

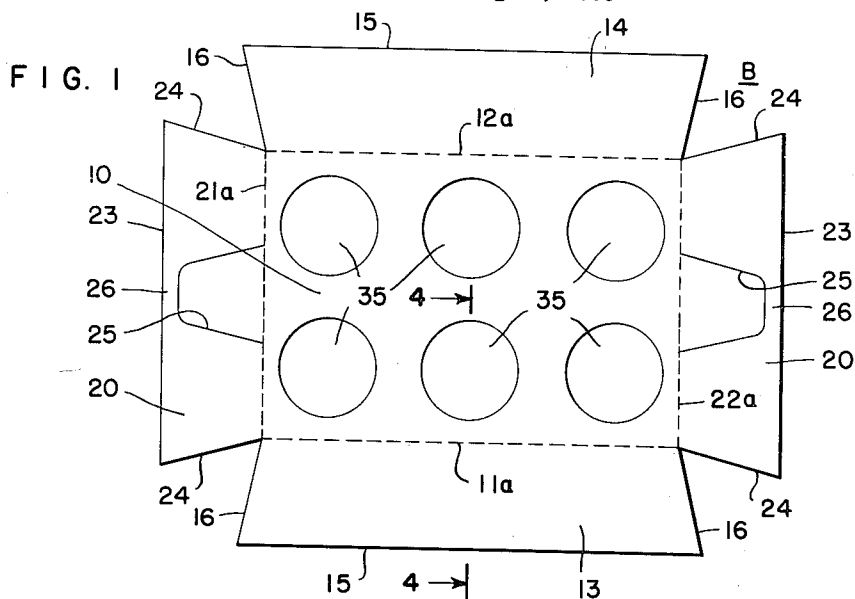
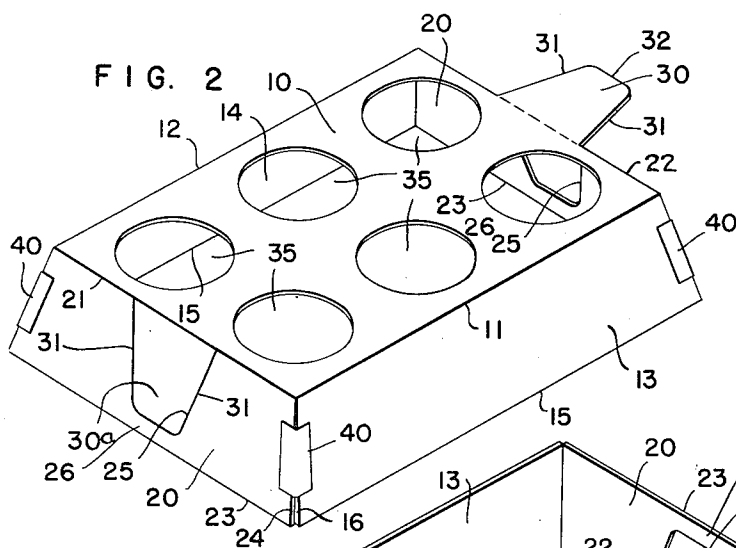
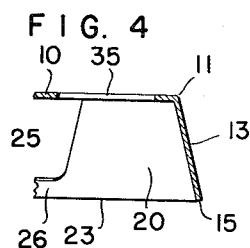
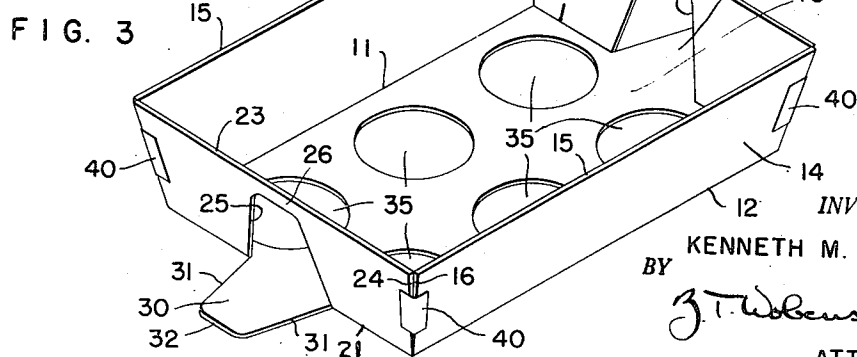
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STACKABLE SERVICE TRAY

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STACKABLE SERVICE TRAY

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1 Claim. (Cl. 224—48)

This invention relates to trays.

It is the principal object of the present invention to provide a portable tray for supporting and carrying relatively light articles.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a tray suitable for carrying a plurality of ice cream cones and the like in one position and other articles, such as sandwiches and the like in another position.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a relatively inexpensive single service disposable tray.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a light sturdy tray.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a tray of such a construction that a plurality of like trays may be stacked in a minimum space.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a tray having exterior sections suitable for decoration and advertising.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a tray which can be satisfactorily used either in an upright or an inverted position.

Other objects and advantageous features of the present invention will be apparent from the specification and claim.

The nature and characteristic features of the invention will be more readily understood from the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings forming part hereof, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a blank for making the tray in accordance with the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a view in perspective of the tray;

Fig. 3 is a view in perspective of the tray in inverted position; and

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary sectional view taken approximately on the line 4—4 of Fig. 1 and showing the side and end panels in assembled position.

It should, of course, be understood that the description and drawings are illustrative merely, and that various modifications and changes may be made in the structure disclosed without departing from the spirit of the invention.

Like numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views.

Referring now more particularly to the drawings, in accordance with the present invention, a blank B is provided of a single sheet of material such as paperboard, cardboard, or similar tough, yet flexible material, preferably finished on one face thereof for printing or decoration, if desired. The blank B, is provided with predetermined panels, creases, cut-outs and shapes thereon to provide the desired constituent portions.

The constituent portions of the blank B preferably include a rectangular central panel 10 connected by spaced parallel longitudinal crease lines 11 and 12 to elongated trapezoidal side panels 13 and 14 which extend the length of the panel 10. If desired, the crease lines 11 and 12, may be provided with spaced slitted or perforated lines 11a and 12a as shown in Fig. 1 to facilitate

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tate folding during the assembly stage. The panels 13 and 14 each has a longitudinal side edge 15 generally parallel to and spaced from the crease lines 11 and 12, and a pair of spaced, preferably inclined, transverse side edges 16 connected to the edges 15.

A pair of transverse end panels 20 is provided one on each end of the panel 10 connected thereto by aligned transverse crease lines 21 and 22. Similarly to the lines 11 and 12, the lines 21 and 22 may be provided with spaced slitted or perforated lines 21a and 22a. Each of the panels 20 has an outer transverse edge 23 generally parallel to and spaced from the lines 21 and 22, and a pair of spaced, preferably inclined, side edges 24 connected to the edges 23. Each of the panels 20 has a cut out portion 25, preferably of a truncated triangular configuration, extending from the inward extension of the lines 21 and 22 to a point proximate the edges 23, with the wider portion of the cut out portion 25 remote from the edges 23. A bridging section 26 is provided, centrally disposed extending along the edges 23 at the outer edge of the portions 25.

A pair of tabs or handle portions 30 is provided, one on each end of the panel 10 and extending outwardly therefrom in the same plane therewith when the tray is in use or is ready for use. When the tray is stacked with like trays, tabs 30 are collapsed into the same plane as panels 20 as shown by tab 30a in Fig. 2, as hereinafter further explained. The tabs 30 are preferably of a truncated triangular configuration of the same approximate size as the cut out portions 25 with which they may be simultaneously formed during the cutting operations on the tray. The tabs 30 have inclined side edges 31 joined by a transverse end edge 32.

The panel 10 is provided with a plurality, preferably at least three, of cut-out sections or openings 35 of any desired shape, but preferably circular, for the stable positioning of articles (not shown) therein. One particular use is for the reception of ice cream cones, preferably of the flat bottom type, so that the cones can be transported from the place of purchase to the place of consumption.

The blank B can be readily formed into the tray of the present invention by mechanically bending downwardly the panels 13 and 14 along the lines 11a and 12a, respectively, to an inclined position somewhat outwardly from normal. The panels 20 are bent similarly along the crease lines 21a and 22a to a similar inclined position. The tabs 30 may remain in the same or substantially the same plane as the central panel 10, as shown by tab 30 of Fig. 2, or may be temporarily collapsed into cut out portions 25 formed in end panels 20 during stacking for storage, as shown by tab 30a in Fig. 2. The panels 13, 14 and 20 are preferably stayed in position by a plurality of thin strips of paper 40, such as the ordinary kraft paper, adhered to the panels 13, 14 and 20 near the meeting edges thereof. Such an angular disposition of the panels 13, 14 and 20, as described, permits the effective stacking of a plurality of trays in a minimum of space with bending downwardly of the handles 30 during stacking. Furthermore, if desired, the insertion of articles such as ice cream cones in the sections 35 may be achieved while the trays are in a stacked pile thereby minimizing dispensing operations. The tray, if desired, may be inverted to be used as a carrier for other light articles such as sandwiches or the like. It is, of course, necessary that the articles, to be borne, be larger than the openings 35, so that no articles will be dropped through the openings 35 when the tray is in an inverted position.

The assembled tray can be carried, along with its contents, by the tabs 30 and thereby a reduction in the complexity of dispensing ice cream cones, sandwiches and

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the like is achieved. The tabs 30 have sufficient strength to support the tray and its contents without permanent deformation or failure. The panels 13, 14 and 20 stayed by the strips 40, provide adequate vertical reinforcement to augment the strength of the panel 10, and by such support prevent the panel 10 from deformation and collapse under a full load.

I claim:

A single service multiple purpose disposable stackable tray comprising a one piece construction of thin flexible sheet material having a central plane panel with a plurality of spaced cup receiving openings therein for the reception and retention of cups on one side thereof, a pair of oppositely spaced side panels having terminal edges, each of said side panels being joined to said central panel by a longitudinal crease line and extending outwardly and downwardly from said central plane panel, each of said side panels diverging from said longitudinal crease line and being substantially trapezoidal in shape, a pair of oppositely spaced end panels having terminal edges in the same plane as said first mentioned terminal edges, each of said end panels being joined to said central panel by a transverse crease line and extending outwardly and downwardly from said central plane panel, each of said end panels diverging from said transverse crease line and

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being substantially trapezoidal in shape, a flexible handle portion at each end of said central panel centrally disposed with respect thereto, each of said handle portions being in the same plane as an end panel and each of said end panels having an opening corresponding in size to the handle portion located in the same plane therewith, the flexible handle portions being adapted to be bent substantially at the transverse crease lines to rest in the same plane as said central panel, said side panels and said end panels being secured at their meeting margins, said side and end panels providing supports for the central panel and said tray being adapted to receive like trays in stacked relation.

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