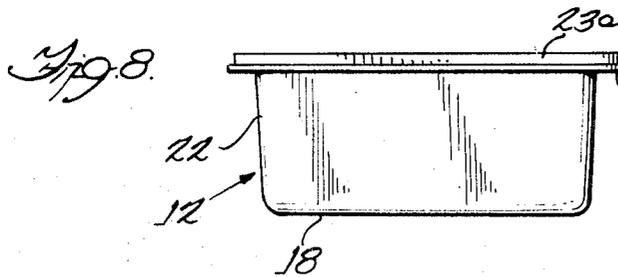
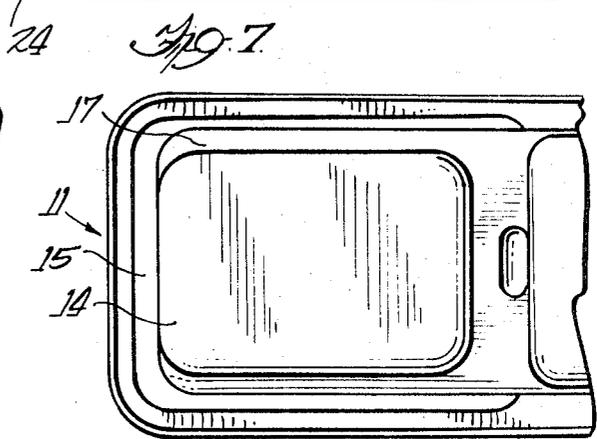
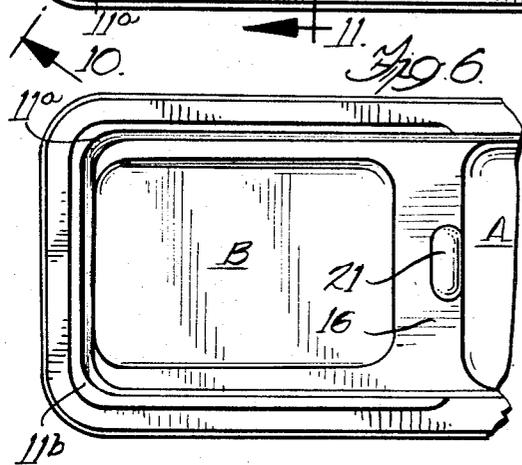
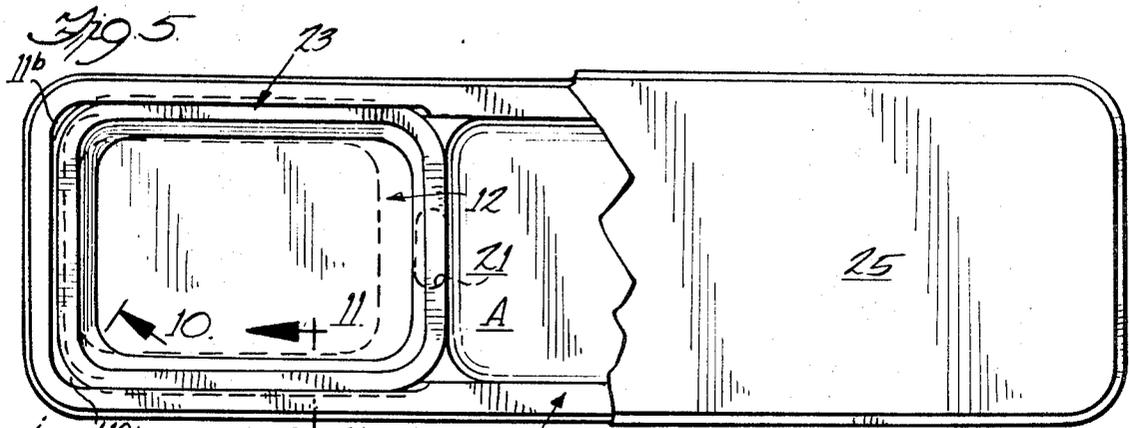
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ABSTRACT: A composite package is provided which includes an outer receptacle and an inner receptacle removably mounted therein. Means are provided on the walls of the outer receptacle which releasably engage complementary means provided on the walls of the inner receptacle whereby the receptacles are retained in a predetermined assembled relation. The bottom of the outer receptacle is provided with a transversely extending ridge which forms said bottom into contiguous compartments. The ridge subtends and supportingly engages the inner receptacle when the latter is in the said predetermined assembled relation.





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COMPOSITE PACKAGE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Often times it is desirable to package together in a single compact unit various types of food products (e.g., cheese spread and crackers), various types of chemical ingredients (e.g., two-part epoxy adhesives), various types of medical supplies (e.g., sterile compresses and ointment), or various other products (e.g., screws and washers).

Packages for this general purpose have heretofore been provided; however, because of certain structural characteristics, they have been beset with one or more of the following shortcomings: (a) the package was awkward to assemble and handle; (b) it was susceptible to pilferage or infestation; (c) it was costly and unattractive; and (d) it was incapable of retaining the accommodated products in a segregated state even when the package was subjected to normal handling.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Thus, it is an object of this invention to provide a composite package which is not beset with any of the aforementioned shortcomings.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a composite package which is inexpensive to produce, is easily loaded, and is versatile in accommodating a variety of products.

It is a still further object of this invention to provide a composite package, the components of which do not deleteriously affect the accommodated products.

Further and additional objects will appear from the description, accompanying drawings and appended claims.

In accordance with one embodiment of this invention, a composite package is provided which includes an outer receptacle and an inner receptacle releasably mounted therein. The outer receptacle has a bottom delimited by upstanding walls. The upper edge portions of the walls delimit an open top. Formed in the bottom of the outer receptacle is a transversely extending ridge which separates said bottom into contiguous compartments. Opposed wall portions of the outer receptacle are provided with means which releasably engage complementary means provided on the walls of the inner receptacle so as to retain the inner receptacle in a predetermined assembled position with respect to the outer receptacle. The inner receptacle, when in its predetermined assembled position, rests upon the ridge formed in the outer receptacle. The outer receptacle is provided with a cover which overlies the inner receptacle.

DESCRIPTION

For a more complete understanding of the invention reference should be made to the drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view taken from above of one form of the improved composite package.

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary front elevational view of the assembled package shown in FIG. 1 and with a portion of the outer receptacle removed so as to reveal the interior thereof.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary left end elevational view of the package shown in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a sectional view taken along line 4-4 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 5 is a top plan view of FIG. 2 with a portion of the cover thereof removed so as to reveal the inner receptacle.

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary enlarged top view of the outer receptacle shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 7 is a bottom view of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is a side elevational view of the inner receptacle shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 9 is a top plan view of the inner receptacle of FIG. 8.

FIGS. 10 and 11 are enlarged fragmentary sectional views taken along lines 10-10 and 11-11, respectively, of FIG. 5.

Referring now to the drawings, one form of the improved composite package 10 is shown. It is to be recognized at the start that the illustrated package 10 is merely a representative embodiment of the inventive concept and the scope of the latter is not to be limited thereto.

Package 10, as illustrated, includes an elongated open top outer receptacle 11, an inner receptacle 12 removably disposed within receptacle 11, and a removable cover or lid 13 which overlies both receptacles 11 and 12 and is secured to the upper end of receptacle 11. If desired, the receptacles may be formed from vinyl polymers and copolymers; acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene polymers; homopolymers and copolymers of styrene; polyethylene, polypropylene; copolymers of ethylene and butene, polybutene, homopolymers and copolymers of 4-methyl-1-butene, and polyamide. The cover 13, if desired, may be formed of any of the aforementioned polymers, or laminates of two or more of said polymers, or laminates of one or more of the said polymers and paper, or a metal foil.

The inner receptacle 12 may, if desired, be provided with a separate cover, not shown. Whether a separate cover is to be utilized will depend upon the types of products accommodated in the package.

The outer receptacle 11 includes a bottom 14, and upwardly extending walls 15 delimiting same. The bottom is provided with a transversely extending ridge 16 which interconnects opposed wall portions 15a. The ridge separates the bottom 14 into contiguous compartments A and B. The wall portions of the outer receptacle 11 adjacent compartment B are offset inwardly so as to form a ledge or shoulder 17. The upper surfaces of the ledges 17 and ridge 16 are generally coplanar and thus, coact to provide a supporting surface for the bottom 18 of the inner receptacle 12 when the latter is in a predetermined assembled position with respect to outer receptacle 11, see FIGS. 2 and 4.

Spaced above the supporting surface of the ledges and ridge and formed in the adjacent wall portions of the outer receptacle 11 are elongated pockets 20 which open toward the interior of the outer receptacle, see FIGS. 1, 4 and 11. The pockets 20 are disposed adjacent the top of the receptacle.

Formed in the top surface of ridge 16 is an upwardly protruding stop or nub 21. The stop is adapted to engage an end of the inner receptacle 12 when the latter is in its assembled position and prevents endwise or lateral movement in one direction of the inner receptacle 12 with respect to the outer receptacle 11.

The inner receptacle 12 is of simple construction and includes the bottom 18 and upwardly extending walls 22 which delimit said bottom. The upper edges of the walls 22 terminate in an outwardly extending flange 23. Flange 23, as seen more clearly in FIGS. 10 and 11, has an inverted substantially U-shape cross-sectional configuration. The lower end of the outer leg 23a of the flange 23 is turned abruptly outwardly so as to form a lip 23b. A similarly shaped flange 24 is formed at the upper edge of the walls 15 forming a part of the outer receptacle 11. Both flanges 23 and 24 reinforce the upper edges of the respective receptacles 12 and 11.

The flange 24 serves as a means of securing the cover 13 in an overlying closing relation with respect to the open top of the outer receptacle 11. The height of the inner receptacle 12 is such that it will not interfere with the securing of the cover 13 on the outer receptacle 11.

Cover 13, as seen in FIGS. 1 and 4, includes a flat top panel 25 suitable for having indicia formed on or a gummed label affixed to the exposed surface thereof. The periphery of panel 25 is delimited by a depending shoulder 26. The interior surfaces of the shoulder 26 engage the exterior surfaces of the leg 24a forming a part of flange 24. The lower edge of shoulder 26 is shaped so as to form an inwardly facing pocket 27 which is adapted to resiliently accommodate a lip 24b formed on flange 24, see FIG. 4. Because of the material of which the cover 13 is formed, the shoulder 26 and pocket 27 of the cover may be flexed so as to facilitate assembly or disassembly of the cover on the receptacle 11. Obviously, other means may be utilized to secure the cover in place, such as tape, adhesives, etc.

It will be noted in FIGS. 10 and 11 that the inner leg 24c of the flange 24 in the vicinity of pocket 20 is offset outwardly a slight amount with respect to the interior surface of the receptacle walls 15. This outward offsetting of the flange leg 24c

facilitates sliding of the lip 23b of the inner receptacle flange 23 downwardly into the interior of the outer receptacle 11 until it snaps into locking engagement with the pocket 20 formed in the receptacle walls 15. As noted in FIG. 10, no pocket 20 is formed at the corners 11a and 11b of the outer receptacle 11.

It will be noted in FIG. 2 that, when the inner receptacle 12 is in its predetermined assembled position, the bottom thereof 18 closes off the compartment B. Thus, if desired, the compartment B may accommodate a product which is different from that disposed in either receptacle 12 or compartment A of the outer receptacle 11. The depth and shape of compartments A and B may vary from that shown and will depend upon the types of products to be accommodated therein. Furthermore, the bottom 14 of the outer receptacle 11 may be provided with more than one transversely extending ridge. The various components of the composite package 10 may be formed of like or different materials and again will depend upon the types of products to be accommodated and the esthetic appearance desired. Furthermore, various other types of locking means may be provided on the corresponding wall portions of the inner and outer receptacles. For example, an outwardly facing pocket might be formed on the walls of the inner receptacle which would resiliently accommodate an inwardly projecting protuberance formed on the interior surfaces of the outer receptacle walls.

Thus, it will be seen that a simple, inexpensive and efficient composite package has been provided which is adapted to accommodate a variety of products and retain the segregated status of the products while the components of the package are in assembled relation.

While several embodiments of the invention have heretofore been described, it is to be understood, of course, that the invention is not limited thereto, but further modifications are contemplated and it is intended by the appended claims to cover such modifications.

I claim:

1. A disposable composite package comprising an open top outer receptacle and an inner receptacle removably mounted therein; said outer receptacle being of unitary construction and including a bottom and wall delimiting same and extend-

ing upwardly therefrom, and said inner receptacle being of unitary construction and including a bottom and wall delimiting same and extending upwardly therefrom, walls of said receptacles being adjacent one another when said receptacles are in assembled relation; protruding means formed on the wall of one receptacle and pocket means formed on the wall of the other receptacle, said protruding means being in inter-fitting relation with pocket means to releasably hold said receptacles in assembled relation, the bottom of said outer receptacle being provided with a transversely extending hollow rib interconnecting opposed wall portions of said outer receptacle, the height of said rib being less than the height of said wall, said rib cooperating with said wall and bottom of said outer receptacle to form contiguous independent compartments, the wall portions of said outer receptacle delimiting one of said compartments being offset inwardly to form an inwardly extending shoulder, said shoulder and rib subtending and supportingly engaging the bottom of said inner receptacle when said receptacles are in said assembled relation.

2. The composite package of claim 1 wherein the pocket means is formed on the wall of said outer receptacle, and the protruding means is formed on the wall of said inner receptacle.

3. The composite package of claim 2 wherein the protruding means of said inner receptacle includes an outwardly extending peripheral flange formed on the upper terminating edges of upwardly extending wall of said inner receptacle, said flange being releasably accommodated in said pocket means.

4. The composite package of claim 1 wherein the top of said rib is provided with an upwardly projecting stop which engages the exterior of said inner receptacle and retains the latter in overlying relation with respect to one of said compartments when said inner and outer receptacles are in assembled relation.

5. The composite package of claim 1 wherein the top of said inner receptacle is disposed beneath the top of said outer receptacle, and said package includes a cover removably mounted on the top of said outer receptacle and overlying said inner and outer receptacles.

6. The composite package of claim 1 wherein said outer receptacle is formed of a semiflexible plastic material.

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