A game set that includes a plurality of tiles. Each tile has at least one indicia and at least one attachment feature that allows the tiles to be attached to each other in a three-dimensional manner. The tiles can be attached to create at least one visual image. For example, the indicia may be letters and the tiles can be attached in either horizontal or vertical directions to create words. A player may be provided a score that corresponds to the number of tiles attached by that player. The attachment of tiles allows the three-dimensional game to be played without a game board.
INTERCONNECTING GAME TILES AND GAMES THEREWITH

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to Application No. 61/111,618, filed on Nov. 5, 2008.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention
[0003] The present invention relates to a game with interconnected tiles.
[0004] 2. Prior Art
[0005] There have been marketed many different types of games that require cooperation with individual pieces. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 2,953,380 discloses a map puzzle with interconnecting pieces of identical shape, providing for the interlocking of image segments that, when the puzzle is completed, constitutes an entire image.
[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 3,993,313, discloses a jigsaw puzzle educational play device with cube-like elements that have convex spheroidal lugs. The lugs provide interconnection to adjacent or stacking elements with corresponding concave spheroidal depressions. The players attempt to construct specific images to achieve a game goal, but at the same time create secondary images that affect their opponent's efforts. This patent describes use of a game board and cites a game play wherein multiple face images are entered into each game play move. There is no reference or disclosure of letter or word construction, nor is there disclosure of any game play that would allow a player to select which side of a two-faced tile they may want to utilize. Furthermore, there is no reference of any kind of stacking play that might increase scoring in a game activity.
[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,690,410 discloses a game with a plurality of tiles bearing a letter on one side and features so that a tile is connected to one specific side of a preceding tile. The patent describes a word game, wherein players alternately expose and try to use one tile at a time, to form words from already-exposed and used game tiles. There is no disclosure of stacking, or interconnecting in any manner other than side by side connection. Additionally, there is no disclosure of two sided indicia that would allow a player to utilize either side of a tile.
[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 4,776,597 issued to Rudell, one of the applicants for the present application, discloses a game embodied by a product called UPWORDS and marketed, under license from Rudell, by Hasbro Games. The UPWORDS game includes a game board that is molded with aligned rows of raised bosses upon which players can place game tiles that have corresponding recesses on their underside. The tiles also are molded to provide the identical stacking of additional game tiles atop one another. The players receive additional points depending upon the height of a tile stack. The UPWORD game requires a game board to assure the correct alignment of tiles one beside the other, and the tiles utilized in the game are one-sided.
[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 4,995,615 discloses hexagonal game cubes with interlocking protrusions and indentions to allow for three dimensional constructions. The '615 patent discloses a strategy game wherein a color assembly is required of a player utilizing three of his colored pieces. There is no reference or disclosure of word game play, and the design of the pieces is such that multiple sides of a hexagonal cube will affect building game strategy.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 5,337,501 discloses a letter tile with a zig-zag edge that will align with a similarly shaped letter tile. There is no disclosure of tile stacking, or a design to accommodate such stacking. The '501 patent does not disclose a particular game play.
[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 5,702,105 discloses a game with cubic or spherical game elements. The game elements require the employment of specific interconnecting elements (from cylinders to hook and loop material, such as the Velcro brand) in order to provide attachment of one game element to another. The game elements must have at least one connector hole for the interconnecting elements to attach. Game elements are not disclosed as being able to directly attach one to another. Words are to be formed along orthogonal axes. The '105 patent cites the game Scrabble as its target for improvement, and as such never provides for scoring relative to stacking of tiles, nor is there any reference or disclosure of different letters on the same game piece. To the contrary, the patent discloses game pieces with the same letter on each visible face.

[0012] U.S. Pat. No. 5,813,154 describes a magnetic display format for a sign forming kit. The kit allows a user to link together varying width letter segments, each with a corresponding tab and indentation on only one side. There are no game rules, no stacking of letters and no utilization of both sides of a letter segment disclosed in the '154 patent.
[0013] U.S. Pat. No. 5,799,943 discloses a three dimensional word game utilizing six-faced cubes with the same letter on multiple faces. The cubes have connecting elements so that blocks can be securely attached one to another. The blocks can be attached in a self-supporting manner if there exists first-employed blocks attached to a base plate. In order to assure such required secure interconnection of cube to cube, the patent suggests threads that can literally screw one cube onto the next, or onto the required base plate.
[0014] U.S. Pat. No. 10,263,483 illustrates a six sided game piece with corresponding tabs and recesses, and a certain raised element on one side of the game piece. It is notable that corresponding detents are NOT present on the underside of the game pieces. There is therefore no inference or visual suggestion of any vertical stackability.
[0015] U.S. Pat. No. 6,033,746 discloses a jigsaw puzzle tile with symmetrical protruberances and indentations, to apparently increase the difficulty of assembly solution. With such an approach a user would need to rely heavily upon the graphic representation of the images, and not rely upon one puzzle piece fitting into an adjacent piece as confirmation of correct assembly.

[0016] There was marketed a game referred to as Bananagrams. Bananagrams is a game utilizing lettered tiles each with a numbered point value. The game makes no reference or physical provision for, nor does it cite any play rule regarding, connectability of tiles one to the next, even though it is required for opponents to align tiles closely side by side to form words and get scores. The product and the tile design neither suggest nor physically allow for a second side display.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0017] A game set that includes a plurality of tiles. Each tile has at least one indicia and at least one attachment feature that allows the tiles to be attached to each other in a three-dimensional manner.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0018] FIG. 1 is an illustration showing a game set with a plurality of tiles that can be interconnected;

[0019] FIG. 2 is an illustration of a single tile;

[0020] FIG. 3 is an illustration showing a plurality of tiles interconnected in a word game;

[0021] FIG. 4 is an illustration of an alternate embodiment of tiles with card indicia;

[0022] FIG. 5 is an illustration of an alternate embodiment of tiles with dominos indicia; and,

[0023] FIG. 6 is an illustration of an alternate embodiment of tiles with numbers indicia;

[0024] FIG. 7 is an illustration of an alternate embodiment of tiles with graphical indicia;

[0025] FIG. 8 is an illustration of an alternate embodiment of a larger tile that can be utilized for certain game plays;

[0026] FIG. 9 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a tile that incorporates different size holes and protruberances on opposite corners of the tile, to properly aligned tiles stacked on top of each other in a vertical direction;

[0027] FIG. 10 illustrates an alternative embodiment of a tile that tiles have raised ridges and corresponding slots that align tiles stacked on top of each other in a vertical direction;

[0028] FIG. 11 illustrates an exemplary game layout of interconnected and stacked tiles, and also illustrates the tiles of the invention being positioned in vertical orientation in front of a player of the game.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0029] Disclosed is a game set that includes a plurality of tiles. Each tile has at least one indicia and at least one attachment feature that allows the tiles to be attached to each other in a three-dimensional manner. The tiles can be attached to create at least one visual image. For example, the indicia may be letters and the tiles can be attached in either horizontal or vertical directions to create words. A player may be provided a score that corresponds to the number of tiles attached by that player, or tiles might have predetermined scores dependent upon the difficulty or frequency of use of a letter or image appearing on that tile. The attachment of tiles allows the three-dimensional game to be played without a gameboard, if so desired, both increasing the portability of the game (since no gameboard must be transported) and also providing for cost-efficient marketing of the game (since a costly gameboard is eliminated). Another advantage of being able to play the game without a gameboard is that certain rules variations could provide players with the freedom to extend the gaming area beyond any predetermined boundaries, as a gameboard would necessarily do. Additionally, the interconnected tiles can be rotated about a surface so that the tiles face a player during their turn in the game.

[0030] Referring to the drawings by reference numbers, FIG. 1 shows a game set 10 that includes a plurality of tiles 12 for use in a word game. Each tile 12 may include a first indicia 14 on a first side 16 and a second indicia (not shown) on a second side (not shown). By way of example, the first and second indicia may be letters of the alphabet. A scaled version of the second indicia 18 may be located on the first side 16 of each tile 12 so that the user can know the indicia on the opposite surface without flipping the tile. Likewise, a scaled version of each first indicia 14 may be located on the second side of a tile 12. The scaled version of the opposite side indicia can be displayed small enough so that the game player who controls a tile can see the second side scaled indicia, while an opponent could not differentiate it from a distance.

[0031] As shown in FIG. 2, the indicia 14 may be located within a recessed area 20 of a tile 12 surrounded by an outer ridge 22. The outer ridge 22 may have one or more protrusions 24 and one or more detents 26. The protrusions 24 and detents 26 are used to align and attach vertically adjacent tiles 12. Each tile 12 may also include a pair of tongues 28 and a pair of grooves 30. The tongues 28 and grooves 30 can be used to attach tiles 12 in a horizontal direction. Each tile 12 may be constructed from a molded plastic material. By way of example, the tiles 12 may be constructed from injection molded ABS (acrylonitrile butadiene styrene), high impact styrene, polyethylene or polypropylene.

[0032] As shown in FIG. 3, and illustrated as appearing on an imaginary referential grid (numbers 1-10 and lower case letters a-j) for ease of description, the indicia of the tiles 12 may be interconnected to play a word game. For example, the game may be played in accordance with the general rules of the game UPWORDS, or rules similar to the UPWORDS game. By way of example, each player may be initially given a predetermined number of tiles (e.g. 5 tiles). A first player may attach tiles to create a word with at least two letters. The second player may add tiles to create a different word(s) by attaching a tile(s) in either a horizontal or vertical direction from the existing word. The entire set of interconnected tiles can be rotated around the playing surface so that the letters face the second player.

[0033] A player can use the letter on either side of a particular tile. For example, if the word “AFTER” was constructed (in row g. of FIG. 3) and a player has a tile with the letter “L” on one side and the letter “C” on the other side then the player can use the letter L to create “ALTER”. By way of example (not illustrated) if the word “RATE” was constructed and a player had a tile with the letter “L” on one side and the letter “C” on the other side then the player could either add the letter “C” to create “CRATE” putting the “C” in front of “RATE”, or could create the word “LATE” by placing the “L” on top of the “R” in “RATE”. FIG. 11 illustrates an example of a game wherein tiles are interconnected and stacked atop one another, by players.

[0034] The game play may include certain stacking rules, such as limiting the number of stacked tiles to 5 high, or requiring that the tabs of stacked tiles be aligned. For example, stacked tiles must all have tabs along the same two sides and grooves along the same two sides.

[0035] Each player takes turns attaching tiles to create new words. A player may draw from a pile of tiles to replace the tiles that were used. A score can be provided to a player after each turn. The score for vertically stacked tiles can be different than horizontally coupled tiles. For example, two points may be provided for each horizontally attached tile in a word. One point may be provided for each tile within a vertical stack. For example, if a player has four tiles beneath a tile, that player receives five points for that letter. A player that cannot form a word may pass to the next player. The game continues until a player has run out of tiles or none of the players can form a new word. The player with the highest score wins the game. A player is deducted points for each tile that they did not play.

[0036] The tiles 12 may be segmented into different colors. For example, a first player may have a first group of tiles that has red letters, a second player may have a second group of tiles that has blue letters, etc. The different colored letters
allows for easier identification for purposes of scoring words. Scoring could be reserved for the conclusion of a game, at which time a player might only receive a score for a stack of letters that have the player’s unique color tile at the top of the stack. Alternatively, players could receive scoring for words where their particular color tile was dominant on the top letter stacks of that word.

[0037] FIG. 4 shows an alternate embodiment of the game wherein the indicia 14 of the tiles 12 are representative of playing card indicia. The tiles 12 can be attached to play a card game, such as poker or solitaire. Each tile may have first and second indicia, wherein the player can play either indicia. For example, as shown in the top tile has indicia corresponding to a 5 of diamonds or a 7 of clubs. A scaled version of the opposite indicia may be provided on the face of each tile.

[0038] FIG. 5 shows an alternate embodiment of the game wherein the indicia 14 of the tiles 12 are a sequence of dots to allow the players to play a game of dominoes. The players can connect the tiles to existing tiles in either a horizontal or vertical direction in accordance with the rules of dominoes.

[0039] FIG. 6 shows an alternate embodiment of the game wherein the indicia 14 of the tiles 12 are numbers. Each tile may have a different number on each side. A scaled version of the opposite number is located on each side of the tile. A game play could consist of players having to play and couple tiles together that, when added up, would equal a certain number, or not exceed a certain number.

[0040] Tiles 12 of the game could be molded, or labeled, in different colors, so that different players each had their own specific colored tiles. Game play could dictate certain scoring or strategy rules whereby a player might not be able to stack their own colored tile atop another of their own colored tiles, or players could receive score dependent upon which players’ color tiles are present at the end of a game session.

[0041] FIG. 7 shows another embodiment of the game wherein the indicia 14 of the tiles 12 includes graphical images. For example, the images may be of different objects and the players attach tiles that have objects of a same category. As in very popular image matching games, players could be awarded points for identical or related images that are coupled together either horizontally or vertically. Alternatively, the image indicia may be different colors and the players can attach tiles to obtain a certain sequence of tiles with the same color. For example, the players can take turns attaching tiles in either a horizontal or vertical direction. A tile can be attached to any other tile except that a player cannot cover the last played tile. Play continues until one of the players has four consecutive tiles of the same color to win the game.

[0042] FIG. 8 illustrates a double-sized tile 32 of the invention that could be utilized in games requiring a doubling size, for example, classic “dominos” games, in which a tile would bear two images side by side on its face.

[0043] FIG. 9 illustrates a tile that includes different-sized protrusions 36 and 40, and detents 34 and 38. Opposing corners of the tile 12 may have the same detents and protrusions. Protrusion 36 is sized to fit into a detent 34 of a different tile, while protrusion 40 is sized to fit into a smaller detent 38 of another tile. This design may prevent players from inadvertently placing tiles atop other tiles in the incorrect orientation. For example, larger protrusion 36 could be 0.085 inches, and smaller protrusion 40 could be 0.065 inches.

[0044] FIG. 10 illustrates an alternate embodiment of a tile that includes raised ridges 42 that coordinate with slots 44 on corresponding tiles to provide proper alignment. This design can be utilized instead of the prior-described protrusions and detents.

[0045] Providing tiles that can be attached and disconnected creates a game that does not require a game board. This significantly reduces the packaging requirements for distributing and carrying a commercial embodiment of the game. It is to be understood that the term indicia refers to any graphical image on a face of a tile, including the letters, number and other features shown in the drawings and described above.

[0046] FIG. 11 illustrates a game play layout of tiles 46, and further illustrates the ability for tiles 12 to be stood up on their flat edge so that a player can organize tiles in front of them, without requiring a letter rack of any kind. This reduces product cost, and product bulk, so that game units could be sold and then carried by consumers in smaller and more convenient packages. While certain exemplary embodiments have been described and shown in the accompanying drawings, it is to be understood that such embodiments are merely illustrative of and not restrictive on the broad invention, and that this invention not be limited to the specific constructions and arrangements shown and described, since various other modifications may occur to those ordinarily skilled in the art.

What is claimed is:
1. A game set, comprising:
   a plurality of tiles that each have an indicia and at least one attachment feature that allows said tiles to be attached to each other in a three-dimensional manner.
2. The game set of claim 1, wherein said attachment feature includes a detent and a protrusion that aligns and attaches two adjacent tiles stacked on top of each other in a vertical direction.
3. The game set of claim 1, wherein said attachment feature includes a tongue and a groove that attaches two adjacent tiles side by side in a horizontal direction.
4. The game set of claim 2, wherein said attachment feature includes a tongue and a groove that attaches two adjacent tiles side by side in a horizontal direction.
5. The game set of claim 1, wherein each tile has a first indicia on a first side of said tile and a second indicia on a second side of said tile.
6. The game set of claim 5, wherein said first indicia is a letter and said second indicia is a different letter.
7. The game set of claim 5, wherein said first indicia is a number and said second indicia is a different number.
8. The game set of claim 5, wherein said first side includes a scalled version of said second indicia.
9. The game set of claim 1, wherein a first group of tiles includes a first color of said indicia and a second group of tiles includes a second color of said indicia.
10. A game set, comprising:
   a plurality of tiles that each have a first indicia on a first side and a second indicia on a second side and are adapted to be assembled in a three-dimensional manner.
11. The game set of claim 10, wherein each tile includes a detent and a protrusion that aligns and attaches two adjacent tiles stacked on top of each other in a vertical direction.
12. The game set of claim 10, wherein each tile includes a tongue and a groove that attaches two adjacent tiles side by side in a horizontal direction.
13. The game set of claim 11, wherein each tile includes a tongue and a groove that attaches two adjacent tiles side by side in a horizontal direction.
14. The game set of claim 10, wherein said first indicia is a letter and said second indicia is a different letter.
15. The game set of claim 10, wherein said first indicia is a number and said second indicia is a different number.
16. The game set of claim 10, wherein said first side includes a scaled version of said second indicia.
17. The game set of claim 10, wherein a first group of tiles includes a first color of said indicia and a second group of tiles includes a second color of said indicia.
18. A method for playing a game, comprising:
   providing a plurality of tiles that each have an indicia;
   attaching a first tile to a second tile side by side in a horizontal direction;
   attaching a third tile to the first tile stacked on top of each other in a vertical direction; and,
   repeating the method of attaching tiles side by side in the horizontal direction and stacked on top of each other in the vertical direction.
19. The method of claim 18, wherein at least two players attach the tiles and each player is awarded a score associated with the tiles attached by the player.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein each tile includes a first indicia on a first side and a second indicia on a second side and each player can attach the tiles exposing either the first or second indicia.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein a player uses a scaled version of the second indicia on the first side of each tile to determine the second indicia.
22. The method of claim 19, wherein a first player uses a first group of tiles that have a first color of the indicia and a second player uses a second group of tiles that have a second color of the indicia.
23. The method of claim 18, wherein the indicia are letters and the tiles are attached to create words.
24. The method of claim 18, wherein the indicia are card indicia and the tiles are attached to play a game of cards.
25. The method of claim 18, wherein the indicia include sequences of dots and the tiles are attached to play a game of dominos.
26. The method of claim 18, wherein the indicia include numbers.
27. The method of claim 19, wherein the player receive a different score for a horizontal attachment of the tiles than a vertical attachment of the tiles.
28. The method of claim 19, further comprising rotating the attached tiles about a surface.
29. The method of claim 19, further comprising placing the tiles in an upright position in front of a user of the tiles.

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