Re. 24546

Aug. 24, 1954 G. F. WALES 2,687,305

CHECKER GAME BOARD

Filed Oct. 13, 1951 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 2.

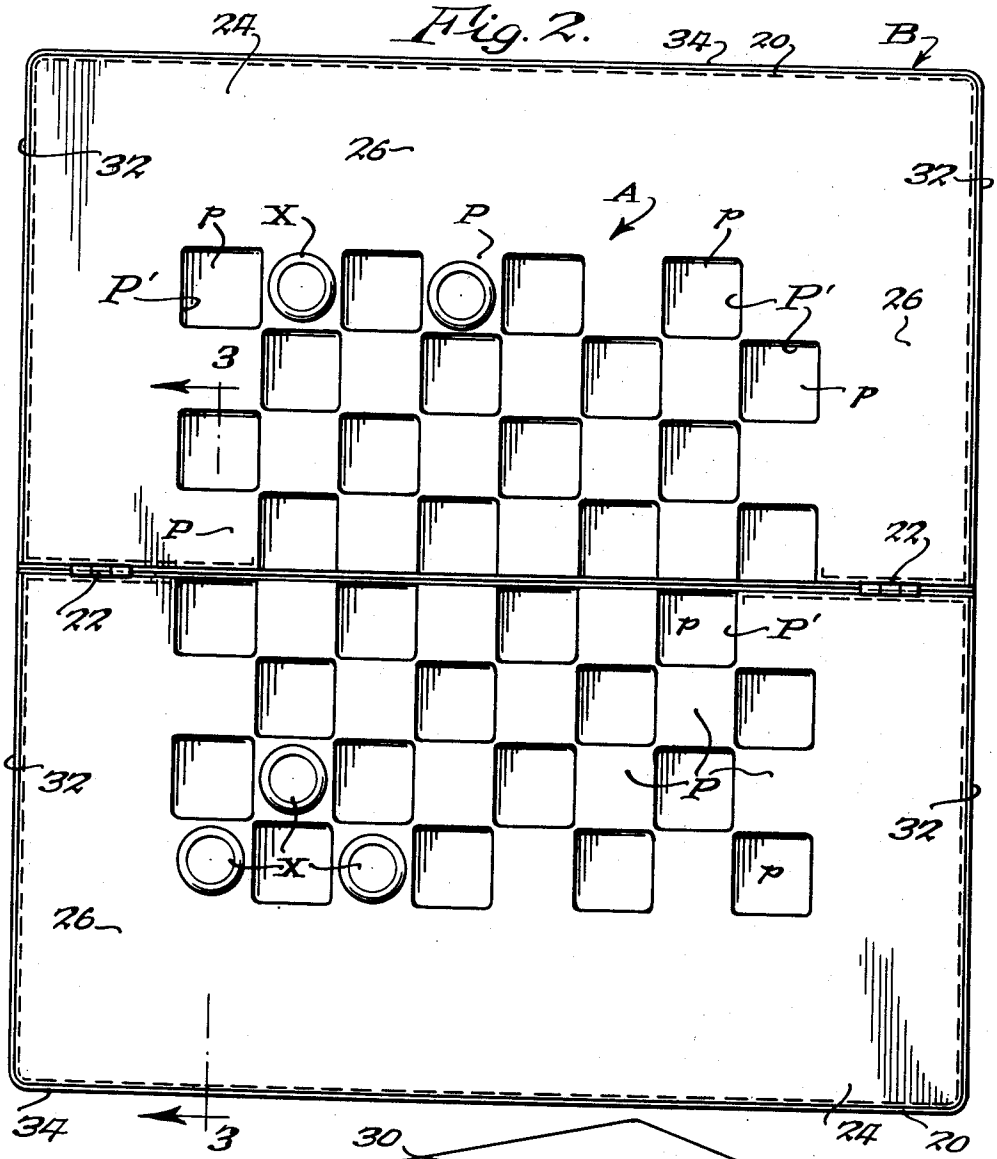


Fig. 1.

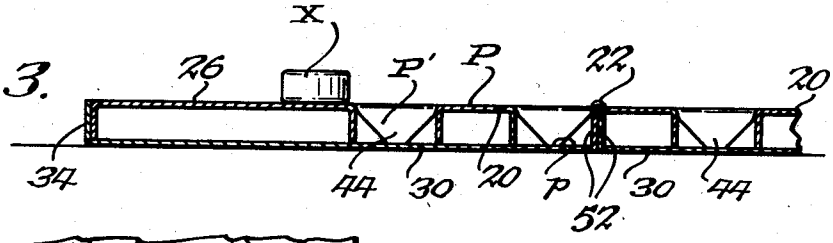
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Filed Oct. 13, 1951 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 3.



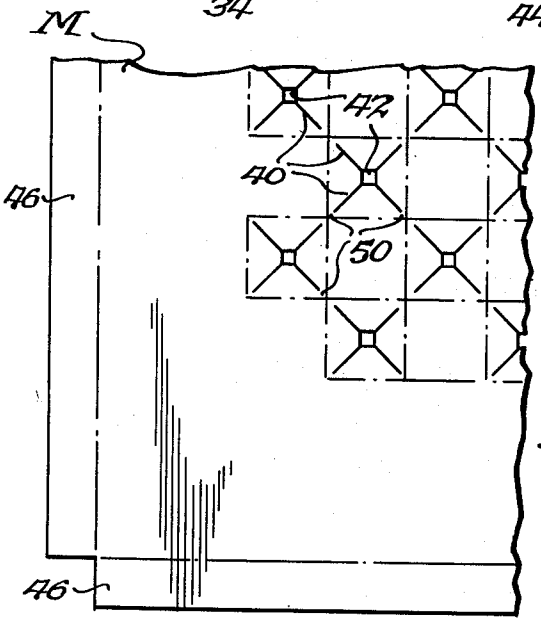


Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

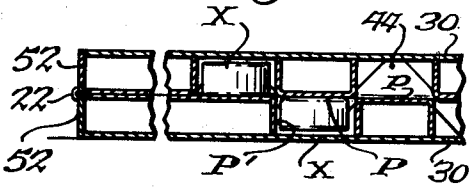


Fig. 6.

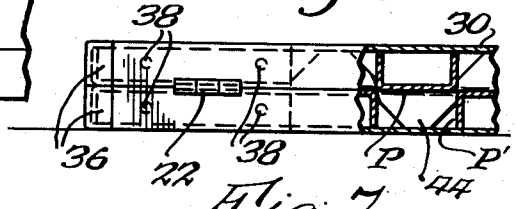


Fig. 8.

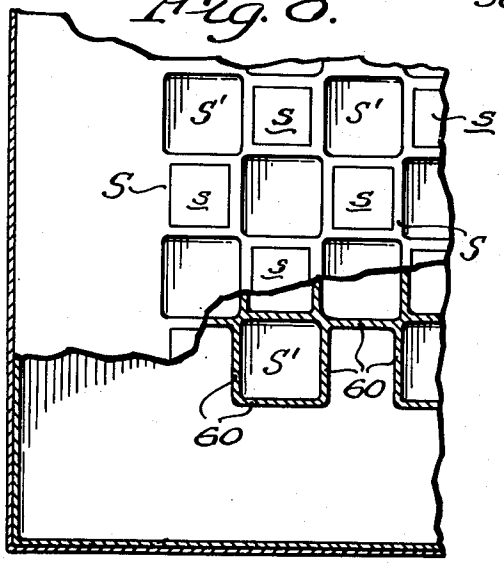
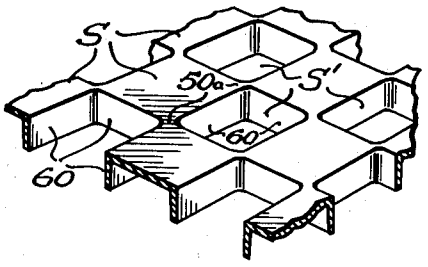


Fig. 7.



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CHECKER GAME BOARD

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4 Claims. (Cl. 273—136)

1

This invention relates to folding checker and like gameboards and more particularly to boards of this type which are adapted to retain the playing pieces or men when the board is folded in the positions to which they have been moved in playing the game. Such boards are often sent through the mail, using men attached by mechanical ferromagnetic action in the positions of a game in progress between players at a distance from each other. Boards of this type are generally made in two hinged sections enabling the boards to be folded; and they are of small size for ease in transportation through the mail or for carrying in the pocket of a garment.

Game boards for playing checkers and chess, regardless of size, and whether of the folding or non-folding type, have heretofore been made with flat playing surfaces, with the playing area containing the usual pattern of squares disposed in the plane of the playing surface. Obviously the alternate squares of such a pattern have to be in contrasting color for easy determination of position and correct play.

The primary object of the invention is to provide a novel and improved gameboard of the folding type which is so constructed that the playing pieces or men may be positively retained in the positions of the play when the board is folded or closed.

Another object is to provide man-retaining means so constructed that the folding of the board positively locks the men against movement.

A related object is to provide a game board in which the men may be retained in selected positions and shipped thus through the mail without possibility of movement out of such positions.

Another important object of the present invention is to provide a novel checkerboard or similar gameboard in which contrasting colors are not required for the alternate squares of the playing area in order to discern and use the playing squares, and, in fact, to provide a gameboard in which only one color need be used on the entire playing area, if so desired, and with which, nevertheless, the squares to be played on are easily and quickly distinguished from the other alternating, non-playing squares.

Another object of the invention is to construct a checkerboard or analogous game board in which the playing squares are disposed in one plane and the alternating squares are disposed in a different and preferably lower plane, whereby, even though all squares are of the same color, the playing squares cast the lower squares into shadow such that, under any normal lighting conditions, great

2

contrast between the two sets of squares is present and the playing squares are very readily distinguished from the other squares.

Another and related object of the invention is to provide a gameboard in which, as a result of the arrangement of the two sets of squares in different planes as just stated, one set of squares may be made from prepainted or colored sheet material, such as painted sheet metal, and the other set may be made from a sheet of material of a different color to accentuate the contrast between alternate squares of the playing area when one sheet is superimposed over the other.

Another resulting object is to provide a game board in which the entire board, or at least the playing area thereof, may be made by forming the two alternating sets of squares from prepainted or colored sheet material of the same or of different colors, thereby eliminating the work and resulting cost of painting or otherwise coloring the playing board after assembly.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel checkerboard having the sets of alternating squares of the playing area in different planes so that one set of squares may be conspicuously set off from the other by the use of different materials, such as sheet metal or molded plastic, and to use such materials, either in the same or in different color, so that a very decorative and attractive item results and whereby sales appeal of such commodity is enhanced.

A further and related object is to provide a gameboard that may be produced by stamping and drawing from sheet metal, or by pressure molding thermosetting or other types of plastic compositions, to the end that highly attractive checkerboards may be made at a very low cost.

Another object is to produce checkerboards and similar game boards which are not only inexpensive to manufacture and of highly attractive appearance, but with which magnetic men or playing pieces may be used.

Still another object of the invention is to construct a novel folding checkerboard having alternating playing squares in different planes so that the playing areas or platforms alternate with squares or pocket form, whereby the playing platforms and the pocket-squares cooperate, when the board is folded, to form enclosures within which the playing pieces or men are positively confined.

In the drawings forming part of the specification disclosing the invention:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a checkerboard, made according to one embodiment of this invention, in folded condition;

Fig. 2 is a plan view of the board opened and in condition for use;

Fig. 3 is a fragmentary vertical section on an enlarged scale on line 3—3 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary plan view, showing diagrammatically, certain steps in stamping out one of the playing sections of the board when the board is made of sheet metal;

Fig. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary vertical section taken through the board in folded or closed position;

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary view partly in side elevation and partly in section looking at the hinged side of the board, when it is folded or closed;

Fig. 7 is a fragmentary perspective view of a different embodiment of the invention; and

Fig. 8 is a fragmentary plan view, partly broken away, illustrating yet another modification of the invention.

The presently chosen, preferred embodiment, of the invention is shown in Figures 1–6 of the drawings.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate, respectively, the novel folding checkerboard in folded or closed condition and in open position for playing.

The checkerboard, designated generally by the reference B, comprises two identical halves or sections **20** of rectangular form with straight vertical sides hinged together at **22** so as to lie flat when open (Fig. 2), and to lie one on the other when closed (Fig. 1).

As usual, in folding boards of this character, each half section **20** has upon what may be termed the top face **24** thereof, when open, one half of the playing area or pattern A, and the two half areas mate or match with one another along the hinge line, which passes through the center of the pattern, as clearly shown in Fig. 2.

If desired the complete pattern may be surrounded, as shown, with a marginal area **26**.

In accordance with the invention, the playing area of pattern A is formed in a novel manner to produce the playing positions or squares and the alternate squares which run in staggered relation therebetween.

The playing areas or squares consist of platforms P which are disposed in a flat plane. The platforms P, if desired, may and preferably are in or formed to be a part of the plane in which the marginal area **26** lies.

The other or alternate squares *p* are located in a plane at a distance below and parallel with the plane of the platforms P with the result that the squares *p* form the bottoms of pockets P'. In any ordinary light conditions the result is that the pockets P' are cast into shadow, forming what may be termed "Shadow Boxes." This condition is such that, even when the entire pattern is of one color, great contrast is effected between the appearance of the upper or platform squares P and the lower squares or areas *p* of the pockets P'.

Thus checkers can easily and comfortably be played by the use of men X upon the platforms P without delay or hesitation in distinguishing the playing squares from the squares below.

The vertical distance between the playing squares or platforms P and the lower squares is slightly greater than the height of men X normally used on the board. The dimension of the platforms will, of course, vary as the dimensions of the men, and therefore the size of the board and of the squares thereon increases or decreases with the size of the men, but in all cases the area of the men used should be less than the area

of the pockets P'. The advantage of this relation will be explained later.

The playing board B of Figures 1–6 is formed of sheet metal and is preferably constructed in the following manner.

The bottom portion of each section or half **20** is formed of a sheet metal piece which has a flat outer wall **30** and upturned side and outer or end flanges **32** and **34** respectively. The side walls may be turned in at **36**, Figures 1 and 6, to provide sections to which the hinges **22** may be attached, as by rivets or welding (see **38**, Figure 6). The sheet metal pieces just described not only form the bottom of the board when open, but also act as the cover C for the board when closed, as seen in Figure 1.

The pockets P' and the alternating playing platforms P may be produced in various ways, one desirable construction being shown diagrammatically in Figure 4.

A sheet M of metal, such as galvanized iron or tin plate, previously colored if desired, is stamped or otherwise marked as shown, in positions corresponding to what are to be the pockets P' of the finished board, to form diagonal slits **40** at 45° angles extending from small central, previously cut-out squares or openings **42**. The outer ends of the slits **40** terminate short of what will be the corners of the platforms P. By a further stamping or drawing operation, the portions of metal between the slits **40** are bent at about 90° from the face of the plate and along lines defining approximately the ultimate margins or edge portions of the platforms P.

The result is the provision of legs **44** (Fig. 3) by which the platforms P may be supported upon the inner faces of the bottom or cover walls **30**. The margins **46** at the sides and one edge of each plate M are also bent simultaneously with the legs **44** and may be of the same length as or slightly shorter than those legs. The length or dimension of the legs **44** in turn is slightly greater than the height of playing pieces or men to be used with the resulting game board.

The size of the finished stamped sheets M just described is preferably such that they will fit snugly within the flanges **32** and **34** of the half sections **20**, so that the flanges **46** and flanges **32**, **34**, **36** of the sheet M and stamped members **30** may be secured together in face to face relation to form the two halves of the gameboard.

By the construction described, the platforms P may be supported firmly, face uppermost, in the cover elements C with the legs **44**, which define the walls of the pockets P', resting against the cover walls **30** to adequately support and reinforce the platforms and to enable them to withstand downward pressure. The exposed portions of the inner faces of said cover elements form the bottoms *p* of the pockets P' and the legs **44** of adjacent platforms P form the sides of the pockets.

The described procedure in producing the stamped or drawn member to form the platforms P is such that the edges of the latter are left slightly rounded, and by terminating the slits **40** short of the corners, as explained, short portions **50** (Fig. 4) are left to connect the corners of the platforms one with another (see Figure 2).

As thus far described, the folded board will have an unfinished appearance since the inner or hinged edges of the sections **20** will show the marginal pockets and adjacent platform legs.

This unfinished appearance may be overcome as by the construction shown (see Figures 1 and

5), wherein the hinges **22** at opposite sides of the folded structure have their flaps or connected portions **52** elongated and carried across the intervening marginal areas to form closures which conceal the otherwise exposed inner ends of the sections **20**. Other suitable means however, could be used to effect the desired result.

It should be obvious that, if suitable metal is used to make at least the elements from which the platforms P are formed, magnetic men may be used for play on the board described, and such men will adhere to the playing surface and not become unintentionally detached therefrom. However, either the bottom wall or cover structure and/or the platform element can be made of non-metallic material and non-magnetic men used therewith without departing from the novel arrangement of playing platforms or squares and intervening pockets.

In the arrangement disclosed, an important advantage is attained if men of the same approximate height as the distance between the platform plane and the plane of the bottom wall **30** are used. Such men, when left in played position, or in any desired arrangement on the platforms of the playing squares P, may be effectually retained in such positions and positively prevented from shifting from such positions when the board is closed or folded as in Figure 1, for, when the board is folded, each pocket P′ of one section fits down upon a corresponding platform P of the other section, enveloping the man on the platform, and providing a complete closure from which the playing piece cannot possibly escape. (See Figures 5 and 6).

It will be apparent that by making the halves or sections of folding checkerboards or other playing boards in two parts in the manner described, the inner or playing portion, can be made of suitably colored sheet metal of a sort where desired, to enable magnetic playing pieces to adhere thereto. The outer or covering portions can also be made of sheet metal and, if desired, of a different color, or they may be made of molded plastic or the like material of a different or contrasting color. The foregoing relative selection of materials may be reversed if desired; or further, both parts could be made of plastic. However, almost unlimited choice is allowed in color selection so that very attractive boards can be produced without complicated painting or printing processes.

Instead of making the sections of the checkerboard containing the playing platforms or squares of sheet metal or the like by a stamping or drawing procedure as above described, a similar element may be produced by pressure molding of the thermosetting or other plastic material.

A fragmentary perspective view of a portion of a checkboard so made is shown in Figure 7. Here suitable dies or molds are used, so that, when the resulting one piece item is removed therefrom, playing squares or platforms, S alternating with pockets S′ will result. The platforms S have integral depending margins or skirts **60** formed continuously with the skirts in adjacent areas. The pockets S′ are defined by the open spaces surrounded by the skirts **60** depending from adjacent platforms S. In this manner the interconnecting portions **50***a* joining the corners of adjacent squares S will extend to the skirt bottoms and provide a very strong structure, offering the needed reinforcement and resistance to pressure for preventing deflection or breaking of the checkerboard in use. Of course, the playing portions of the checkerboard are secured within covering portions similar to the covering portions **30** already described, thereby to form the complete, folding board.

While the plastic form just described is not intended to cooperate with magnetic playing pieces to retain such men on the board, a similar item, molded of a composition now available, and containing iron powder or analogous magnetically attractive material may be made, which is suitable for cooperation with magnetic playing pieces.

Another modified construction is shown in Figure 8. In this view a portion of a playing section is shown in which the body is made of plastic or the like, in the manner of the piece shown in Figure 7. Platforms or playing squares S are here also connected with pendant skirts **60** integrally formed to support the platforms S and to define the pockets S′. In this construction provision is made to enable magnetic men to be used, by molding or embedding iron, steel or other suitable metal buttons or inserts *s* in the platforms S to lie flush with the top faces thereof. These inserts or buttons *s* will magnetically cooperate with and hold metallic men.

While the invention has been described in connection with several different embodiments thereof, it is capable of further modifications, and this application is intended to cover any variations, uses or adaptations of the invention following, in general, the principles of the invention and including such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which the invention pertains and as may be applied to the essential features hereinbefore set forth and as fall within the scope of the invention and the limits of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A checkerboard comprising an upper, flat sheet of material having thereon a plurality of playing squares alternating, in staggered relation with a plurality of substantially square holes punched out of said sheet, the marginal portions of said sheet around said square holes having rounded corners to thereby leave portions of said sheet to connect adjacent playing squares one to another at the corners thereof, and a second sheet of material below and in spaced parallel relation to the playing squares of said upper sheet, portions of said second sheet providing squares alternating with said playing squares, and means for supporting the playing squares of the first sheet above and in spaced, parallel relation to the second sheet.

2. The combination of playing pieces and a folding checkerboard comprising two substantially like half sections each including playing platforms arranged in alternating, staggered relation with depressed pockets, said playing platforms having playing surfaces lying in one plane, and the bottoms of said pockets lying in a plane below the first-named plane, the distance between said two planes being at least the height of said playing pieces, the sides of those pockets at a margin of said section adjacent a similar margin of the other section being open and exposed, each section having an end wall and opposite side walls, the latter having parts extending inwardly along opposite end portions of said margin of the related section, hinge members secured to the marginal end portions of the side walls of the respective sections to pivotally secure said sections, and said hinge members having parts posi-

tioned over and concealing said exposed pockets, each of the pockets in either section, when the checker board is folded, resting over a playing platform on the other section, whereby a playing piece on that platform is completely enclosed and retained against escape from its position by the cooperative relation between said platform and the opposed pocket, and said sections together forming a checkered playing pattern when the checker board is opened.

3. The combination of playing pieces and a checkerboard comprising an upper, flat sheet of material having thereon a plurality of playing squares alternating, in staggered relation with a plurality of substantially square holes punched out of said sheet, and a second sheet of material in spaced, parallel relation to and below said first sheet, said first sheet having integral pendant longitudinal and transverse walls bounding said square holes to thereby form pockets which are shadowed by said playing squares, and said second sheet engaging the bottom edges of said pendant walls to form the bottoms of said pockets, said second sheet lying in a plane which is spaced below the plane of said first sheet a distance equal at least to the height of said playing pieces.

4. The combination of playing pieces and a checkerboard comprising an upper, flat sheet of material having thereon a plurality of playing squares alternating, in staggered relation with a plurality of substantially square holes punched out of said sheet, and a second sheet of material in spaced, parallel relation to and below said first sheet, said first sheet having integral pendant longitudinal and transverse walls bounding said square holes to thereby form pockets which are shadowed by said playing squares, said second sheet engaging the bottom edges of said pendant walls to form the bottoms of said pockets, said second sheet lying in a plane which is spaced below the plane of said first sheet a distance equal at least to the height of said playing squares, and said playing squares of said first sheet having embedded therein flat magnetically attracted metal inserts with their faces flush with those of said playing squares whereby magnetic playing pieces may adhere to said playing squares.

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