PORTABLE CONTAINER POSITIONABLE BETWEEN LOADING AND STORAGE CONFIGURATIONS

Applicant: Nicole CALISE, Lindenhurst, NY (US)
Inventor: Nicole CALISE, Lindenhurst, NY (US)
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ABSTRACT
A portable storage container adapted with peel away wall portions so as to be positionable between a loading configuration and a tapered storage configuration is provided. The storage container may include a plurality of elongated wall portions connected along a periphery of a base portion. A plurality of detachable fasteners may be disposed along the longitudinal edges of each wall portion so that adjacent wall portions may be joined by attaching the detachable fasteners, forming the storage configuration, and peeled away by detaching the plurality of detachable fasteners, forming the loading configuration. The storage device may include an elevated base support having a supporting platform that maintains the base portion at a readily accessible position above the peeled-away wall portions in the loading configuration.
PORTABLE CONTAINER POSITIONABLE BETWEEN LOADING AND STORAGE CONFIGURATIONS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to storage devices and, more particularly, to a portable storage container adapted with peel away wall portions so as to be positionable between a storage configuration and a loading configuration.

[0002] After finishing laundry at the laundromat and taking so much time to fold the clothes neatly, trying to get them back into the laundry bag is a chore. The access openings of such laundry bags are never large enough, there is always a part of the bag in the way of the clothing and by the time you’re finished stuffing all your washed goods back inside the bag, your neatly folded clothes are unfolded and wrinkled.

[0003] As can be seen, there is a need for a portable storage container adapted with peel away wall portions so as to be positionable between a storage configuration and a loading configuration.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In one aspect of the present invention, a storage device positionable between a loading configuration and a storage configuration includes a base portion; a plurality of elongated wall portions extending from a first end to a second end and further defined by two longitudinal edges, wherein the first ends are connected along a periphery of the base portion; and a detachable fastener disposed along each longitudinal edge so that adjacent longitudinal edges are positionable in the loading configuration and the storage configuration forming a tapered storage space.

[0005] In another aspect of the present invention, a storage system positionable between a loading configuration and a pronounced tapered storage configuration includes a base portion; a plurality of elongated wall portions extending from a first end to a second end and further defined by two longitudinal edges, wherein the first ends are connected along a periphery of the base portion, and wherein the plurality of wall portions comprise: two side wall portions, each side wall portion forming a generally rectangular shape; and two end wall portions, each end wall portion forming a generally acute trapezoidal shape; a detachable fastener disposed along each longitudinal edge so that adjacent longitudinal edges are positionable in the loading configuration and the storage configuration forming a tapered storage space, wherein the second ends in the storage configuration form an access opening; a flap disposed along a portion of a periphery of the access opening; a pair of backpack straps disposed along the plurality of wall portions; a supporting platform having an upper surface and an opposing lower surface, wherein the upper surface is dimensioned and adapted to accommodate the base portion; a plurality of releasable fasteners for removably securing the storage device to the supporting platform; and a plurality of casters disposed on the lower surface, whereby the base portion is more pronounced in the loading configuration.

[0006] These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following drawings, description and claims.
plurality of detachable fasteners 14 on the adjacent longitudinal edges may be adapted to detach (unzip) from one another so that the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 collapse (peel away) into the loading configuration, as illustrated in FIG. 4. In the loading configuration, the base portion 48 is accessible from 360 degrees of access, and as a result, a plurality of articles 36 may be easily placed or stacked thereon. In the storage configuration, the plurality of articles 36 disposed on the base portion 48 may be at least partially encased within a storage space 62 formed by the plurality of wall portions 70, 72. In the storage configuration, the second ends may form an access opening to the storage space 62. The access opening may be dimensioned and adapted so that the second ends may reach into the storage space 62 and remove at least one article 36 without having to operate a detachable fastener 14.

[0021] In certain embodiments, the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 may include two side wall portions 70 and two end wall portions 72, having different geometric shapes yet dimensioned and adapted so that the storage configuration forms a tapered shape. For example, the two end wall portions 72 may be generally form a mathematical acute trapezoidal shape, while the two side wall portions 70 form a generally rectangular shape. The two side wall portions 70 and two end wall portions 72 may take any shape as long as they function in accordance with the present invention as described herein, wherein an area of the storage space 62 decreases as a function of its distance from the base portion 48, facilitating the stacking plurality of article 36 of various sizes, as illustrated in FIG. 5.

[0022] In certain embodiments, the storage device 100 may include an elevated base support 80. The elevated base support 80 may form a supporting platform 40 having an upper surface and an opposing lower surface. The upper surface may be dimensioned and adapted to stably accommodate the base portion 48 thereon. A plurality of relesable fasteners 42, for example hook and loop fasteners, may be disposed on the supporting platform 40 for operatively engaging the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 so as to secure the storage device 100 thereto. A plurality of casters 52 may be disposed on the lower surface for rolling the elevated base support 80 loaded with the storage device 100. In certain embodiments, a retractable handle 54 may be disposed along the base support 80 to facilitate said rolling. Moreover, the supporting platform 40 may elevate the base portion 48 above a surrounding supporting surface, for example a floor or counter top. As a result, in the loading configuration, the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 may drape onto said lower surrounding supporting surface, thereby making the base portion 48 more pronounced, facilitating the sometimes precarious stacking of the plurality of article 36 thereon.

[0023] The plurality of wall portions 70, 72 may be formed from an outer layer 10 and an inner layer 12. The outer layer 10 may be made from a durable, weather-resistant material. The inner layer 12 may be made from an anti-microbial material. In certain embodiments, the outer and inner layers may engage opposing surfaces of the base portion 48, as illustrated in FIG. 5. A flap 16 may be disposed along a periphery of the access opening for removably securing it by means of a complementary buckle system 18, 20 disposed on the flap 16 and a nearby wall portion. An upper peripheral trim 34 may be disposed along the periphery of the access opening, whereby the upper peripheral trim 34 strengthens said access opening. Likewise, a lower peripheral trim 46 may be disposed along a periphery of the plurality of first ends near the base portion 48. A hook loop 24 may be disposed along the upper peripheral trim 34 for hanging the storage device 100 thereon. A plurality of handles 22 may be disposed along the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 for manipulating and carrying the storage device 100. A pair of backpack straps 26 may be disposed along the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 for the user 56 to wear the storage device 100, as illustrated in FIG. 1. A plurality of strap loops 30 may be disposed along the lower peripheral trim 46 for operatively engaging the releasable fasteners 42 disposed on the supporting platform 40. A plurality of pockets 28, 38, 50 may be disposed the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 for storing various articles 44. An elastic band 32 may be disposed along a periphery of some pockets 28 for securing said pocket 28.

[0024] A method of using the present invention may include the following. The storage device 100 disclosed above may be provided. The storage device 100 may be placed on the surrounding surface, such as a folding table or the floor. In the loading configuration, the plurality of articles 36, e.g., folded articles of clothes, on the base portion 48, typically with the wider articles nearer the base portion 48 so that a resulting stack tapers as it ascends from the base portion 48, as illustrated in FIG. 5. Balanced on the supporting platform 40, the base portion 48 is isolated from the collapsed plurality of wall portions 70, 72, facilitating a surer foothold by the articles 36 on the base portion 48.

[0025] Then the user 56 may join the plurality of wall portions 70, 72 by reattaching the plurality of detachable fasteners 14, forming the tapered storage configuration, and encasing the stacked plurality of articles 36 within the storage space 62. The user 56 may then secure the flap 16 about the access opening using the buckling system 18, 20, and roll the elevated base support 80 supporting the storage device 100, or alternatively using the pair of straps 26, the plurality of handles 22, or the like to tote the storage device 100.

[0026] It should be understood, of course, that the foregoing relates to exemplary embodiments of the invention and that modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

1. A storage device positionable between a loading configuration and a storage configuration, comprising: a base portion; a plurality of elongated wall portions extending from a first end to a second end and further defined by two longitudinal edges, wherein each wall portion forms a generally acute trapezoid, wherein a distance of the second end is less than a distance of the first end, and wherein the first ends are connected along a periphery of the base portion; and a detachable fastener disposed along each longitudinal edge so that adjacent longitudinal edges are positionable between the loading configuration and the storage configuration defining a tapered storage space having an area that decreases as the tapered storage space extends from the first end to the second end, whereby positioning the storage device from the loading configuration to the storage configuration urges tapering a stack of articles as it ascends from the base portion.
2. The storage device of claim 1, wherein the second ends in the storage configuration form an access opening.
3. The storage device of claim 2, further comprising a flap disposed along a portion of a periphery of the access opening.
4. The storage device of claim 1, further comprising a pair of backpack straps disposed along the plurality of wall portions.
5. (canceled)
6. (canceled)
7. The storage device of claim 1, further comprising:
   a supporting platform having an upper surface and an opposing lower surface, wherein the upper surface is dimensioned and adapted to accommodate the base portion; and
   a plurality of casters disposed on the lower surface, whereby the base portion is more pronounced in the loading configuration.
8. The storage device of claim 7, further comprising a plurality of releasable fasteners for removably securing the storage device to the supporting platform.
9. A storage system positionable between a loading configuration and a pronounced tapered storage configuration, comprising:
   a base portion;
   a plurality of elongated wall portions extending from a first end to a second end and further defined by two longitudinal edges, wherein each wall portion forms a generally acute trapezoid, wherein a distance of the second end is less than a distance of the first end, and wherein the first ends are connected along a periphery of the base portion;
   a detachable fastener disposed along each longitudinal edge so that adjacent longitudinal edges are positionable between the loading configuration and the storage configuration defining a tapered storage space having an area that decreases as the tapered storage space extends from the first end to the second end, wherein the second ends in the storage configuration form an access opening;
   a flap disposed along a portion of a periphery of the access opening;
   a pair of backpack straps disposed along the plurality of wall portions;
   a supporting platform having an upper surface and an opposing lower surface, wherein the upper surface is dimensioned and adapted to accommodate the base portion;
   a plurality of releasable fasteners for removably securing the storage device to the supporting platform; and
   a plurality of casters disposed on the lower surface, whereby positioning the storage device from the loading configuration to the storage configuration urges tapering a stack of articles as it ascends from the base portion.

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