

[54] KEY HOLDER

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[51] Int. Cl. A47g 29/10

[58] Field of Search 70/456, 457, 459; 150/40; 24/3 K

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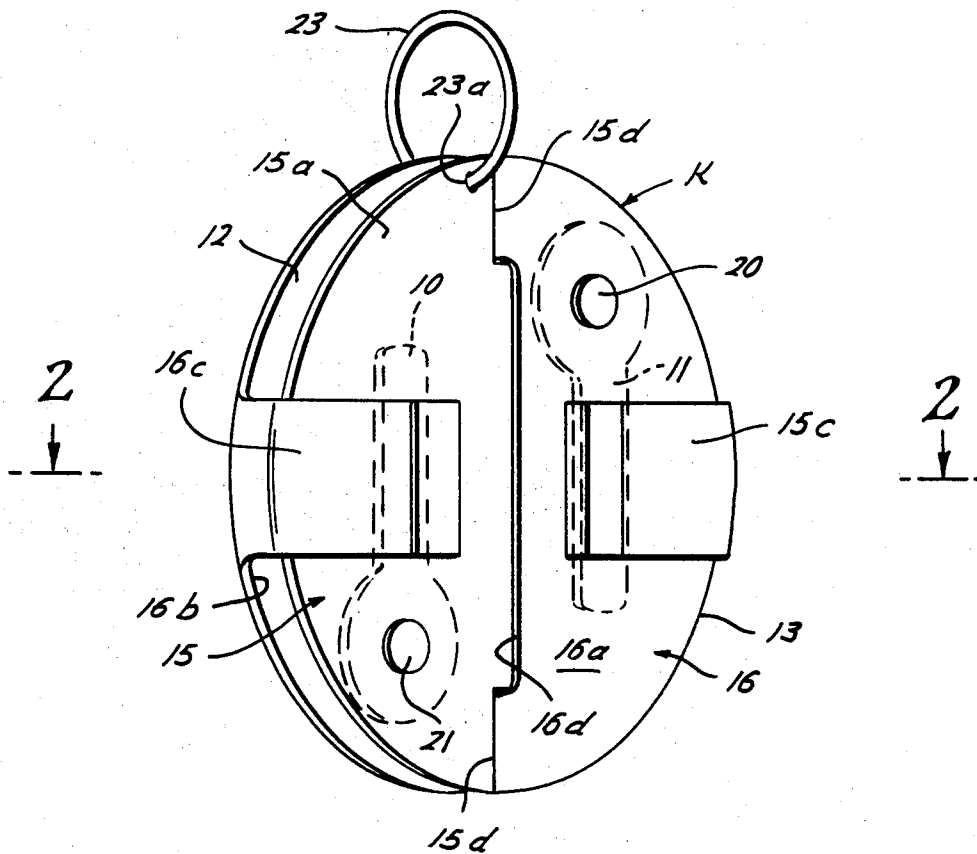
Primary Examiner—Robert L. Wolfe

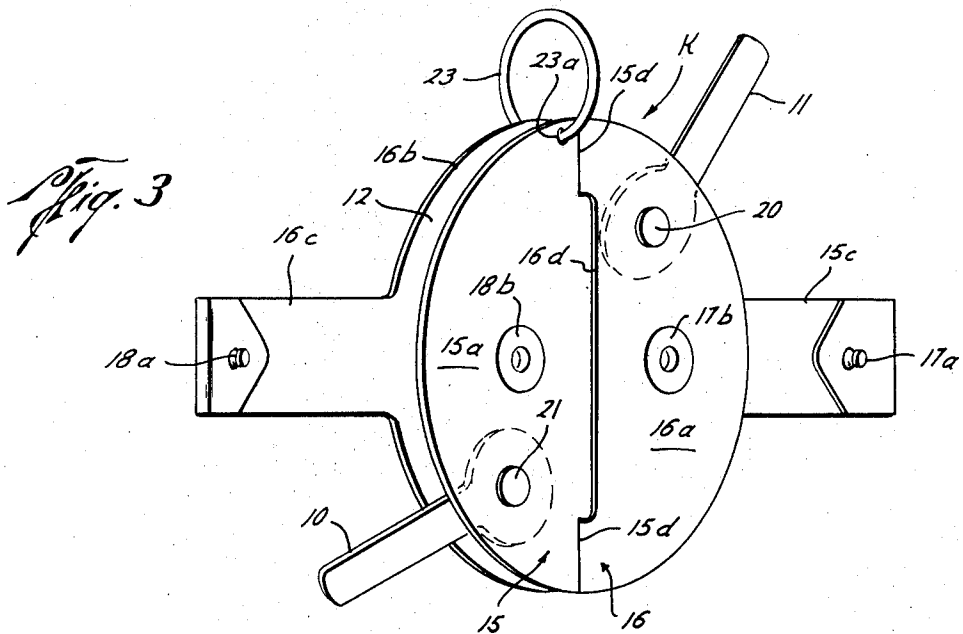
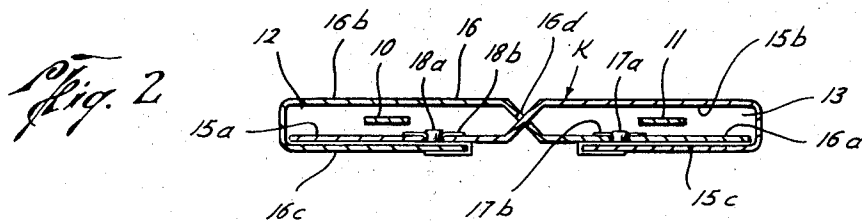
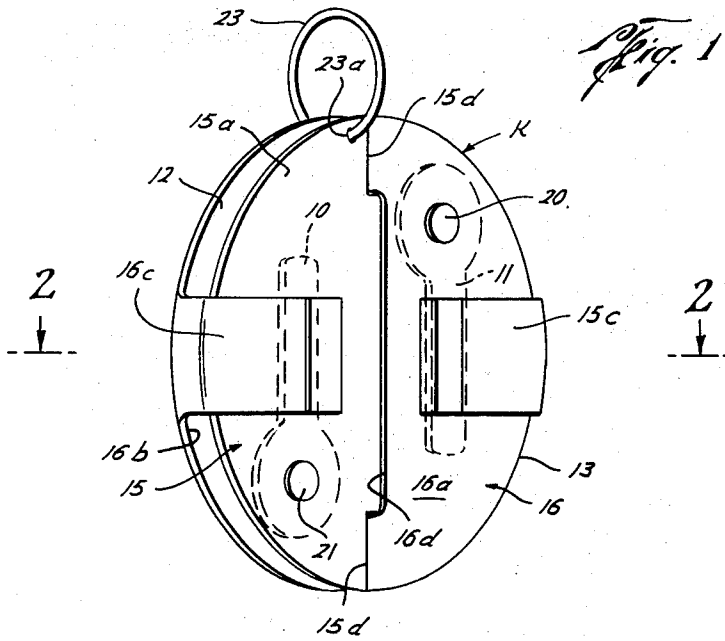
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Pravel, Wilson & Matthews

[57] ABSTRACT

A multi-compartment key holder including a plurality of sheets of flexible material that cooperate to form first and second key holding compartments, a key holder mounted in each compartment; and, connecting means connecting the compartments together to form a multi-compartment key holder that is easily and conveniently confined to a pocket, purse or the like. In one aspect of the invention, releasable means allow the first and second compartments to be released from connection to each other to provide separate key holding units.

6 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures





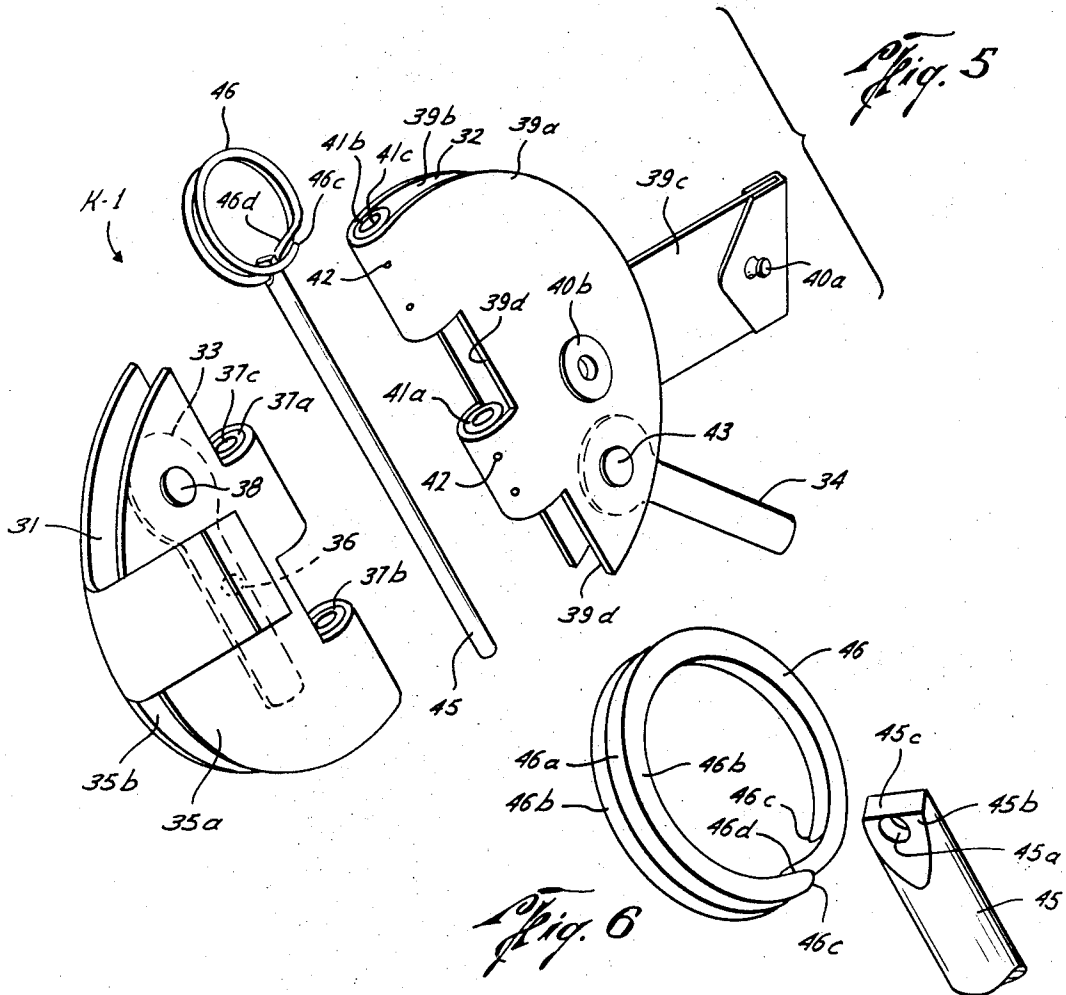
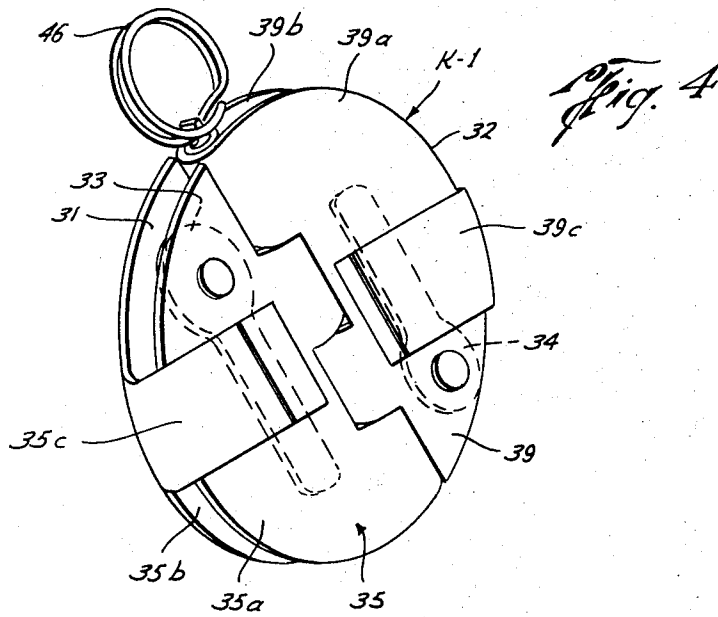
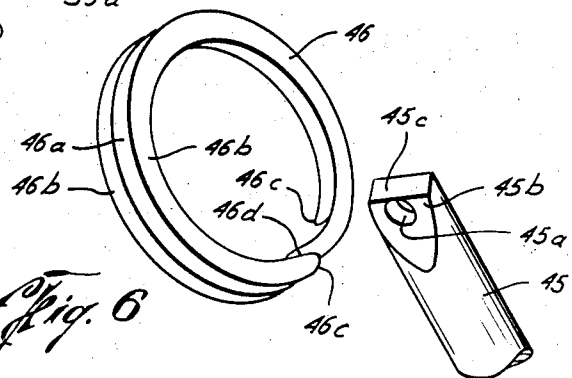


Fig. 6



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KEY HOLDER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The field of this invention is key holders.

The inconvenience of carrying a large number of keys in almost any known key holder is well known. When not in use, the keys and holder are placed in a confined area such as a pocket, where the bulkiness of the keys and holder serves as a source of continual annoyance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The disadvantages and inconveniences of prior key holders is substantially overcome by providing a multi-compartment key holder including a plurality of sheets of flexible material formed into first and second key holding compartments. A key holding pin is mounted in each of the compartments and flexible connecting means are provided for connecting the compartments together to form a multi-compartment key holder that is easily and conveniently confined to a pocket, purse or the like.

In another aspect of this invention, means are provided for separating the first and second compartments from connection such that each key holding compartment can be used separately. In one embodiment of this invention, the separating means is a releasable pin that interconnects the separable compartments in such a manner that the pin may be released from such connection thereby freeing the key holding compartments for separate use.

And, in another aspect of this invention, a coiled outer key ring is mounted onto the releasable pin in such a manner that the pin may be used to expand the coils of the outer ring in order to facilitate placement and removal of a key from the coiled key ring.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a multi-compartment key holder of one embodiment of this invention;

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line 2—2 of FIG. 1 further illustrating the multi-compartment key holder;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the multi-compartment key holder illustrating use of the keys mounted in the key holder;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the multi-compartment key holder in which the compartments are separable for independent use;

FIG. 5 is an assembly view of the separable multi-compartment key holder of FIG. 4 and,

FIG. 6 is a perspective view illustrating the connection between an outer coiled key ring and the releasable pin used to releasably connect the compartments of the key holder of FIGS. 4 and 5.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the drawings, the letter K generally designates a multi-compartment key holder for conveniently carrying keys such as 10 and 11 in compartments 12 and 13, respectively. In the embodiment of this invention illustrated in the drawings, the general shape of the key holder K is circular; however, it should be understood that the key holder K may be of any particular shape or configuration such as elliptical or rect-

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angular and yet be within the scope of this invention.

A generally circular sheet of flexible material designated as 15 basically forms side 15a of compartment 12 and side 15b of compartment 13. Another sheet 16 of flexible material, which is generally circular in shape, is provided for forming side 16a of the compartment 13 and side 16b of compartment 12. Thus the generally circular sheets 15 and 16 of flexible material cooperate to provide sides 16a and 15b of compartment 13 and sides 15a and 16b of compartment 12.

The compartment side 15b of the flexible sheet 15 includes a tab portion 15c having mounted thereon a male snap member 17a. A female snap member 17b is mounted on side 16a of the compartment 13 in position to receive the male snap member 17 so that the compartment 13 may be open and closed as desired.

In a similar manner, side 16b formed by the flexible sheet 16 includes a tab portion 16c having mounted thereon a male snap member 18a. A female snap member 18b is mounted with side 15a in position to receive the male snap member 18a so that compartment 12 can be opened and closed as desired.

The keys 11 are held in the confined position illustrated in FIG. 1 when the compartment 13 is closed by the fastening together of elements 17a and 17b. In a similar manner, the keys 10 are confined within the compartment 12 in the position illustrated in FIG. 1 when tab 16c is folded over side 15a and fastening element 18a and 18b are joined.

The substantially circular flexible sheets 15 and 16 are interconnected such that the key holding compartments 12 and 13 are flexible with respect to each other. An elongated opening 16d is provided at substantially the center of the circular sheet 16 in order to receive the substantially circular sheet 15. The sheet 15 has outer slots 15d cut therein at substantially the center of the sheet such that the slots fit about the flexible sheet 16a in the vicinity of the opening 16d so that the sheets 15 and 16 flexibly connected. The utilization of two sheets 15 and 16 of flexible material and the providing of a flexible connection therebetween to form the compartments 12 and 13 without additional hardware helps to maintain the manufacturing cost of the key holder K at a minimum.

A key holding pin assembly 20 is removably mounted in the sides 15b and 16a of the compartment 13 in order to receive and contain the keys 11. The key holding assembly 20 is of conventional construction and includes male and female members which are threadedly connected in such a manner that the members can be temporarily disconnected so that keys can be removed or placed thereon as desired. The position of the key holder pin assembly 20 with respect to the sides 15b and 16a of the compartment 13 is such that the keys 11 can be maintained totally within the compartment 13 as illustrated in phantom lines in FIG. 1 or, one or more of the keys 11 can be moved to the exposed position of FIG. 3 for use. A key holding pin assembly 21 is mounted in the sides 15a and 16b of the compartment 12 to contain keys 10 in either the confined position illustrated in phantom lines in FIG. 1 or in the position for use illustrated in FIG. 3.

An outer coiled ring 23 extends through openings such as 23a in the sides 15a and 16b of the compartment 12 so that one or more keys can be placed upon the outer ring in a continuously exposed position for

convenience in the use of those keys which are used quite often.

In the use of the key holder K of the embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 1 - 3 of this invention, the user may mount keys in compartment 12 that are generally used for one particular purpose such as office keys and other keys in compartment 13 which are used for another purpose such as house keys. The sides such as 15a and 16d of compartment 12 can be color-coded or otherwise labeled for ease in identification of the set of keys confined and housed in the compartment 12. The key holder K of this invention thus provides the user with a great deal of convenience in the carrying of a large number of keys. Further, the key holder K is of such structure that the keys 10 and 11 in the compartments 12 and 13, respectively, are maintained quite flat so that the entire key holder K is not bulky and may be comfortably carried within the pockets of pants, in small purses or in other such confined areas. The confining of the keys 10 and 11 to the compartments 12 and 13, respectively, also prevents the sharp edges of the keys from wearing through clothes.

Referring to FIGS. 4 - 6, the separable key holder of another embodiment of this invention is generally designated as K - 1. The separable key holder K - 1 includes key holding compartments 31 and 32 for housing keys 33 and 34, respectively. A single piece of flexible material 35 generally in the shape of a circle is folded to provide sides 35a and 35b for the compartment 31. The side 35b includes a tab 35c having mounted thereon a fastening means 36 (which is identical to the fastening elements 18a and 18b) for fastening the tab to side 35a of the compartment 31. The flexible sheet 35 is folded about the polyethylene bushings 37a and 37b which are attached thereto by means of rivets (not shown) or other suitable means. A key holding pin assembly 38 is mounted with the sides 35a and 35b of the compartment 31 to contain the keys 33 therein.

The key holding compartment 32 is formed by a generally circular piece 39 of flexible material that is folded to provide the semi-circular compartment 32 having sides 39a and 39b. The side 39b includes a tab portion 39c having a male snap member 40a attached at the end thereof. A female snap member 40b is attached or mounted with the side 39a such that the compartment 32 can be closed by the fastening of the elements 40a and 40b. Polyethylene bushings 41a and 41b are attached to the flexible material 39 in the folded area by means of rivets 42 or other suitable means. A key holding pin assembly 43 is attached to the sides 39a and 39b in order to contain keys 34 within the compartment 32.

The bushings 37a and 37b of compartment 31 are positioned to fit within recesses 39d in the compartment 32 in such a manner that the bushings 37a and 37b may be aligned with the bushings 41a and 41b. With the bushings 37a, 37b, 41a, and 41b aligned, a releasable pin 45 is insertable therein for flexibly and pivotally connecting the two compartments 31 and 32. The size of the openings such as 37c in the bushings such as 37a is such as to allow the bushings to frictionally engage the inserted releasable pin 45 until it is pulled therefrom by a user. The frictional engagement and the bushing with the pin 45 is not, however, so tight that the releasable pin 45 cannot be easily pulled therefrom such that the key holding compartments 31 and 32 are easily separable for independent usage.

An outer coiled key ring 46 of conventional construction is mounted onto the releasable pin 45 through hole 45a therein. The outer key ring 46 may be described as being comprised of an intermediate coil 46a and outer coils 46b. The ends 46c of the ring 46 are tapered to normally receive a key which is placed onto the ring 46 by a user manipulating the key between one of the outer coils 46b and the middle coil 46a and sliding the key therebetween until it is mounted with the ring in a conventional manner. The size of the hole 45a and the tapering of end 45b of the releasable pin combine to substantially anchor the tapered end 45a at the bent portion 46d of the ring between the ends 46c. Whenever it is desired to place a key onto the outer ring 46, the releasable pin 45 is manipulated such that the camming surface 45c allows the pin to be inserted between an end 46c of outer coil 46b and the middle coil 46a to expand and hold apart the outer and middle coils so that a key can be more easily placed on the ring 46.

In the use of the multi-compartment key holder K-1, the user may place keys for use in different locations in the separate compartments 31 and 32, the keys that are continually used such as car keys may be placed upon ring 46. The separable feature of the compartments 31 and 32 allows the user to carry only one compartment such as 31 (instead of the entire key holder K-1) if the only keys being used contained in the compartment 31. For example, a user may be required to leave his car keys with a parking attendant while wanting to use office keys during the time of parking. In this situation, the car keys, which may be in compartment 31, are left with the car while the office keys in compartment 32 can be taken along with the user simply by pulling the releasable pin 45.

The foregoing disclosure and description of the invention are illustrative and explanatory thereof, and various changes in the size, shape and materials as well as in the details of the illustrated construction may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention. For example, the flexible sheets or pieces of material disclosed herein as forming the sides of the various compartments of the multi-compartment key holders K and K-1 may be leather, leatherette or any other plastic or flexible material that is suitable for such use. The number of compartments can be varied within the scope of this invention as well as the shape or configuration of the key holders K or K-1 themselves. The bushings may be any material other than polyethylene if such material is suitable for frictionally engaging the releasable pin 45 while allowing the pin to be removed easily and conveniently.

I claim:

1. A multi-compartment key holder, comprising:
 - first and second sheets of flexible material cooperating to form first and second compartments key holding compartments;
 - key holding means mounted in said first and second compartments for confining keys within said compartments and for exposing keys for use;
 - first closing means mounted with said first compartment and second closing means mounted with said second compartment for individually closing each of said compartments;
 - connection means connecting said first and second compartments together to form said first and second key-holding compartments;

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said first sheet of flexible material forming a side of said first and second compartments and said second sheet of flexible material forming another side of said first and second compartments;

said first closing means for said first compartment including a tab of flexible material integrally connected with said second sheet of flexible material; and

said second closing means for said second compartment including a tab of flexible material integrally connected with said first sheet of flexible material whereby a multi-compartment key-holder is provided with individual access to either of said compartments as desired.

2. The structure set forth in claim 1, wherein said connection means includes: flexible connection means for flexibly connecting said first and second compartments.

3. The structure set forth in claim 1, including: an outer key ring mounted with said first compartment to mount a key in a continually exposed position.

4. The structure set forth in claim 1, including: said first and second closing means for each of said first and second compartments being distinctive in appearance for ease in identification of each of said

compartments.

5. The structure set forth in claim 1, including: said first and second closing means for each of said first and second compartments being color-coded for ease in identification of each of said compartments.

6. A multi-compartment key holder, comprising: a plurality of sheets of flexible material cooperating to form first and second compartments for receiving keys;

key holding means mounted in said first and second compartments for confining keys within said compartments and for exposing keys for use;

first closing means mounted with said first compartment and second closing means mounted with said second compartment for individually closing each of said compartments; and

flexible connection means for connecting said first and second compartments together to form a multi-compartment key holder that is easily and conveniently confined to a pocket, purse of the like, said flexible connection means including an opening in said second sheet of material through which said first sheet of material extends.

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