United States Patent

Brocato

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[54] DISH TRAY

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[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**A47g 23/06**

[58] **Field of Search** .....224/48 R; 211/126; 206/72; 220/23.8, 94 A

[56] **References Cited**

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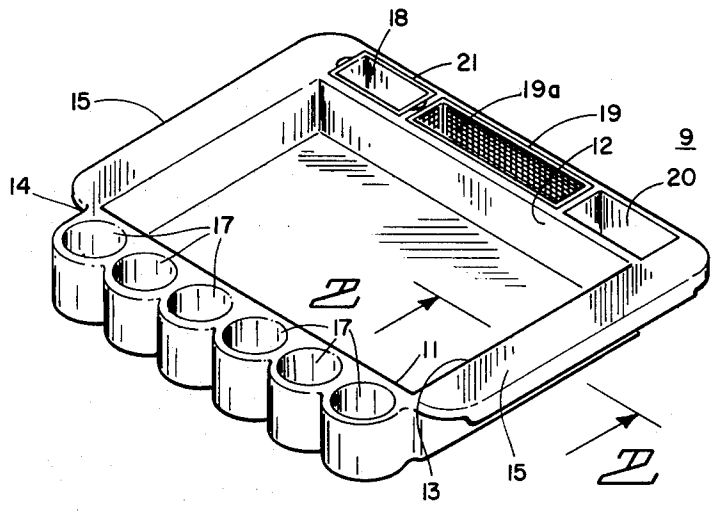
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

An improved flat bottom compartmentalized tray for holding and carrying dishes, food products, and eating accessories wherein the compartments are arranged along the sides of the tray.

3 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



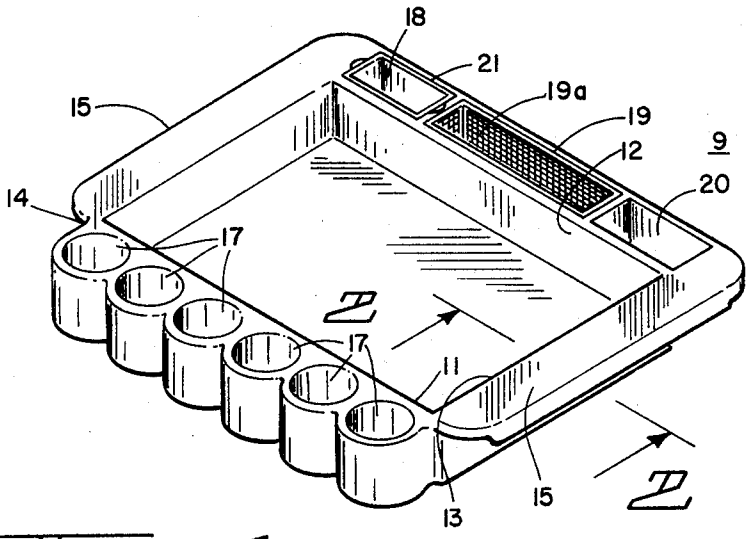


Fig 1

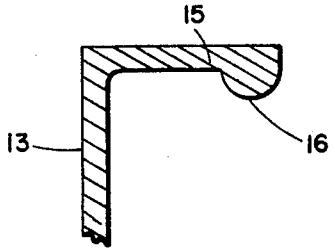
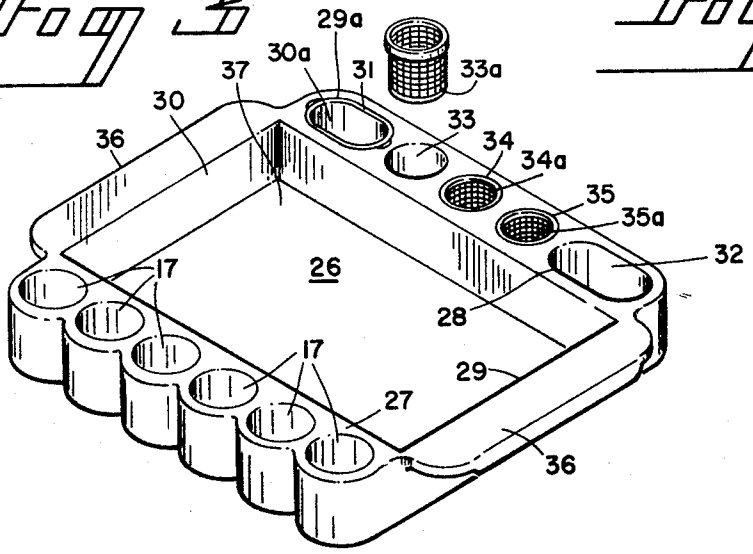


Fig 2

Fig 3



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DISH TRAY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to shallow trays and particularly to compartmetalized trays for carrying dishes food products, and eating accessories wherein certain size compartments for given items are arranged along the sides of the tray.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the invention claimed an improved compartmetalized tray for carrying dishes, food products, and eating accessories is provided which eliminates the mixing of silverware with soiled paper napkins.

It is, therefore, one object of this invention to provide an improved dish tray.

Another object of this invention is to provide an improved compartmetalized tray for dishes, food products, and eating accessories wherein the compartments are arranged along the sides of the tray.

A further object of this invention is to provide an improved shallow tray having compartmetalized portions of it arranged along is sides in such a manner as to balance the weight of the tray when loaded about its handles.

Further objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent as the following description proceeds and the features of novelty which characterizes this invention will be pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed to and forming part of this specification.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The present invention may be more readily described by reference to the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a tray for carrying dishes, food products, and related dining accessories and embodying the invention;

FIG. 2 is a cross sectional view of FIG. 1 taken along the line 2— 2; and

FIG. 3 is a modification of the structure shown in FIGS. 1 and 2.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring more particularly to the drawing by characters of reference, FIGS. 1 and 2 disclose a tray 9 having a flat bottom 10, side members 11 and 12 and ends 13 and 14 defining a shallow open receptacle for carrying dishes. Each end of the tray is provided with an outwardly extending handle 15 which may have a downwardly extending lip 16 which forms a finger gripping surface. Instead of the lip 16 each handle may be provided with a finger gripping groove in the under surface thereof.

As shown in FIG. 1, tray 10 is provided with a plurality of openings 17 formed to extend into the top surface of side member 11 of the tray to hold, for example, glasses. These openings extend to the bottom 10 of the tray but preferably not through side member 11 so as to hold glasses of smaller diameter than the diameter of the openings.

The opposite side member 12 is provided with openings 18, 19 and 20 extending to but not through bottom 10 and each having a different rectangular cross sectional configuration. These openings may be provided with containers (only two of which are shown) of the same configuration but of slightly smaller size. Each container has a rim for fitting over the edge of the opening, as shown.

As noted in FIG. 1 handles 15 are formed to extend around the ends of side member 12.

Tray 10 may be formed of any suitable material, for example, metal, plastic or wood stamped, molded or formed to comprise one integrated piece except for the individual trays fitted into the rectangular openings.

It should be noted that openings 17 may be used for holding glasses while opening 18 may be used for holding a container

21 for butter, margerine, jelly or any other similar food product than might be served in individual small servings. The larger rectangular opening 19 may hold with or without a container 19*a* silverware, while opening 20 may be used for storing soiled paper or cloth napkins. Although only two rectangular openings are shown with containers in them, it should be understood that one or more openings may be used with corresponding containers.

FIG. 3 shows a modification of the tray structure shown in FIG. 1 wherein tray 25 comprises an open receptacle having a bottom 26, side members 27 and 28 and ends 29 and 30. Side member 27 is provided with the same type of openings 17 shown in FIG. 1. The other side member is provided with an elongated round ended opening 29a at one end having a container 30*a* loosely fitted into it and held in place by a rim 31 on the edge of the container. At the opposite end of the tray is provided another elongated round ended opening 32 with a plurality of cylindrical openings 33, 34 and 35 arranged in between openings 30 and 32. As in tray 10 all of the openings are closed at the bottom of the tray to form pockets for receiving the items intended to be carried therein.

As noted in FIG. 3, openings 33, 34 and 35 may be arranged to receive containers 33*a*, 34*a* and 35*a* for individually receiving, for example, knives, forks and spoons. These containers may be removed from the tray and directly placed into a dish washer.

In FIG. 3 handles 36 are arranged to extend over the ends of dish receptacle 37 only and with the other parts of the tray forming a single integrated tray structure.

It should be noted that the present method of piling soiled napkins, dishes, glasses and unused food products in one heap on a tray is completely unsatisfactory since silverware is thrown away with the paper napkins, butter and unused food products are destroyed by this stacking arrangement and dishes are many times broken or cracked. With the disclosed tray each item has its particular storage spot and may be safely carried and removed from the tray without loss or damage.

Although but two embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated and described, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention or from the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A tray for carrying soiled dishes, food remains and eating utensils comprising:
   - a flat bottom, a pair of side members, and a pair of ends all integrally formed to define a shallow open receptacle,
   - each end of said tray being provided with a handle extending outwardly from the ends of said tray in the same plane as the tops of the edges defining the open receptacle,
   - one of said side members defining a plurality of cylindrical openings arranged in a row along the outside of the receptacle for receiving glasses, said openings being closed at the plane of said bottom of said receptacle,
   - the other of said members defining a plurality of openings having rectangular cross sectional configurations, each of said openings being closed at the plane of said bottom of said receptacle,
   - said openings of rectangular cross sectional configuration being provided for receiving individually, food remains, silverware and napkins, and
   - at least one removable container having a cross sectional configuration like one of said openings provided in said other of members, said container having a turned over edge for overlying the edge of said one of said openings.

2. The tray set forth in claim 1 wherein at least some of said plurality of openings in said other side member are elongated with rounded ends.

3. The tray set forth in claim 2 wherein some of said plurality of opening in said other side member are circular in cross sectional configuration.

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