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(54) **LABELLED SPONGES**

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(57)

**ABSTRACT**

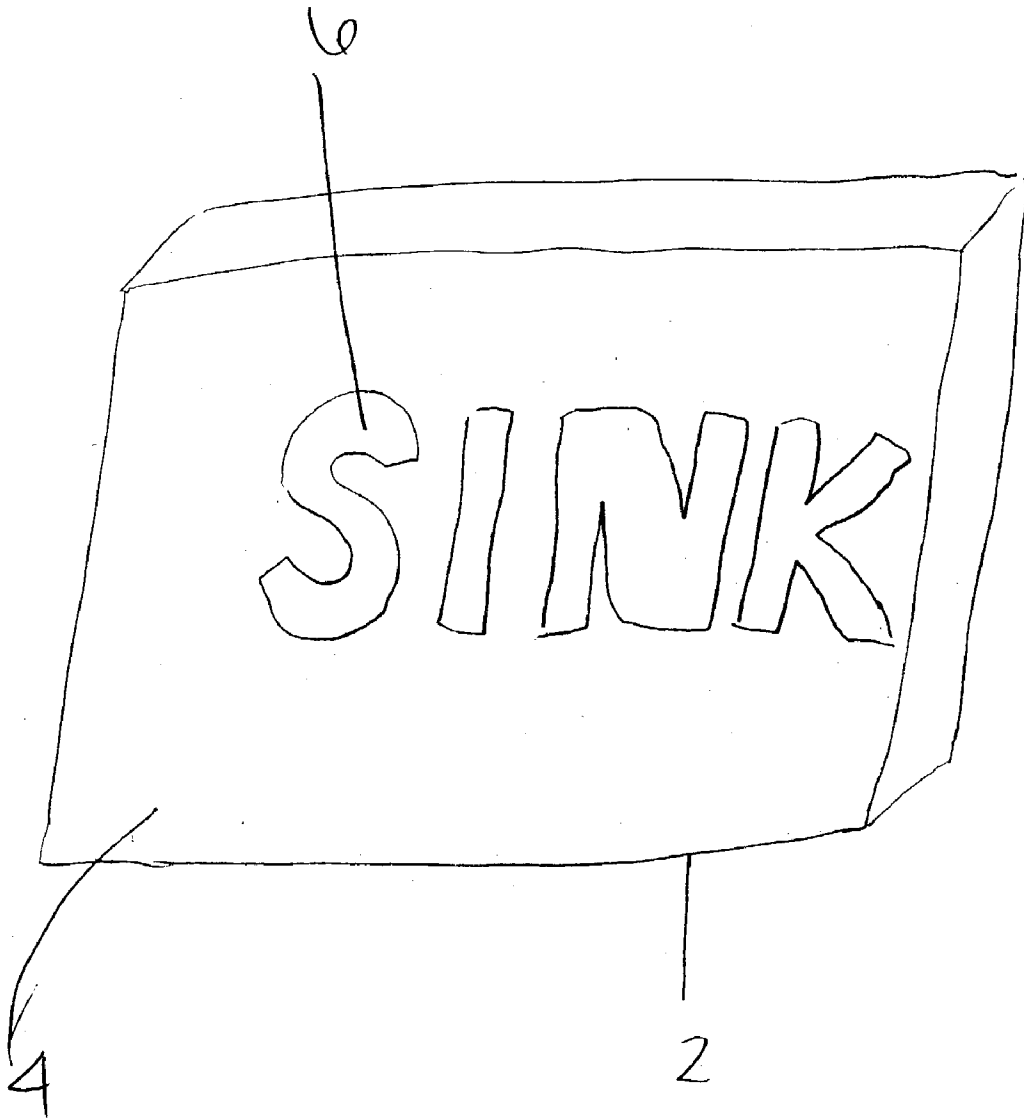
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**Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) Provisional application No. 60/340,089, filed on Oct. 31, 2001.

The present invention involves to a cleaning tool comprising a pad or towel with a mark designating the intended use of the pad or towel. A cleaning kit comprises a plurality of cleaning pads or towels with at least one face with a mark designating an intended use and includes instructions for use of the pads, enclosed in a receptacle.



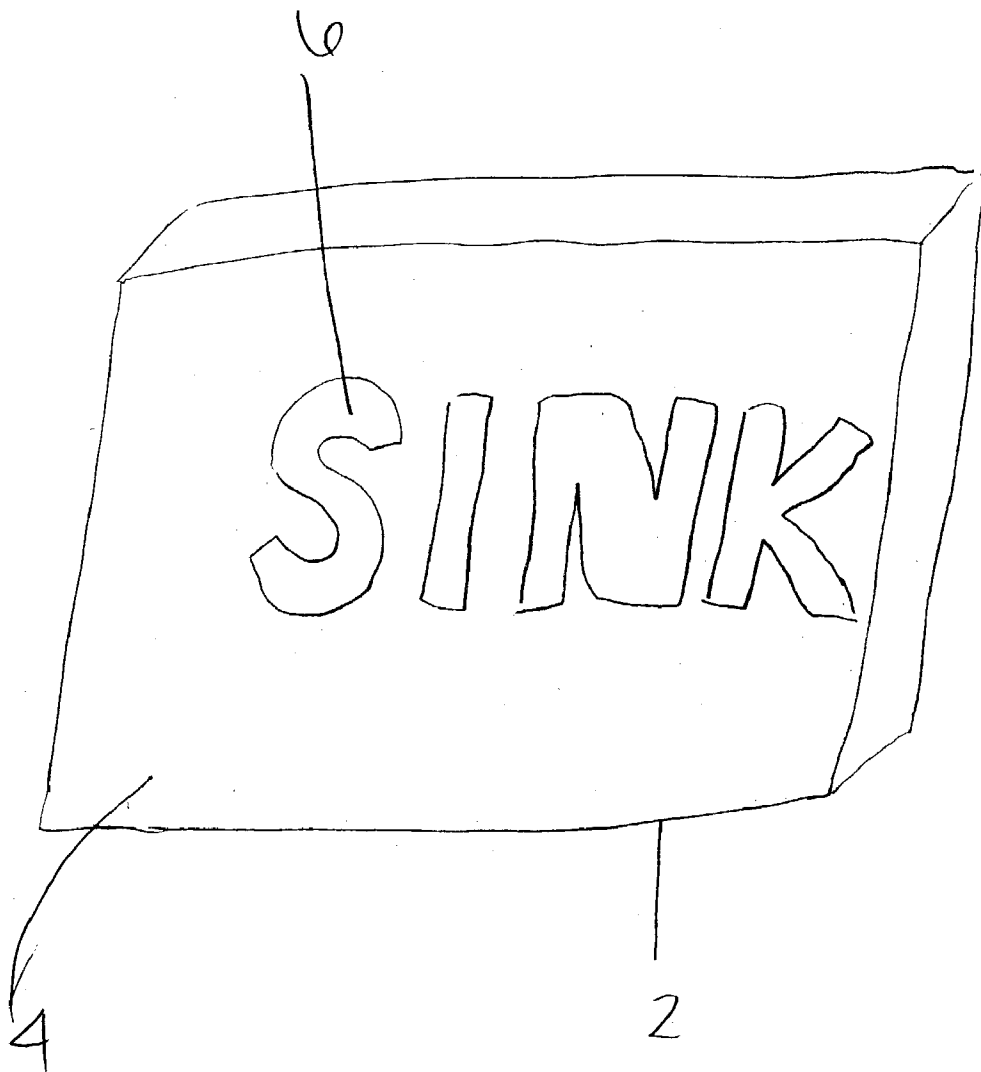


Fig 1

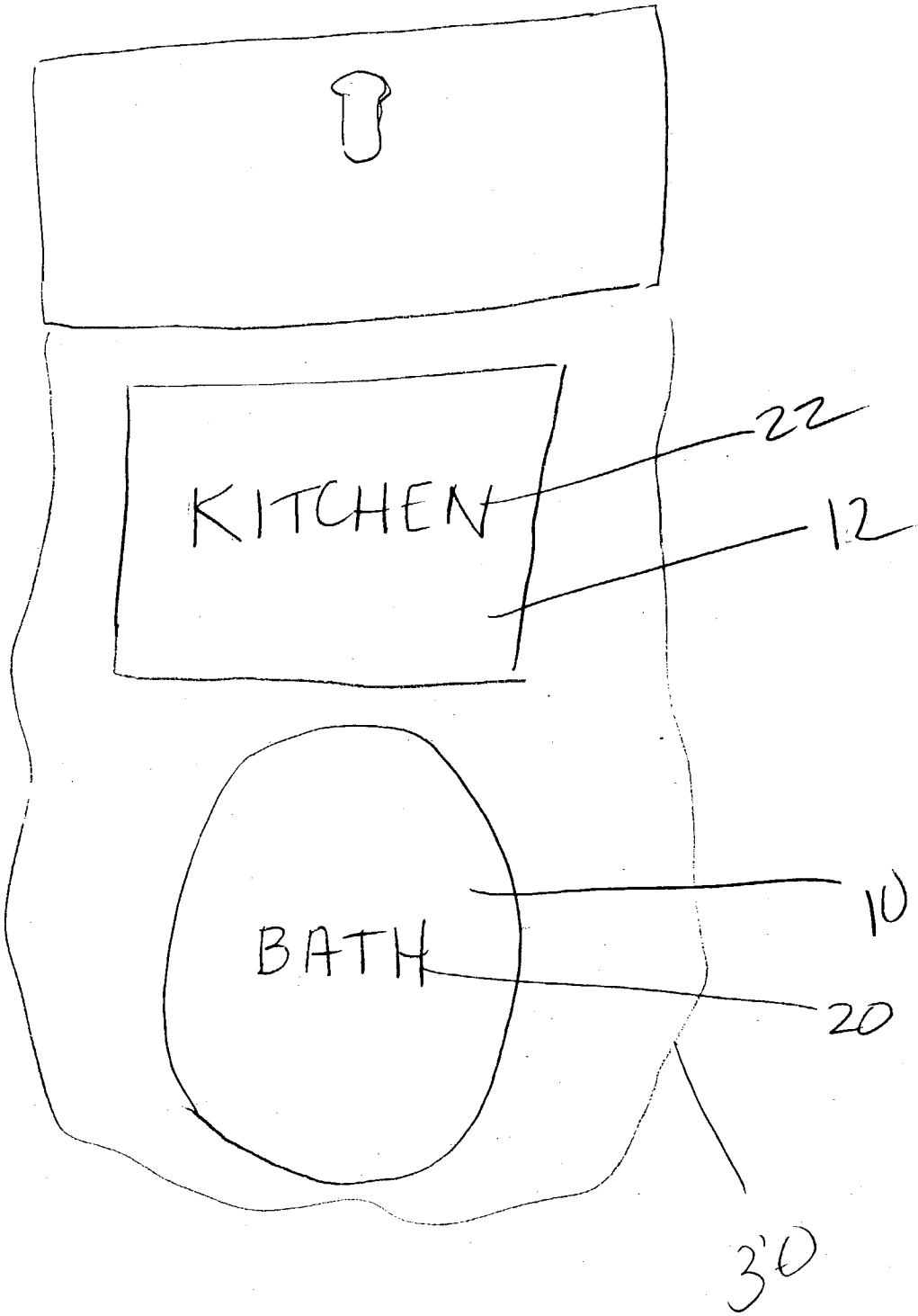


Fig 2

## LABELLED SPONGES

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The invention relates to sponges and other multiple purpose, reusable cleaning towels.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Cleaning towels and sponges are often used for many different purposes around a household, business, or other facility. Uses include cleaning floors, windows, cars, and the like; polishing furniture, silver and other metal articles, and the like; sanitizing bathrooms; cleaning kitchenware; preparing food; removing stains; mopping up spills; and a variety of other uses. These uses often conflict, e.g., no one who uses a sponge to clean a bathroom would willingly also use it for food preparation or kitchen cleaning.

[0003] Frequently, a sponge that is used for one of these purposes will be reused, or used multiple times, in order to avoid the expense of constantly purchasing new sponges or to avoid the hassle of having to open a new package each time a sponge is needed, among other reasons. Often, for convenience, a sponge is kept in an area where it is typically used. As a result, sponges with conflicting uses are frequently stored in the same general area, e.g. a sponge used for food preparation and a sponge used to clean the kitchen counter are typically both kept on the kitchen counter. This can lead to the accidental switching of the sponges the next time they are used. Similarly, it is often the case that all the sponges used for cleaning purposes will be kept in a common area devoted to storage of cleaning supplies. As a result, one can very easily mix up sponges with conflicting cleaning uses, e.g. a sponge used to clean the toilet can be confused for a sponge used to clean the bathtub.

[0004] The general practice of using and storing sponges and other cleaning towels disadvantageously includes a substantial likelihood of accidentally employing the wrong sponge for a particular use, possibly causing damage, contamination, infection, sickness, or in some cases, even death.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention relates to a cleaning tool comprising an absorbent pad having at least one face and a mark on said face designating the intended use of the pad. A cleaning kit comprises a plurality of absorbent pads, each pad having at least one face and a mark on said face designating the intended use of said pad, instructions on use of the pads, and a receptacle for enclosing the pads.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the present invention.

[0007] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the present invention.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] This invention provides improved sponges and cleaning towels that drastically decrease the probability of accidental switching. FIG. 1 shows an one embodiment of the present invention, a cleaning tool comprising an absorbent pad 2 with at least one face 4. According to the invention, a mark 6 designating a particular intended use,

located on the face 4 of the pad, solves the above-noted problem in the art. The mark 6 may comprise a word or short phrase denoting the place in which, or the purpose for which, the sponge is to be used. Alternatively, the mark 6 may be a symbol to designate the particular use. Preferably, the mark 6 is not easily removed when the sponge or towel is used for its intended purpose. Therefore, it may be printed with appropriate inks or dyes depending upon use. Similarly, it may be created via a surface treatment, such that the mark 6 is legibly formed in or on the sponge or towel from the material of which the sponge or towel is made. Alternatively, the mark may be embossed or debossed.

[0009] In addition to selling the sponge in individual packages or typically random collections of several sponges, it could also be sold in various types of sets or kits. FIG. 2 shows a cleaning kit including a plurality of pads 10, 12 with marks 20, 22 designating intended use of the pads. The pads 10, 12, are enclosed in a receptacle 30, made of plastic, cardboard, combination of both, or any other suitable material for a receptacle 30. Additionally, the kit could include instructions on use of the pads.

[0010] For instance, a "kitchen set" of sponges could be sold, including "counter," "sink," "dishes," and "food" sponges, among others. Similarly, a "household set" could be sold, including sponges for all the rooms of the house. Another example would be an "auto kit," including a sponge for different steps of treating an automobile, such as a "soap" sponge, a "glass" cleaner sponge, a "wax" sponge, and the like. These are just a few examples, as the possibilities for the assemblage of sets are endless.

[0011] Because sponges are often located in areas where aesthetic appeal is desired, such as kitchens and bathrooms, the label can take various forms in order to facilitate this. For instance, the marking may be in any of various fonts and styles, and may even be accompanied by simple designs. Similarly, the markings may be in different colors, such as colors that match, or are a different hue of, the color of the sponge.

[0012] In order to increase the usefulness of the invention as a way of eliminating confusion about the previous uses of a particular sponge, the marking may be in a color that sharply contrasts with the color of the sponge to make the label more obvious to one who grabs the sponge in haste. For the same reason, the marking can appear on multiple faces rather than just one, such as both on the front and the back of the sponge.

[0013] The invention relates to any kind of cleaning pad or towel, but particularly relates to sponges and absorbent cleaning cloths, such as Handi Wipes®. These are very versatile and resilient, and are thus commonly used for a wide variety of purposes and are reused many times. Therefore, multiple, previously used sponges and absorbent cleaning cloths are often kept around for reuse, and are thus very prone to accidental use for the wrong purpose.

[0014] The invention relates to any size or shape of sponges. In addition to sponges and absorbent cleaning cloths, the invention also relates to scouring pads and other cleaning towels, which may be fashioned from cloth, wool,

plastic, or any other material suited for cleaning pads and towels.

What is claimed is:

1. A cleaning tool, comprising:

an absorbent pad having at least one face; and

a mark on said face, which mark designates an intended use of said pad.

2. A cleaning, kit comprising:

a plurality of absorbent pads, each of which pads has at least one face;

a mark on each of said face, each of which marks designates an intended use of said respective pad; and

a receptacle for enclosing said pads.

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