United States Patent

[11] 3,621,989

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[21] Appl. No. **17,495**
[22] Filed **Mar. 9, 1970**
[45] Patented **Nov. 23, 1971**

[54] **PILFER RESISTANT RECLOSABLE CONTAINER**
3 Claims, 6 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **206/45.31,** 206/56 AC, 206/78 B, 229/51 TS
[51] **Int. Cl.** **B65d 25/00**
[50] **Field of Search** ..... 206/45.31, 78 B, 80 A, 56 AC, 42; 229/51 TS

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ABSTRACT: A pilfer-resistant reclosable container comprises a boxlike body member having a peripheral lip provided with a shallow recess which supports the edges of a transparent flat rectangular lid. A flat card provided with a central rectangular window is bonded to the lip of the body member and overlaps the edges of the lid to hold the latter in place. A portion of the card is adapted to be torn away so that the corresponding end of the lid can be grasped and bent through the resulting opening to enable the lid to be slid open.

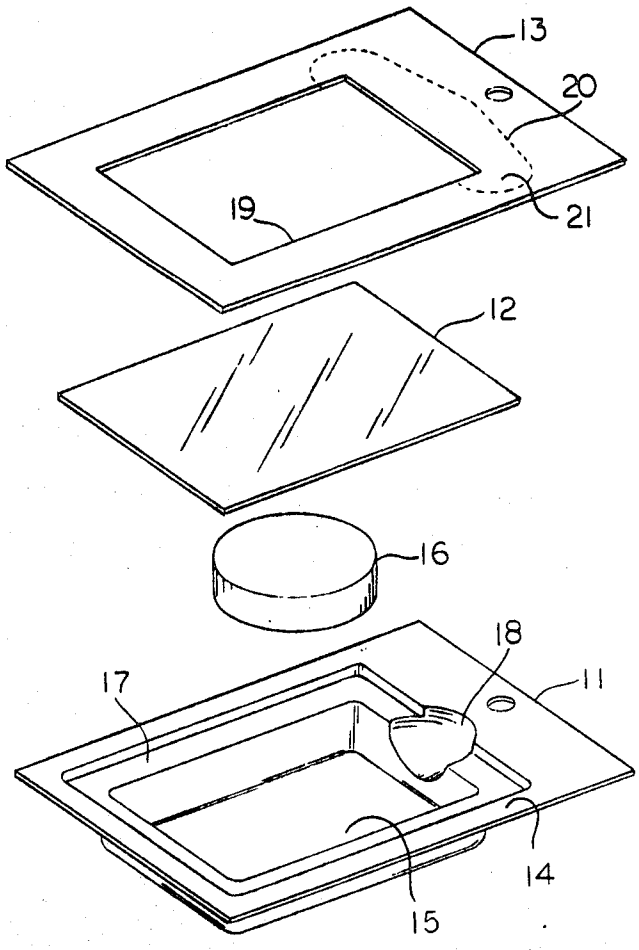


FIG. 1

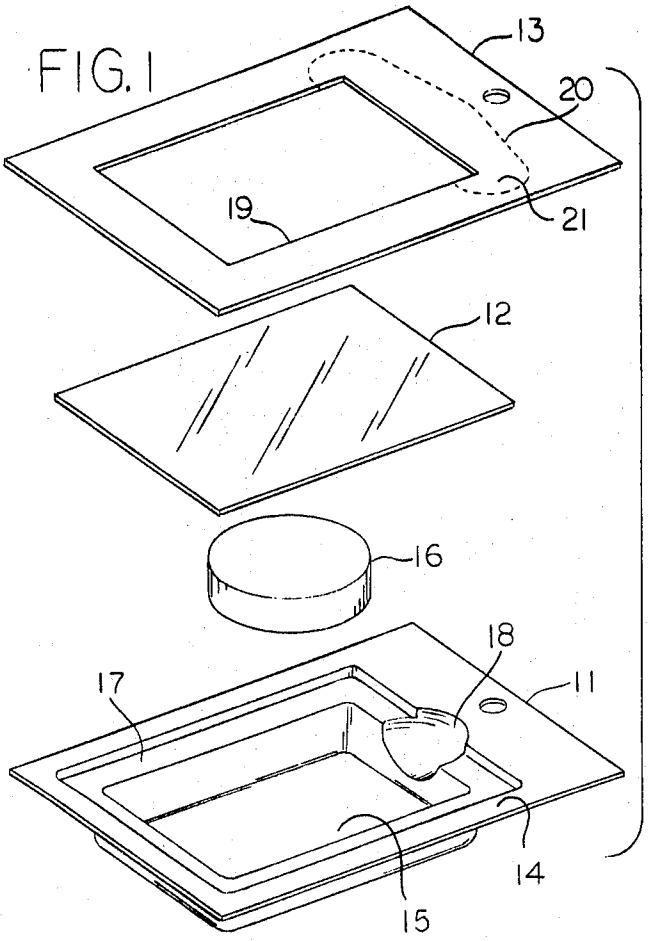


FIG. 3

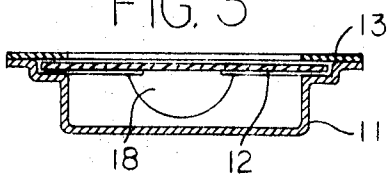


FIG. 4

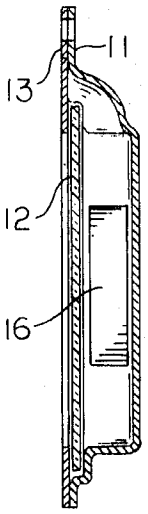
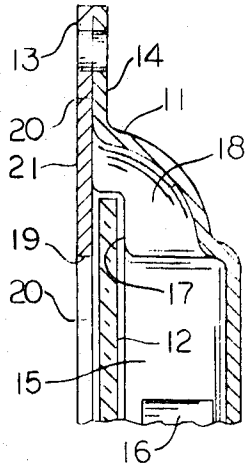


FIG. 5



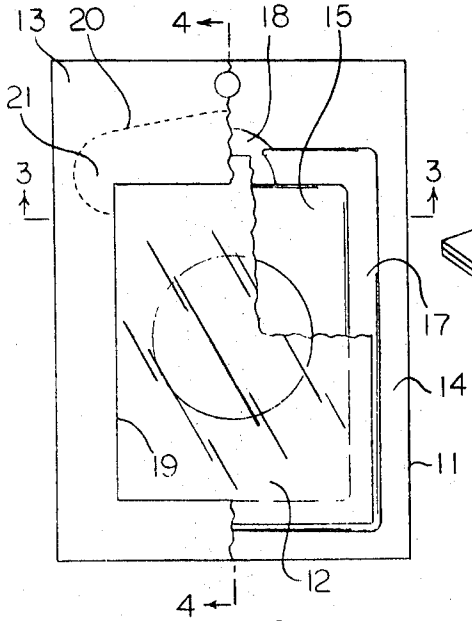
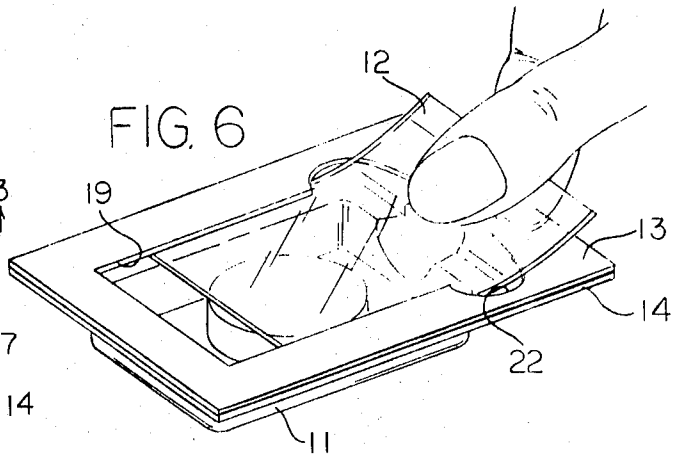


FIG. 2

FIG. 6



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PILFER RESISTANT RECLOSABLE CONTAINER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to containers for packaging and displaying small articles and more particularly to such containers which are reclosable and resistant to surreptitious pilferage.

2. Description of the Prior Art

In recent years, many small articles have been packaged for sale in expendable containers of the so-called blister or bubble type comprising a transparent boxlike member sealed to a flat card member. Since the card member must be torn away from the bubble or blister to open the container, a very significant advantage of this type of packaging is that a purchaser can readily determine whether the container he wishes to buy has been previously opened. In many cases, though, the purchaser would like to be able to reuse the same container to store the purchased article or articles, which is not conveniently possible if the container must be partially destroyed to open it. Accordingly, it is also well known to provide containers of the same general type in which the transparent boxlike member includes bent over edge lips which engage the flat card member so that the latter can be slid to open and closed positions after a sealing member has been torn or broken. However, the latter type of container inherently complicates the packaging process of requiring that the card member and the boxlike member be slid into mating engagement with each other rather than simply being placed in facing contact and sealed together. Furthermore, the initial sealing of such a container is customarily accomplished by means of a separate piece of pressure sensitive tape or the like, which often can be surreptitiously peeled back and then replaced after the contents of the container have been handled or pilfered.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention, a pilferproof reclosable container comprises a boxlike body member which is preferably made of sheet plastic material by pressure-forming or vacuum-forming techniques. A peripheral lip of the boxlike member is provided with a shallow recess adapted to receive the edges of a transparent flat rectangular lid member which covers the contents located in the box member. After the contents have been placed within the boxlike member and the lid member has been laid in place, a flat card member is laid atop the boxlike member and is sealed to the peripheral lip of the latter, preferably by a heat sealing operation. The card member is provided with a central window and overlaps the edges of the lid member to hold the latter in place. A perforated line or the like defines a portion of the card member which is adapted to be torn away so that the corresponding end of the lid can be grasped and bent through the resulting opening in the card to enable the lid to be slid open. When the lid is returned to its initial position, its inherent resiliency retains it within the shallow recess of the boxlike member until it is again grasped and bent upwardly through the lid opening.

Various means for practicing the invention and other advantages and novel features thereof will be apparent from the following detailed description of an illustrative preferred embodiment of the invention, reference being made to the accompanying drawings in which like reference numerals denote like elements.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is an exploded perspective view of a container according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a plan view of an assembled container comprising the elements depicted in FIG. 1, with portions of the card member and lid shown broken away to illustrate internal details;

FIG. 3 is a cross section end elevational view of the container taken along like 3—3 of FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a cross section side elevational view of the container taken along line 4—4 of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a cross section side elevational view of the container corresponding generally to an enlarged portion of FIG. 4, and

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the assembled container showing the manner in which the lid thereof is opened and closed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATIVE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

As best shown in FIG. 1 of the accompanying drawings, the illustrative preferred embodiment of the container according to the present invention is of very simple construction, comprising a body member **11**, a lid member **12** and a card member **13**. The body member is preferably formed from relatively rigid sheet plastic material by a pressure or vacuum forming process and includes a flat rectangular peripheral lip **14** and a central cavity or box portion **15** adapted to receive the contents of the container represented by a disk-shaped object **16**. A shallow rectangular recess **17** in lip **14** surrounds the cavity or box portion of the body member and is adapted to receive the slightly smaller rectangular lid member **12**, which is preferably made of thin resilient transparent sheet plastic material. At one end of the central cavity **15**, the body member also includes a depression **18**, which interrupts and extends beyond the adjacent portion of recess **17** to facilitate opening and closing the lid member, as explained in greater detail below. The card member **13**, which is preferably made of flat cardboard stock, is of the same external dimensions as the peripheral lip of the body member and is provided with a central rectangular window **19** somewhat smaller than lid member **12**.

To assemble the illustrative container, the contents thereof are placed in the cavity or box portion of the body member while the latter is located in a horizontal position and lid **12** is positioned horizontally in recess **17**. The card member is then laid atop the body member and is sealed to the peripheral lip thereof, preferably by a heat sealing process employing a heat-sensitive adhesive coated onto the lower surface of the card member. Since the contents of the container and the lid and card member thereof are simply laid in place while the body member remains in the horizontal position shown in FIG. 1, it should be apparent that the subject container is admirably suited to being assembled by means of a relatively simple and inexpensive automated packaging machine comprising a conveyor provided with a plurality of nests which carry individual container body members to successive loading stations at which the other container components are subsequently placed in position and then to a sealing station at which the card member is sealed automatically to the body member.

As shown at numeral **20**, the card member **13** is provided with a perforated or scored separation line, which intersects the lateral edges of window **19** and defines portion **21** of the card that can be torn away to provide an opening **22**, as shown in FIG. 6. Before the portion **21** of the card is removed, the rectangular central card window **19** is aligned with cavity **15** of the body member and overlaps all four edges of the lid loosely received in recess **17**, thereby maintaining the lid in the position shown in FIGS. 2 through 5. The portion of the card defined by the separation line is wider than the lid and overlaps above the end thereof adjacent depression **18** in body member recess **17**. Accordingly, after the card portion **21** has been removed, the customer can grasp the corresponding end of the lid and bend that end of the card upwardly through opening **22**, whereupon the lid can be slid along recess **17** to an open position as illustrated in FIG. 6. Depression **18** in the body member is adapted to facilitate this operation by permitting the customer to insert the tip of his index finger below the end of the lid member as he grips the upper face of that end of the lid with his thumb. To reclose the container, the lid member is simply slid back to its initial position and released,

thereby allowing its inherent resilience to restore it to its former generally flat condition within recess **17** so that it cannot slide open until it is again grasped and bent upwardly through opening **22**.

The invention has been described in detail with particular reference to an illustrative preferred embodiment thereof but it will be apparent that variations and modifications can be effected within the spirit and scope of the invention as described hereinbefore and as defined in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A pilfer-resistant reclosable container comprising:

a. a body member including a boxlike central cavity and a substantially flat peripheral lip provided with a shallow rectangular recess surrounding said central cavity,

b. a thin flexible rectangular transparent lid member supported by the reception of its edges in said recess and covering said cavity,

c. a substantially flat card member provided with a central window, said card member being sealed to said peripheral lip of said body member in overlapping relation to all four edges of said transparent lid member received in said rectangular recess thereof with said window in alignment with said cavity of said body member, and

d. means providing a separation line in said card member the opposite ends of which respectively intersect said window along opposite lateral edges thereof and define a removable portion adjacent one end of said central window which removable portion overlies an edge of the transparent lid permitting viewing of the contents of said container through said central window, said removable portion being adapted to be torn away to provide an opening in said card member through which the adjacent portion of said transparent lid member can be bent out of said recess through said card member to allow said lid member to be slid along said recess, and

e. means providing a depression interrupting and extending below and beyond said recess in alignment with said removable portion of said card member to provide finger-gripping access to the lower surface of the corresponding end of said lid member received in said recess when said removable portion of said card member has been torn away.

2. A container according to claim **1**, in which said separation line is defined by a row of perforations in said card member.

3. A container according to claim **1**, in which said transparent lid member comprises a sheet of resilient transparent plastic material.

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