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PATENTS

AUSTRALIA
Patents Act 1990

PATENT REQUEST: STANDARD PATENT

We, RUBBERMAID INCORPORATED being the person(s) identified below as the Applicant, request the grant of a standard patent to the person identified below as the Nominated Person, for an invention described in the accompanying complete specification.

Full application details follow.

Applicant and Nominated Person: RUBBERMAID INCORPORATED

Address: 1147 Akron Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691-6000
United States Of America

Invention Title: Storage container having fragrance dispensing compartment

Name(s) of Actual Inventor(s): Albert T Kobilarcik; Stacy L Wolff

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BASIC CONVENTION APPLICATION(S) DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application No</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Country Code</th>
<th>Date of Application</th>
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<tr>
<td>08/392253</td>
<td>United States Of America</td>
<td>US</td>
<td>14 December 1994</td>
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We are not an opponent/eligible person described in Section 33 - 36 of the Act.

Drawing number recommended to accompany the abstract: Fig 2

Dated this eleventh day of December 1995

RUBBERMAID INCORPORATED

By:

FRED SCHILLING
Registered Patent Attorney
AUSTRALIA
Patents Act 1990

NOTICE OF ENTITLEMENT

I (We) James A. Morgan
authorised by Rubbermaid Incorporated
of 1147 Akron Road, Wooster, Ohio 44691, U.S.A.

the applicant and nominated person in respect of an application for a patent for an invention
entitled STORAGE CONTAINER HAVING FRAGRANCE DISPENSING COMPARTMENT

filed under Australian Application No. , state the following:

PART 1 - Must be completed for all applications.
The person(s) nominated for the grant of the patent
☐ is (are) the actual inventor(s)
☐ has, for the following reasons, gained entitlement from the actual inventor(s)
The nominated person is the assignee of the invention from the actual inventor(s)

PART 2 - Must be completed if the application is a Convention application.
The person(s) nominated for the grant of the patent is (are):
☐ the applicant(s) of the basic application(s) listed on the patent request form
☐ entitled to rely on the basic application(s) listed on the patent request form by reason of the following:
The nominated person is the assignee of the basic application from the actual inventor(s)
The basic application(s) listed on the request form is (are) the first application(s) made in a Convention country in respect of the invention.

PART 3 - Must be completed if the application was made under the PCT and claims priority.
The person(s) nominated for the grant of the patent is (are):
☐ the applicant(s) of the application(s) listed in the declaration under Article 8 of the PCT
☐ entitled to rely on the application(s) listed in the declaration under Article 8 of the PCT by reason of the following:
The basic application(s) listed in the declaration made under Article 8 of the PCT is (are) the first application(s) made in a Convention country in respect of the invention.

Dated this 3rd day of November 1995

Signed James A. Morgan
Status Senior Vice President

Signatory’s Name James A. Morgan

F.B. RICE & CO PATENT ATTORNEYS
A storage container is disclosed comprising a lid (12) and a base (14). A fragrance dispensing compartment (22) is provided to extend downward into the lid, defined by side walls (30), a bottom wall (28), and an upper open mouth (26). A door component (46) is provided to pivotally attach to the lid and to pivot downward to enclose the compartment mouth (26), or to pivot upward to open the compartment. L-shaped apertures (32) extend through the intersection of the compartment side walls (30) and bottom wall (28). Fragrance emitting material is introduced into the compartment (22) and transmits aromas through the apertures (32) and into the base (14).
AUSTRALIA

Patents Act 1990

RUBBERMAID INCORPORATED

ORIGINAL

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION
STANDARD PATENT

Invention Title:

Storage container having fragrance dispensing compartment

The following statement is a full description of this invention including the best method of performing it known to us:-
Background of the Invention

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to storage containers of the type comprising a plastic lid and base for use in storing myriad household products and, in particular, to such a container having an integral fragrance dispensing compartment.

The Prior Art

Storage containers for household and business use are common products. Typically, such a container comprises a molded plastic base that is translucent and a companion molded plastic lid. The lid has a dependent peripheral skirt that fits over an upper rim of the base and inwardly directed skirt flanges that engage the rim of the base to secure the lid in place. The container bases are stackable for compact shipment and display as are the lids of multiple container units.

While such containers have met with widespread acceptance, they are deficient in certain regards. First, it is not uncommon for consumers to store a wide variety of household goods in such containers, and frequently storage is for an extended period of time. Conventional containers are not airtight and ambient aromas can infiltrate the containers that are in storage use and transfer unwanted odors to the contents.

Secondly, such containers are frequently used to store cloth goods such as clothing. Moths can infiltrate the confines of the container and damage cloth goods stored therein. Conventional containers have no integral means for organizing moth repellents such as moth balls.
Summary of the Invention

The present invention overcomes the aforementioned deficiencies in available containers by providing a storage container base and a lid fitting thereover. The lid includes a fragrance dispensing compartment formed through a top panel and depending therefrom, defined by an upper mouth opening, a bottom wall, and side walls extending upward from the bottom wall to the mouth opening. The chamber receives fragrance dispensing material such as moth balls or cedar chips.

Aperture slots extend through the lower corner edges of the compartment, each slot having a vertical component extending through a compartment side wall and a horizontal component extending through the compartment bottom wall. Fragrance emitted by the fragrance emitting material in the compartment exits through the apertures into the container base.

A pivotal door encloses the upper mouth opening of the compartment when in use. For shipping purposes, the door pivots backward to lie flat against the lid top panel, making multiple lids stackable together in a relatively low stack as the compartment of one lid nests into the compartment of an underlying lid.

Accordingly, it is an objective of the present invention to provide a storage container having fragrance dispensing means.

A further objective is to provide a storage container having integrally formed compartmented fragrance dispensing means.

Still a further objective is to provide storage containers having stacking lids that include nestable fragrance dispensing means.

Another objective is to provide a fragrance dispensing lid for a storage container having improved fragrance venting aperture configuration.

Yet a further objective is to provide a fragrance dispensing storage container having relatively few component parts that are economically manufactured and readily assembled.
These and other objectives, which will be apparent to those skilled in the art, are achieved by a preferred embodiment that is described below and illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

Brief Description of the Accompanying Drawings

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the subject storage container with the lid in place and the fragrance compartment closed.

Fig. 2 is a front perspective view thereof with the fragrance compartment door in the open condition.

Fig. 3 is a top plan view thereof.

Fig. 4 is a longitudinal section view through the storage container taken along the line 4-4 of Fig. 3.

Fig. 5 is a section view through the fragrance compartment taken along the line 5-5 of Fig. 3.

Fig. 6 is an enlarged exploded front perspective view of the fragrance compartment and door component.

Description of the Preferred Embodiment

Referring first to Figs. 1, 2, and 6, the subject storage container 10 is shown to generally comprise a rectangular lid 12 and base 14. The lid and base are formed of conventional plastic material such as polypropylene by conventional molding methods such as injection molding. The lid 12 is formed to have a slightly domed central panel 16 extending outwardly to a downturned peripheral skirt 18. The skirt 18 intersects the lid top along an edge 20.

Positioned to extend into the top panel 16 at a forward end of the lid 12 is a fragrance compartment 22. The compartment 22 comprises an upwardly opening chamber 24 having an open upper mouth 26, defined by a bottom wall 28 and four side walls 30 extending from...
the bottom wall 28 to the mouth 26. A series of spaced apart, L-shaped apertures 32 extend into the ninety degree angle intersection of side walls 30 and the bottom wall 28 such that a vertical component of each aperture extends through a respective side wall and a horizontal component of each aperture 32 extends through the bottom wall 28.

Shown best by Fig. 4, the bottom wall 28 of the compartment 22 depends downward from an under side 34 of the lid 12 a distance, such that the bottom wall 28 is substantially coplanar with a downward edge of the skirt 18 of the lid. The compartment 22 is located at a forward end of the lid but it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the compartment 22 may be located at any location on the lid and still function in accordance with the teachings herein set forth.

With continued reference to Figs. 1, 2, and 6, the lid top is configured having a domed central portion 36 that extends outward from the center of the lid to a down stepped outward surface 38. The surface 38 then proceeds outward to peripheral edge 20 where it meets the skirt 18. Positioned at a rearward edge of the compartment 22 are spaced apart mutually facing sockets 40, each having an inwardly opening axial bore 42. A pair of spaced apart latch detents 43 are provided at a forward end of the compartment 22, facing inward as shown best by Fig. 6. An elongate pivot pin channel 44 extends between the sockets 40, extending into and recessed below the surface 36 for a purpose explained below.

A pivotal door 46 is provided of generally square configuration, comprising a flat plate portion 48 from which downturned side flanges 50 depend. Outwardly directed detent flanges 52 extend from outward sides of side flanges 50, positioned at a forward end of the door 46. The door 46 is provided with an arcuate, semi-cylindrical pivot flange 54 along a rearward edge and a pair of outwardly directed cylindrical pivot posts 56 at rearward ends of the side flanges 50. The door portion 48 is dimensioned to enclose the mouth 26 of compartment 22.

The door 46 is separately molded and is attached to the lid by insertion of the pivot posts 56 into the socket bores 42, with the door flange 54 thereby residing within the
channel 44 of the lid. So attached, the door 46 pivots downward into the mouth 26 and into a coplanar relationship with the lid surface 36 as shown by Fig. 1. The detent flanges 52 snap into the detents 43 of the lid as the door arrives at its horizontal closed position represented by Fig. 1. To open the door, upward pressure is applied to a forward edge causing the detent flanges 52 to move out of detents 43 and initiating upward pivotal rotation of the door about pivot posts 52. The door can be pivoted backward to lie flat against surface 36. With the door so positioned, multiple lids may be stacked one upon another, with the compartment 22 of one lid nesting within the compartment 22 of an underlying lid. With their compartments so nested, the stacked lids assume a relatively low profile, whereby conserving space during shipment and display.

The base container 14 is shown having side panels 58, and end panels 60 that extend upward from a bottom surface 66 to an upper rim flange 64. Handles 62 are formed in each end panel 60 to provide a hand grip for lifting the container. In the bottom surface 66 of the base 14 is a central recess 68 dimensioned and shaped to receive the domed lid surface 36 of a second container, whereby multiple containers and lids may be stacked upon one another. Each base 14 has four downward projecting feet 70 at the corners spaced apart so as to be positionable upon the outward edge surfaces 38 of an underlying lid from a second container.

Operation of the invention proceeds as follows. It will be appreciated that containers of the general type represented by the lid 12 and the base 14 can be used to store myriad household goods, including cloth goods such as clothing. Because storage may be for an extended period of time, ambient odors may infiltrate the interior of the base 14 and impart unwanted odors into the clothing. In addition, moths may infiltrate the interior of the base 14 and cause damage to the cloth goods stored therein.

To combat these problems, the subject invention provides compartment 22 in the lid 12. Aromatic substance such as cedar chips or a cedar block may be inserted into the compartment 22 and placed upon the bottom wall 28. The door 46 can be pivoted into the
closed position (Fig. 1), with latch detent flanges 52 snapped into detents 43. So positioned, the door is flush with the top of the lid and does not interfere with one container stacking upon a like-configured second container.

The aromatic substance within the compartment 22 imparts its aroma to the contents of the base 14 through the apertures 32. The apertures 32 are configured as an L-shape, having components that extend through the side walls 30 and the bottom wall 28 of the compartment. Accordingly, the apertures remain open for ventilating the contents of the compartment 22 even if the base is packed full enough to block the portion of the apertures 32 that extend through the bottom wall 28. The vertical components of apertures 32, extending through the side walls 30 will continue to ventilate the contents of compartment 22 even if the horizontal components of the apertures 32, extending through the bottom wall 28, are blocked by the contents of the base 14.

It will be appreciated that the compartment 22 can also be utilized for the containment of moth balls if so desired in like manner. Alternative materials can also be placed into compartment to impart a specific, desired aroma to the contents of the base 14 if so desired. Thus, the storage container can be used to bar unwanted odors from infiltrating the contents of the base 14 or to impart wanted aromas to the contents of the base 14 is so desired.

As described above, the compartments 22 of stacked lids nest to reduce the stack height of the lids and to thereby reduce the cost of transportation and display at retail stores. The storage container comprises only three components; the lid 12, base 14, and door 46, minimizing the manufacturing cost of the invention and minimizing its assembly time. The compartment 22 is integrally molded into its lid and the door component 46 is integrally molded having pivot posts 56. Finally, the fragrance emitting compartment and door do not interfere with the storage function of the container and do not detract from the storage capacity of the container. Thus, the container may be use conventionally for storage without interference from the fragrance compartment if so desired.
While the above describes the preferred embodiment of the subject invention, the invention is not intended to be so confined. Other embodiments, which will be apparent to those skilled in the art and which utilize the teachings herein set forth, are intended to be within the scope and spirit of the invention.
THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOW:

1. A fragrance dispensing storage container lid, comprising:
   a lid top panel extending outward to a peripheral edge;
   a downturned skirt connected to depend from the lid peripheral edge and to fit over
   an upper rim of a storage container base and enclose an internal storage compartment
   of the base;
   a fragrance dispensing compartment extending through the lid top panel, the
   compartment having an internal chamber defined by an upward open mouth, a
   bottom wall, and side walls extending upward from the bottom wall to the chamber
   mouth, the compartment chamber being adapted to receive fragrance emitting
   material through the chamber mouth;
   at least one aperture extending through at least one of the compartment sidewalls,
   whereby fragrance emitted by the fragrance emitting material in the compartment
   chamber exits through the aperture and into the internal storage compartment of the
   base.

2. A lid according to claim 1, wherein the lid storage compartment bottom wall is
   disposed below the lid top panel.

3. A lid according to claim 2, wherein further comprising door means attached to the
   lid top panel for selectively closing and unclosing the lid compartment mouth.

4. A lid according to claim 3, wherein the door means is pivotally attached to the lid
   top panel.

5. A lid according to claim 4, wherein the aperture has a horizontal component portion
   that extends through the compartment chamber bottom wall and a vertical
   component portion that extends through the one compartment chamber side wall.

6. A fragrance dispensing storage container comprising:
   a container base having an upwardly open central chamber defined by a bottom
   surface and side panels extending from the bottom surface to an upper rim;
   a lid having a top panel extending outward to a peripheral edge and a downturned
   skirt connected to depend from the lid peripheral edge and to fit over the upper rim
   of the base to enclose the base central chamber;
a fragrance dispensing compartment extending through the lid top panel, the
compartment having an internal chamber defined by an upward open mouth, a
bottom wall and a plurality of side walls extending upward from the floor surface to
the mouth, the compartment chamber being adapted to receive fragrance emitting
material through the chamber mouth; and
at least one aperture extending through at least one of the compartment walls,
whereby fragrance emitted by the fragrance emitting material in the compartment
chamber exits through the aperture and into the base central chamber.

7. A storage container according to claim 6, wherein the compartment bottom wall is
disposed below the lid top panel.

8. A storage container according to claim 7, wherein further comprising door means
attached to the lid top panel for selectively covering and uncovering the lid
compartment mouth.

9. A storage container according to claim 8, wherein the door means is pivotally
mounted to the lid top panel.

10. A storage container according to claim 9, wherein the aperture has a horizontal
component portion that extends through the compartment chamber bottom wall and a
vertical component portion that extends through one of the compartment chamber
side walls.

11. A fragrance dispensing storage container comprising:
a container base having an upwardly open central chamber defined by a bottom
surface and four side panels extending from the bottom surface to an upper rim;
a lid having a top panel extending outward to a peripheral edge and a downturned
skirt connected to depend from the lid peripheral edge and to fit over the upper rim
of the base to enclose the base central chamber;
the lid having an integrally formed fragrance dispensing compartment portion
formed therein, the compartment portion extending through the lid top panel and
having an internal chamber defined by an upward open mouth, a bottom wall, and a
plurality of side walls extending upward from the floor surface to the mouth, the
compartment chamber being adapted to receive fragrance emitting material through
the chamber mouth; and
aperture means extending through at least one of the compartment walls, whereby
fragrance emitted by the fragrance emitting material in the compartment chamber
exits through the aperture and into the base central chamber.

12. A storage container according to claim 11, wherein the lid storage compartment
   bottom wall extends below the lid top panel.

13. A storage container according to claim 12, wherein further comprising door means
   mounted to the lid top panel for selectively covering and uncovering the lid
   compartment mouth.

14. A storage container according to claim 13, wherein the door means is pivotally
   mounted to the lid top panel.

15. A storage container according to claim 14, wherein the aperture means comprises an
    elongate aperture having a horizontal component portion extending through the
    compartment bottom wall and a vertical component portion extending through one of
    the compartment side walls.

Dated this 11 day of December 1995
RUBBERMAID INCORPORATED
Patent Attorneys for the
Applicant:-
F B RICE & CO
Abstract

A storage container is disclosed comprising a lid (12) and a base (14). A fragrance dispensing compartment (22) is provided to extend downward into the lid, defined by side walls (30), a bottom wall (28), and an upper open mouth (26). A door component (46) is provided to pivotally attach to the lid and to pivot downward to enclose the compartment mouth (26), or to pivot upward to open the compartment. L-shaped apertures (32) extend through the intersection of the compartment side walls (30) and bottom wall (28). Fragrance emitting material is introduced into the compartment (22) and transmits aromas through the apertures (32) and into the base (14).