Dec. 27, 1966 D. B. RUBENSTEIN 3,294,137

KEY CASE

Filed Feb. 4, 1964

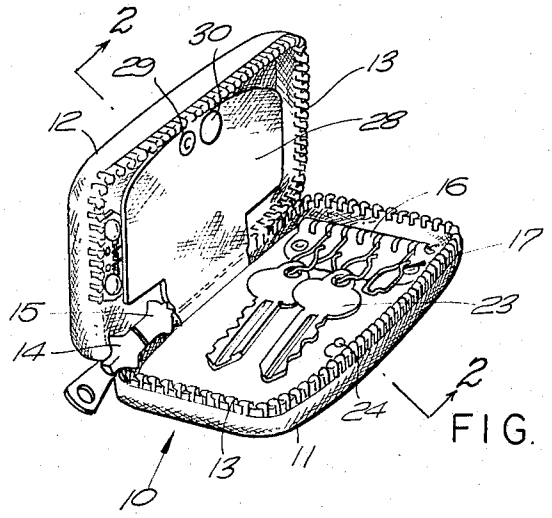


FIG. 1

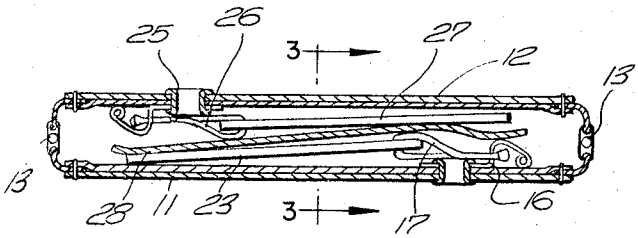


FIG. 2

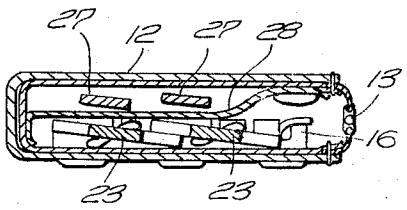


FIG. 3

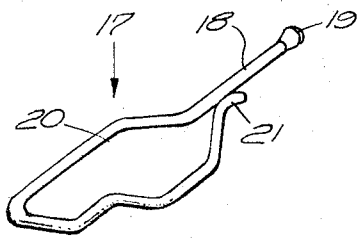


FIG. 4

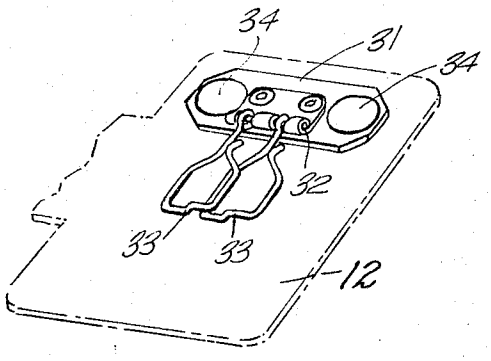


FIG. 5

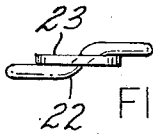


FIG. 4A

INVENTOR.
DAVID B. RUBENSTEIN
BY
Max Schwartz
ATTORNEY

United States Patent Office

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KEY CASE

David B. Rubenstein, 10 Dorset Road,
Pawtucket, R.I. 02860

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My present invention relates to a key case and a novel method of maintaining the keys therein.

The principal object of the present invention is to provide a key case which will hold a plurality of keys in a flat plane without undue bulkiness.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a key case in which the keys may be divided so that only those keys in particular use may be exposed.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a key case having a separate compartment for either lesser used keys or for removable keys.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a key case in which a plurality of keys are so arranged that they will lie flat without bulging the case.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a key case having a hook construction which tends to hold the keys in flat position.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a novel key case having a double slide mechanism which permits the keys to be produced in upright position regardless of the position of the case.

A further object of the present invention is to provide a novel key case having the above advantages which is simple in construction and easy and economical to manufacture and assemble.

With the above and other objects and advantageous features in view my invention consists of a novel arrangement of parts more fully disclosed in the detailed description following in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and more particularly defined in the appended claims.

In the drawings,

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a key case embodying my present invention with one side of the case in open position.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged longitudinal section of the key case substantially on line 2—2 of FIG. 1, but with the case in closed and fastened condition.

FIG. 3 is a transverse section taken on line 3—3 of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of one of the key hooks.

FIG. 4A is an end view of one of the hooks showing the position of a key thereon.

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary perspective view of one side of the key case showing an alternative construction.

The average householder is forced to carry a considerable number of keys. Beside keys to the front and rear doors of the house and possibly to an office, the householder must carry keys to the car, keys to the garage, keys to his desk and numerous other keys. As a result the average small key case is usually bulging at the seams. The standard size small key case is provided with six or seven hooks and the conventional method is to hang more than one key on a particular hook in order to have the case hold all the keys. However, the applicant has found that while the householder finds it necessary to carry all these keys, only a particular group of these keys are in frequent use, for example, the keys to the front door, office door, automobile, garage, etc. The present invention is designed to provide a key case, no larger than the standard key case construction but which permits the user to divide the keys into two groups, one frequently used and one less frequently used, to separate these groups into separate accessible positions, and to provide a construction which will permit the maximum number of keys to be held with a minimum amount of bulging.

Referring more in detail to the drawings illustrating my invention, I provide a conventional type of key case **10** which comprises two sections of suitable material **11** and **12** integrally hinged to each other. The material of the case is preferably a soft pliable material such as leather or plastic. The contiguous edges of the sections **11** and **12** are provided with suitable teeth **13** of a standard slide fastener which can be closed by means of the conventional slides **14** and **15**. Viewing FIG. 1, when the slide **14** is slipped around the edge of the sections **11** and **12**, the teeth **13** will be in closed position. In this position the slides **14** and **15** will be separated by the hinged portion of the case. Now whichever end of the closed case is turned upwardly, a slide is positioned in the upper position whether it is **14** or **15** and permits the user to move the slide downwardly to open the case and upwardly to close it. The advantages of such a construction will be hereinafter described.

Now referring to FIG. 1, a conventional elongated slotted holding member **16** is riveted or otherwise mounted to one end of the section **11** and is designed to hold the key hooks **17** in a conventional manner. In order to allow the keys to lie flat, each key hook **17** is constructed as shown in the enlarged view in FIG. 4. It is contemplated that only a single key be positioned on each hook and therefore the hooks can be made of slightly thinner material than that normally used. Each hook comprises a shank **18** having an enlarged head **19** for positioning in the slots of the member **16**. The other end of the shank **18** is formed into a loop **20** terminating in a spring finger **21** for snapping the keys into the hooks. However, as can be seen in FIG. 4, the lower end of the loop is in a straight instead of a rounded line, and is provided with a horizontal twist **22** which allows both the key and the hook to lie flat and to occupy a minimum of space (see FIG. 4A). This contributes to the thinness of the key case. The keys **23** are positioned on the hooks **17** as illustrated in FIG. 1 and lie flat in overlapping relation in the usual manner. At a point midway along the outer edge of the portion **11**, I provide a male snap member **24** for purposes hereinafter to be described.

FIGS. 2 and 3 illustrate the key case shown in FIG. 1 in closed position. As can be seen in FIG. 2, the portion **12** is also provided with a slotted member **25** holding key hooks **26** and keys **27**. However, as can be seen in FIG. 2, the hooks **26** and the member **25** are on the opposite end from that in the member **11** so that in closed position they are on opposite ends of the key case. With such a construction the keys extend in opposite directions from each set of hooks. Since the heaviest part of the metal is at the point where the hooks are held in the members **16**, by separating each set of members **16** and **25**, the key case can be closed flat as shown in FIG. 2 without bulging. Furthermore with such a construction double the amount of keys can be held in the case without excessive bulging. I now provide a central wall portion **28** mounted in the hinged portion between the members **11** and **12** and acting as a separating wall between the two halves. The central wall portion is provided at its outer edge with a pair of female snap fastening elements **29** and **30** facing in opposite directions. The element **29** is adapted to snap on to the male element **24** as shown in FIG. 1, whereas the element **30** is adapted to snap over a similar male element on the member **12**. In the position shown in FIG. 1, the keys on the portion **11** are in exposed position whereas the keys in the portion **12** are retained in upside down position by the central member **28** snapped in place. If the central member **28** were not there, then the keys in the member **12** would fall downwardly and hang outside of the key case.

In use it is contemplated that the two slide elements **14** and **15** would be colored differently for quick identification. When the slide element **14** is at the top, it is pulled downwardly to open the case into the position shown in FIG. 1. It is contemplated that for example in this position the keys **23** are those which would be most used. However, if it is desired to use the keys **27**, then the case is held with the slide fastener **15** in uppermost position and when this is pulled downwardly the case will open with the keys **27** exposed and with the central wall portion snapped over the keys **23**. The above construction thus provides a thin hook with the proper curvature to allow the keys to lie flat. The double opposed rows of keys permits the use of half the keys and provides a closure flap over the unused keys. The use of a pair of zipper slides allows the keys from either side to be opened in upright position with the color of the slides acting as identification of each group.

If desired two separate flap members may be provided instead of the single central member **28**. Thus each individual set of keys will have its own closure flap. These may be of transparent plastic material. Furthermore as an alternative construction, the keys in the portion **12** may be hung on the type of member shown in FIG. 5. In this form I provide a strip of leather, plastic or other suitable material **31** having a central portion **32** holding a plurality of key hooks **33**. In this form illustrated there are two key hooks shown but the central portion may be provided with three or more if desired. Each end of the strip **31** is provided with a female snap fastener member **34** adapted to snap over male fastener members, not shown, mounted in the portion **12**. With this construction, a set of car and garage keys can be put on the removable portion **31** and retained separately from the regular keys. If the user wishes to loan the car keys to some other person, it is merely necessary to open the other section of the key case and snap off the strip **31** carrying the car keys. They can then be returned to position later on. It is contemplated that these are for the extra car keys. Thus, the extra set of keys in the second section held in closed position by the flap **28** may either be identical to the first section as illustrated in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, or may be a removable set as illustrated in FIG. 5.

I have thus provided a key case construction which permits the mounting of a large number of keys without undue bulging of the key case. Also, the construction of the present invention permits a separation between the keys that are used most frequently and the keys that are not used too frequently so that the user need not grope among large quantities of keys for the particular key he needs. Other advantages of the present invention will be readily apparent to a person skilled in the art.

I claim:

1. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other.

2. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said slide fastener having a pair of slides operating from opposite ends of said fastener.

3. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said key suspension means including swivel hooks having straight ends, said ends being offset at the central portion permitting the keys to lie flat.

4. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other.

5. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, one of said key suspending means being releasably mounted in said case.

6. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, said slide fastener having a pair of slides operating from opposite ends of said fastener.

7. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of either of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, one of said key suspending means being releasably mounted in said case, said slide fastener having a pair of slides operating from opposite ends of said fastener.

8. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the

free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, said wall portion comprising a pair of rectangular members, one for each key section.

9. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, one of said key suspending means being releasably mounted in said case, said wall portion comprising a pair of rectangular members, one for each key section.

10. A key case comprising a pair of rectangular members in hinged relation to each other, means for releasably locking said members in edge to edge relation to close said case, a wall portion hingedly mounted at said case hinge and extending between said members, the free edge of said wall portion being adapted to lock adjacent the free edge of said members, and means for suspending a plurality of keys from each of said members, said members being integrally hinged to each other and

said members being locked in edge to edge relation by a continuous slide fastener, said key suspending means being at opposite ends of said case to suspend said keys toward each other, said slide fastener having a pair of slides operating from opposite ends of said fastener, said wall portion comprising a pair of rectangular members, one for each key section.

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FRANKLIN T. GARRETT, *Primary Examiner.*

JOSEPH R. LECLAIR, *Examiner.*

M. L. MINSK, *Assistant Examiner.*