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(54) **THREE PART SEPARABLE JEWELRY CASE**

(57)

ABSTRACT

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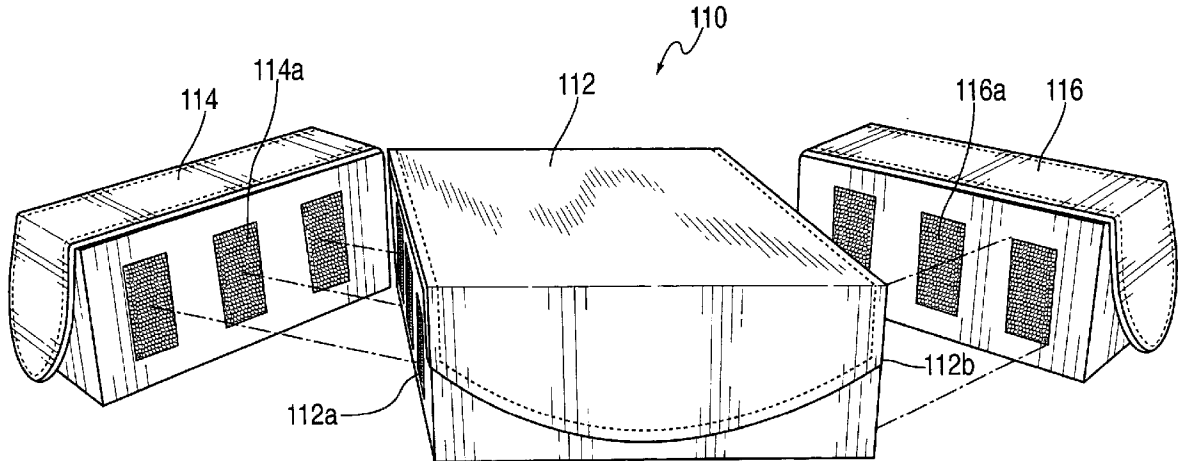
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A jewelry case includes three separable components: a center component and two side components. Each component has a hinged lid and means for securing the lid in the closed position. The side components are removably attached to the center component by fastening means. The presently preferred fastening means includes a plurality of magnets disposed in the sidewalls of the components. Alternative fastening means include snaps or VELCRO. According to the presently preferred embodiment, the side components are each provided with a removable zippered pouch and a plurality of necklace/bracelet holders. The center component preferably includes a removable tray and a plurality of pouches and cards for holding earrings, and other articles of jewelry. A plurality of ring rolls are also provided for use in either the center or side components.



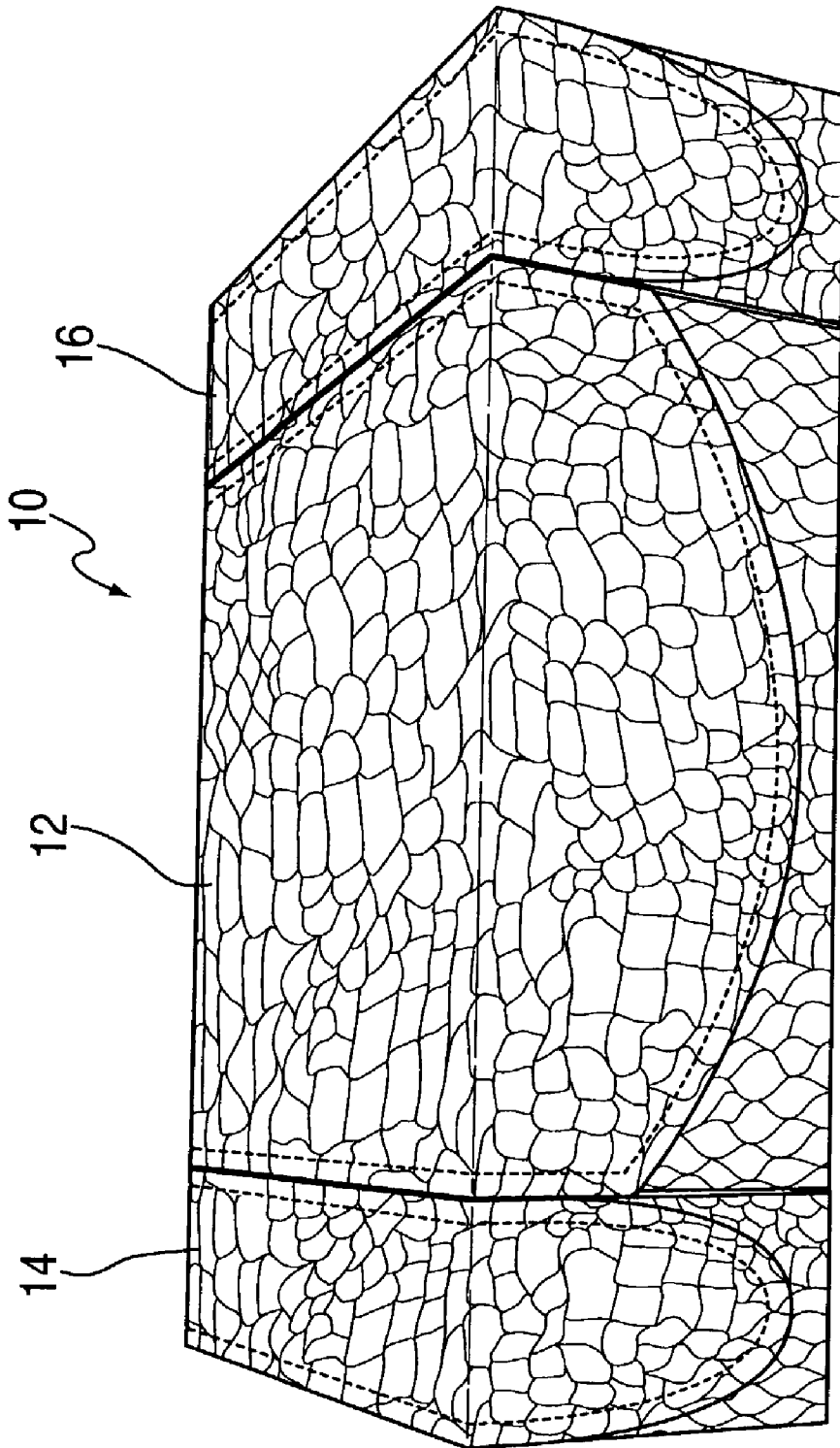


FIG. 1

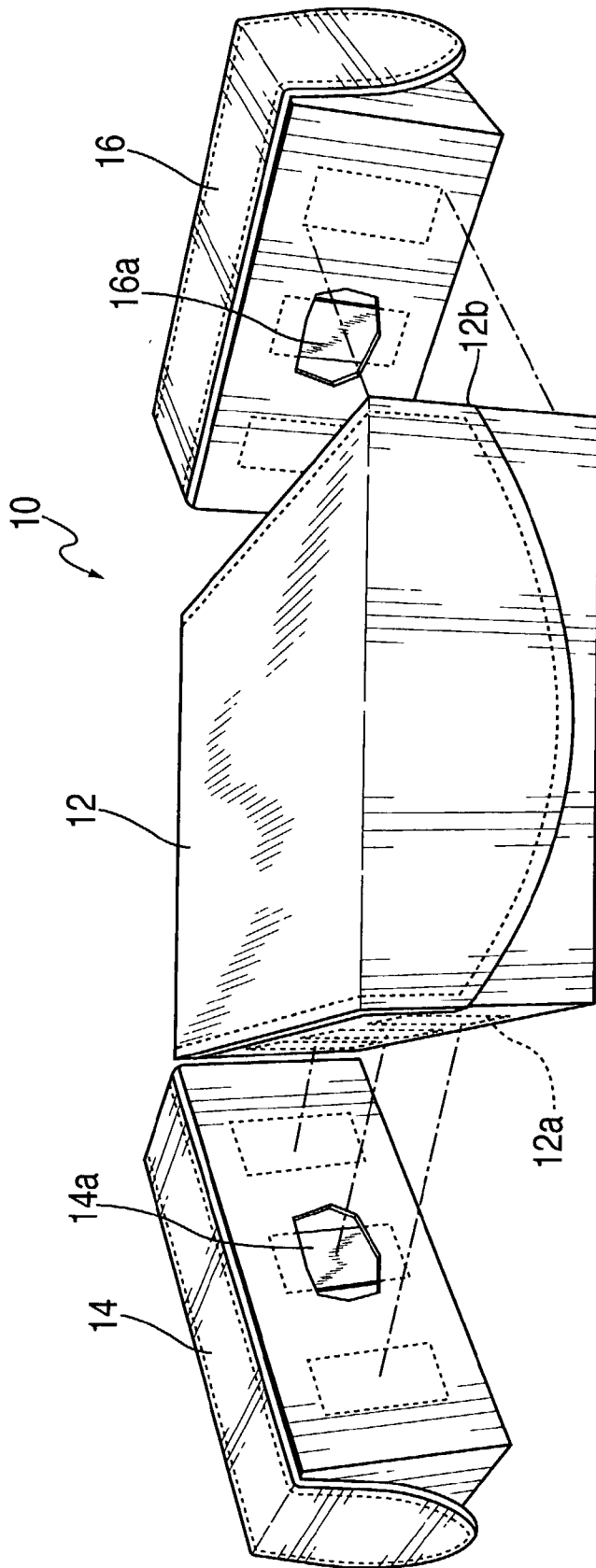


FIG. 2A

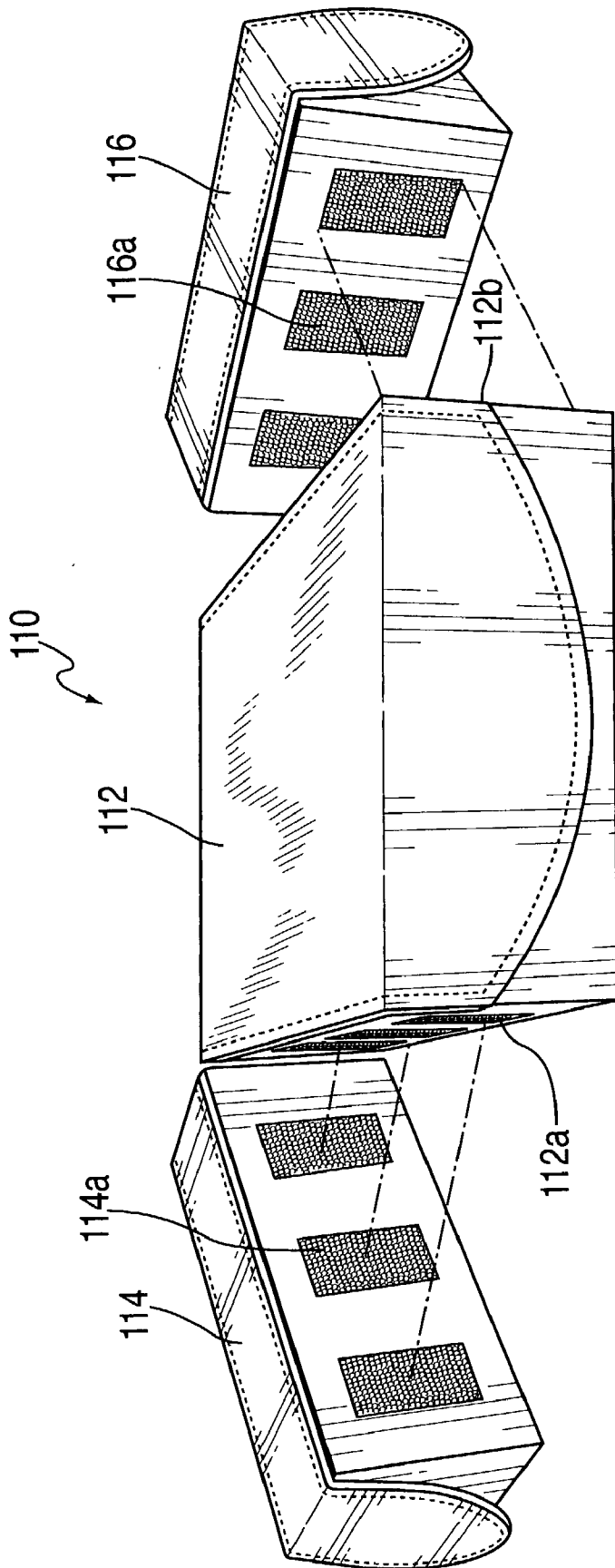


FIG. 2B

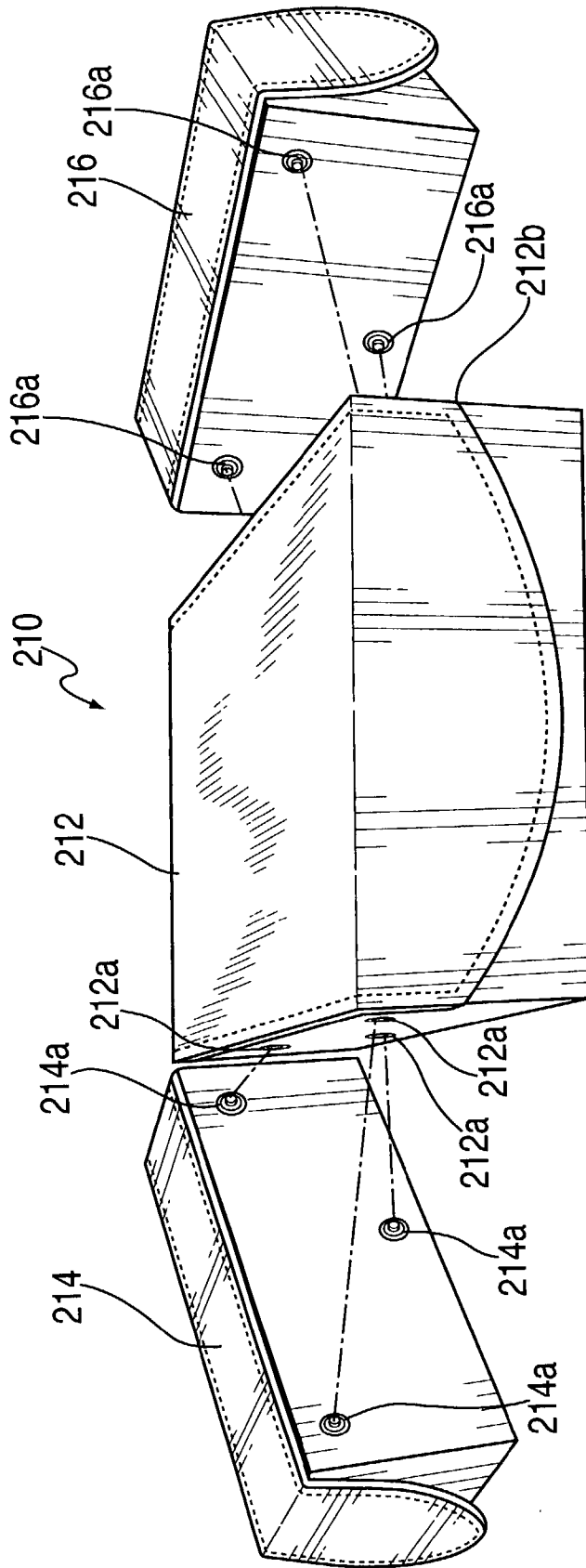


FIG. 2C

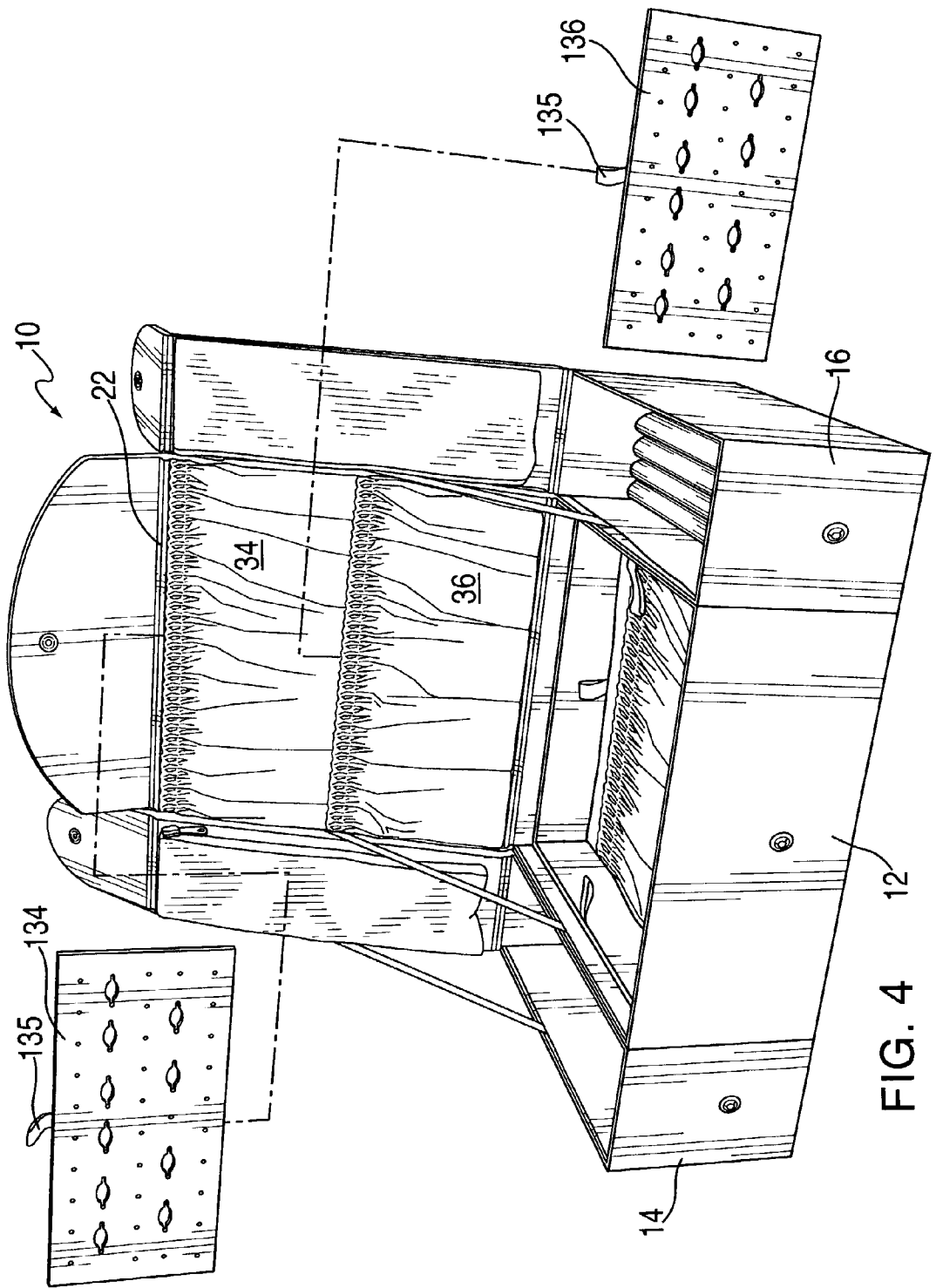


FIG. 4

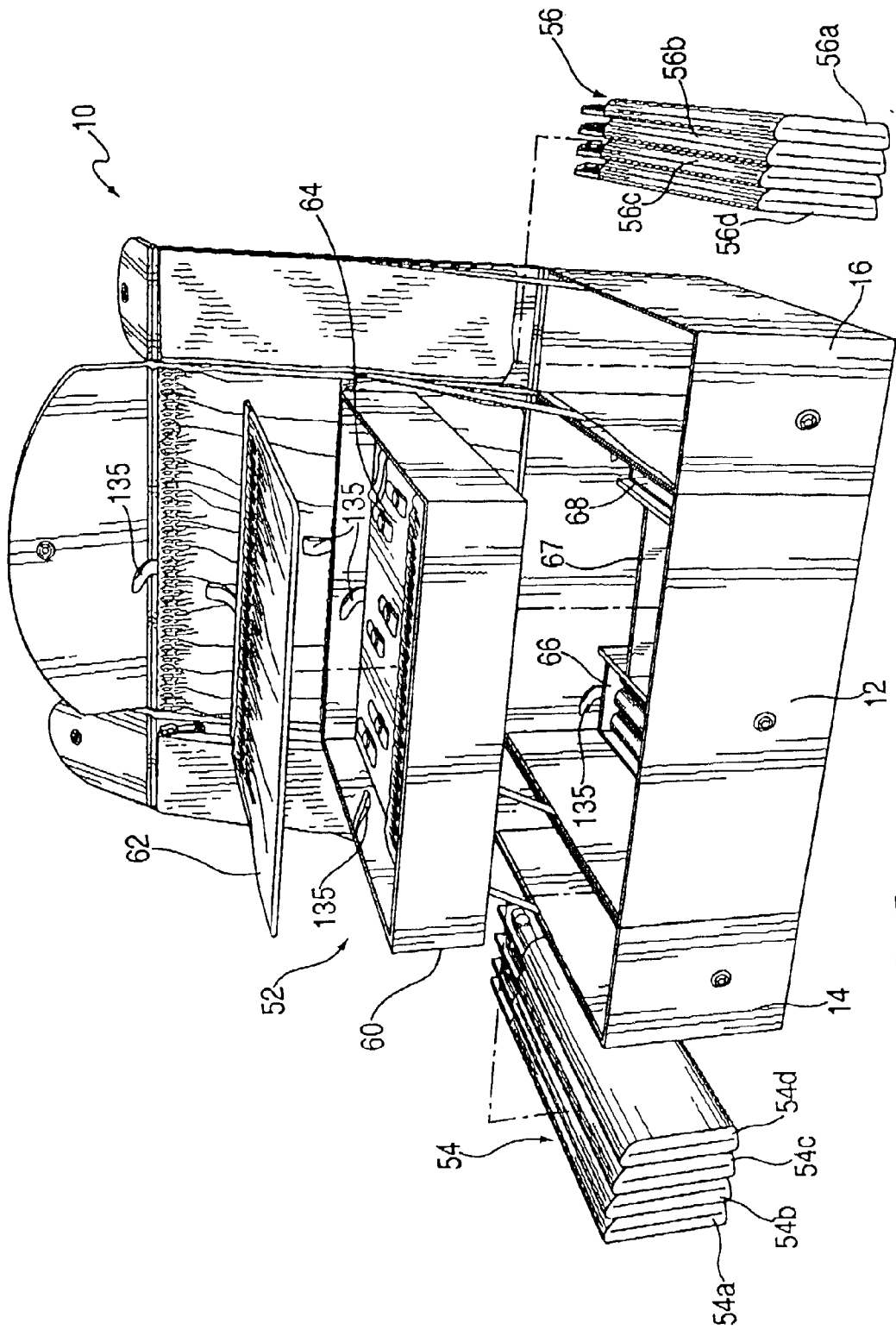


FIG. 5

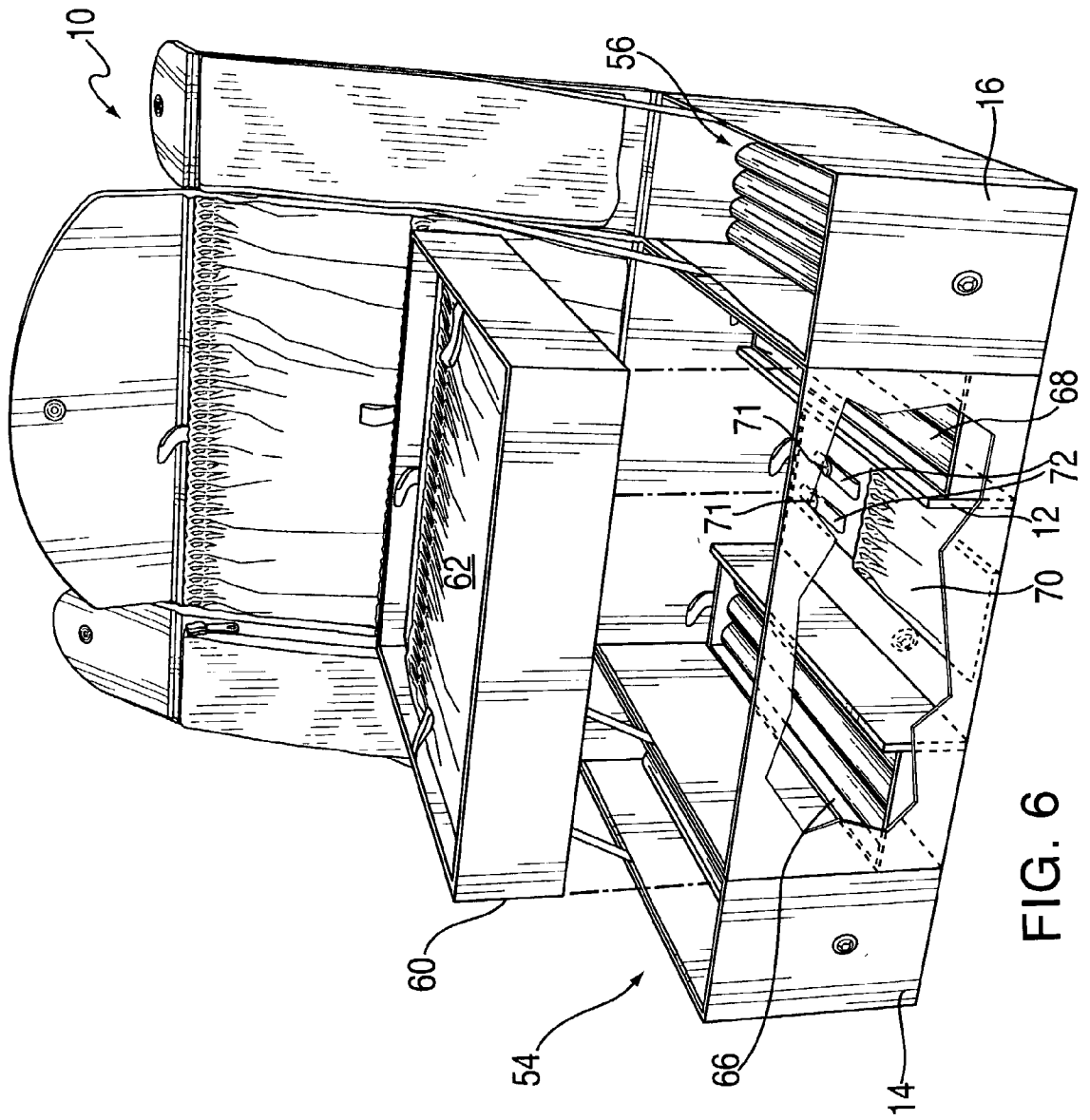


FIG. 6

THREE PART SEPARABLE JEWELRY CASE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] This invention relates to jewelry cases and more particularly to a case which is useful and efficient in the receiving, storing, carrying, organizing and displaying articles of jewelry.

[0003] 2. State of the Art

[0004] It has been a particular problem that when chains, necklaces, earrings, and other beaded necklaces with and without pendants and charms are put in a box or drawer-type jewelry cabinet or box, they become mixed up and tangled. In the case of rings, they become easily separated. In the case of very fine charms, if they become knotted or tangled, damage may result during the untangling process. While some prior jewelry cabinets have provided improvement in the hanging or supporting of jewelry articles, they still suffer the problems of tangling or knotting when the cabinet is moved or carried from one place to another. Such other prior art devices suffer from other disadvantages including lack of ready adaptability to ease of access, reception and removal, and instant visibility of the articles of jewelry.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 4,324,446 to LeSage discloses a jewelry case for receiving, storing, carrying and displaying jewelry, having a front portion and a back portion defining compartments therebetween. The front portion has a pair of closure members hingedly mounted to said back portion to provide easy access to the compartments. The back portion and the closure members are provided with compartments having means for supporting jewelry thereon, and transparent means are hingedly mounted between the back portion and each closure member whereby jewelry may be retained in spaced orderly relationship and are instantly visible and easily accessible upon opening of the closure members. In the preferred embodiment, the back surface of the back portion is provided with means for attaching it to a wall or for standing it upon a dresser, table or other supporting surface in an upright position. While the LeSage jewelry case has many good features, it is rather large, occupies double its closed footprint when opened. This requires that articles (such as perfumes and cosmetics) placed nearby must be moved before the case can be opened. In addition, the LeSage case is limited in adjustability.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 4,401,219 to Mink discloses a jewelry storage container which has a generally planar flexible web shaped member and a plurality of compartments mounted on the first web shaped member. Each compartment is formed of at least one additional web shaped member. At least one side of each of the compartments is selectively closed by means of a band shaped molded hook and loop fastening apparatus. Each compartment may be formed by two additional web shaped members. At least some of the compartments may include a plurality of linear connections, stitched or heat bonded, between the web shaped members to define subcompartments. The apparatus may include a plurality of tying members for securing the apparatus to an associated hanger. The apparatus may also include a loop and snap for securing the apparatus to an associated hanger. The apparatus may include means for securing an associated elongated piece of jewelry in at least

one of the compartments which comprises a band shaped molded hook and loop fastening apparatus for joining axially spaced sections of an associated elongated piece of jewelry at axially spaced intervals of the band shaped molded hook and loop fastening apparatus. While the Mink jewelry container may be desirable for traveling, it is not well adapted for location on a horizontal surface. In addition, due to the many closures, it is time consuming to store and retrieve multiple articles of jewelry.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,717,024 to Djezovic discloses a portable organizer case for jewelry or cosmetics which has a semi-circular dome shaped lid hinged to a receptacle. Within the receptacle is stored a pair of unattached, removable trays, each fitted with a mounting bracket. When the case is opened, the trays may be removed from the receptacle and may be mounted outwardly astride the end walls of the receptacle to form a dressing table. Within the hollow of the lid is mounted a mirror pivotably rotatable. Lower and upper rails are molded onto the receptacle and lid. When the case is closed, upper and lower rails nest allowing a pair of catches to sealably slide over both rails. Although the Djezovic case is suitable for location on a horizontal surface, when the trays are attached, the shadow footprint of the case is doubled. Even if the trays are not attached, they must be removed and placed somewhere to access the interior of the case. In addition, the adjustability of the case is limited.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 4,735,246 to Niehaus discloses a foldable display and storage receptacle for jewelry. A rectangular base cloth is provided with one or more cross hands. A plurality of small spaced-apart strips have a first end secured adjacent the band lower edge with an opposing free end being releasably attachable to the band. When attached to the band the strips form a series of closed loops for holding small objects such as necklaces, rings and bracelets. A closable lower pocket is provided that includes an exterior flap. The flap is readily piercable to accommodate objects having pin attachment means. The base cloth may include side covers and the overall assembly can be rolled upon itself for compact storage and easy transport. The base cloth includes connector elements for hanging and display and for securing the receptacle in its roll form. The Niehaus case is similar in approach to the case of Mink. Both are designed to roll up and when unrolled, hang from a hanger or the like. They are not well adapted for placement unrolled on a horizontal surface. They both have very limited adjustability.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,779,033 to Roegner discloses a jewelry carrying case much like those of Mink and Niehaus and which suffers from many of the same disadvantages.

[0010] In addition to the foregoing utility patents, a number of design patents have issued for different kinds of jewelry cases. Most of these have various trays which swing out or hinge out and which significantly increase the shadow footprint of the case when it is opened.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] It is therefore an object of the invention to provide a jewelry case which is adapted to be placed on a horizontal surface and is composed of a plurality of releasably attached compartments.

[0012] It is also an object of the invention to provide a jewelry case which is adapted to be placed on a horizontal

surface and which does not change its footprint or shadow footprint when it is opened and closed.

[0013] It is another object of the invention to provide a jewelry case which is adapted to be placed on a horizontal surface and which is widely adjustable as to overall size and the types of jewelry which can be securely stored therein.

[0014] It is a more particular object of this invention to provide a novel three-part separable jewelry case.

[0015] In accord with these objects which will be discussed in detail below, the jewelry case of the present invention includes three separable components: a center component and two side components. Each component has a hinged lid and means for securing the lid in the closed position. The side components are removably attached to the center component by fastening means. The presently preferred fastening means includes a plurality of magnets disposed in the sidewalls of the components. Alternative fastening means include snaps or VELCRO (e.g., hook and loop) fasteners. According to the presently preferred embodiment, the side components are each provided with a removable zippered pouch and a plurality of necklace/bracelet holders. The center component preferably includes a removable tray and a plurality of pouches and cards for holding earrings, and other articles of jewelry. A plurality of ring rolls are also provided for use in either the center or side components.

[0016] The presently preferred embodiment is covered on its exterior with either a crocodile print or artificial leather and is covered on its interior with velvet, flocked cloth or artificial suede.

[0017] Additional objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon reference to the detailed description taken in conjunction with the provided figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0018] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a crocodile pattern exterior, with the side components attached to the center component, and with all of the component lids closed;

[0019] FIG. 2A is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components removed from the center component, and with portions broken away illustrating the placement of magnets for removably coupling the components, and with all of the component lids closed;

[0020] FIG. 2B is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components removed from the center component, illustrating the placement of VELCRO for removably coupling the components, and with all of the component lids closed;

[0021] FIG. 2C is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components removed from the center component, illustrating the placement of snaps for removably coupling the components, and with all of the component lids closed;

[0022] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the

side components attached to the center component, and with all of the component lids opened;

[0023] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components attached to the center component, with all of the component lids opened, and illustrating removable cards from the center component;

[0024] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components attached to the center component, with all of the component lids opened, and illustrating a removable tray, cards and ring rolls from the center component and removable necklace/bracelet cards from the side components; and

[0025] FIG. 6 is a partially cut out perspective view of a jewelry case according to the invention having a smooth exterior, with the side components attached to the center component, with all of the component lids opened, and with portions broken away to illustrate the removable tray and ring rolls of the center component.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0026] Referring now to FIG. 1, a jewelry case 10 according to the invention includes three separable components: a center component 12 and two side components 14 and 16. The side components 14 and 16 are removably attached to the center component 12 by fastening means. The presently preferred fastening means is illustrated in FIG. 2A.

[0027] Turning now to FIG. 2A, the presently preferred fastening means includes one or more concealed magnets disposed in the sidewalls of the components. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 2A, the central component 12 has magnets 12a and 12b centrally located in each of the two sidewalls. The side components 14 and 16 each have at least one magnet 14a, 16a centrally located in one of their sidewalls. Preferably, three magnets are used in the sidewalls of both the central and side compartments. FIG. 2A shows in phantom lines the possible location of the three magnets. It will be appreciated, that magnets need not mate with magnets but may mate with a ferromagnetic material. It will also be appreciated that, optionally, the side components 14 and 16 may have magnets in both side walls so that the side components can be interchanged with each other. From the following description of FIGS. 2B and 2C, it will be appreciated that magnetic fasteners provide the most aesthetically pleasing embodiment when the components are separated from each other and used individually or in sub-combination. Thus, it will also be appreciated that the arrangement of the magnets/ferromagnetic material in the side components 14 and 16 be such that it allows the fastening of the two side components to each other without the center component 12.

[0028] FIG. 2B illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry case 110 which is substantially the same as the case 10 but for the different fastening means. Thus, similar reference numerals (increased by 100) refer to similar components. According to this embodiment, the side components 114 and 116 are provided with VELCRO hook and loop patches 114a and 116a, respectively and the center component 112 is provided with mating VELCRO patches

112a, 112b. It will be appreciated that the number, location, and dimensions of the VELCRO patches will depend on the dimensions of the components **112, 114, and 116**. It will be further appreciated that, for aesthetic reasons, VELCRO need not be provided on both sidewalls of the side components. As mentioned above with regard to the magnets/ferromagnetic material, it is preferred that the VELCRO be arranged such that the side components **114 and 116** can be fastened to each other without the center component **112**.

[0029] FIG. 2C illustrates an alternate embodiment of a jewelry case **210** which is substantially the same as the case **10** but for the different fastening means. Thus, similar reference numerals (increased by 200) refer to similar components. According to this embodiment, the side components **214 and 216** are provided with snaps **214a and 216a**, respectively and the center component **212** is provided with mating snaps **212a, 212b**. It will be appreciated that the number, location, and dimensions of the snaps will depend on the dimensions of the components **212, 214, and 216**. Generally, however, it will be desirable to use more than one snap on each component to prevent rotation of the components relative to each other. It will be further appreciated that, for aesthetic reasons, snaps not be provided on both sidewalls of the side components. As mentioned above with regard to the magnets/ferromagnetic material, it is preferred that the gender of the snaps be arranged such that the side components **214 and 216** can be fastened to each other without the center component **212**.

[0030] Turning now to FIG. 3, each component **12, 14, 16** is provided with a hinged lid **22, 24, 26**, respectively. Each lid **22, 24, 26** is restrained by a respective ribbon tether **28, 30, 32** which prevents the lid from opening too far. In addition, each lid has at least one pouch attached to it. As shown in FIG. 3, the lid **22** has two pouches **34**, which are fixed to the lid **22**. The upper ends of the pouches are provided with elastic closures **35, 37**. The lids **24, 26** are provided with removable zippered pouches **38, 40**. It will be appreciated that the ribbons **28, 30, 32** substantially limits the shadow footprint of the components when the lids **22, 24, 26** are opened and also provide for easier access to the pouches **34, 36, 38, 40**.

[0031] As mentioned above, each component **12, 14, 16** and its respective hinged lid **22, 24, 26** is provided with means for securing the lids in the closed position. As shown in FIG. 3, these means are mating snaps **42-43, 44-45**, and **46-47**, respectively. It will be appreciated from the discussion of FIGS. 2A through 2C that the means for securing the lids in the closed position could be magnets or VELCRO® fasteners or the like.

[0032] Finally as shown in FIG. 3, the components **12, 14, and 16** are each provided with a number of removable jewelry containers, generally designated **52, 54, 56** respectively.

[0033] Referring briefly to FIG. 4, the pouches **34, 36** on the center component lid **22** are preferably provided with removable cards **134, 136** respectively. These cards are adapted to hold earrings or the like and have tabs **135** made preferably of looped ribbon to allow for their easy and facile removal from, and insertion into, pouches **34 and 36** respectively. The other removable trays, cards and pouches etc., may likewise be provided with tabs **135** for easy removal and/or opening.

[0034] Turning now to FIGS. 5 and 6, the presently preferred embodiment of the jewelry case **10** is illustrated in more detail with reference to the presently preferred removable jewelry containers **52, 54, 56**. More particularly, the center component **12** has several jewelry containers defined collectively by reference number **52**, which includes a removable tray **60** containing a plurality of removable cards, e.g. **62, 64** which are adapted to store necklaces, watches, etc., and two removable ring roll trays **66, 68** beneath tray **60**.

[0035] Card **62** has one large pouch for storing large jewelry pieces and card **64** has three small pouches for smaller pieces. The bottom compartment of center component **12** has a H-shaped partition **67** which defines two lateral compartments in which ring rolls **66, 68** are removably mounted and two central open compartments in which loose jewelry or other cards or trays may be inserted.

[0036] FIG. 6 illustrates the bottom compartment of center component **12** with the center leg of H-shaped partition **67** removed and a pouch **70** in its place. Of course, numerous other configurations or arrangements of trays, cards, pouches, partitions, etc. are possible.

[0037] Pouch **70** has a pair of spaced-apart looped straps **71**, each comprised of a pair of tabs with mating snap fasteners **72** to allow for opening and closing of the loop. The looped straps may be employed to hold a necklace, bracelet or the like (i.e., the necklace would be placed within the loop of the strap and the depending end of the necklace would be inserted in the pouch **70** therebelow). The side components **14 and 16** are each provided with four removable card/pouches **54a-54d and 56a-56d** which are similar in construction to pouch **70**. These pouch covered cards are suitable for holding necklaces, watches, and the like.

[0038] From the foregoing, it will be appreciated that the various components of the jewelry case **10** can be mixed and matched in numerous different combinations. For example, the center component **12** can be used alone or in combination with one or both of the side components **14, 16**. Moreover, the side components can be used individually or coupled to each other. Although the tray **60** may only be used in the center component, the ring rolls **66, 68** and the cards, **54a-d, and 56a-d** can be used in either the center component or the side component. Ring rolls **66, 68** can also be used in tray **60**.

[0039] There have been described and illustrated herein several embodiments of a multipart separable jewelry case. While particular embodiments of the invention have been described, it is not intended that the invention be limited thereto, as it is intended that the invention be as broad in scope as the art will allow and that the specification be read likewise. It will therefore be appreciated by those skilled in the art that yet other modifications could be made to the provided invention without deviating from its spirit and scope as so claimed.

1. A jewelry case, comprising:

- a) a center component having a left side, a right side and a cover;
- b) a left component having a left side, a right side, and a cover; and

c) a right component having a left side, a right side and a cover, wherein

said components include attachment means such that the right side of the left component is removably attachable to the left side of the center component and the left side of the right component is removably attached to the right side of the center component.

2. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said covers is hinged.

3. A jewelry case according to claim 2, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with a tether which prevents it from opening beyond a measured point.

4. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with fastening means for securing the covers in a closed position.

5. A jewelry case according to claim 2, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with fastening means for securing the covers in a closed position.

6. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

said attachment means includes a magnet.

7. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

said attachment means includes a plurality of snaps.

8. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

said attachment means includes VELCRO.

9. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

at least one cover has a pouch attached to it.

10. A jewelry case according to claim 1, wherein:

at least one cover has a pouch removably attached to it.

11. A jewelry case, comprising:

a) a first component having a left side, a right side and a cover; and

b) a second component having a left side, a right side, and a cover, wherein

said components include attachment means such that the right side of the first component is removably attachable to the left side of the second component.

12. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

each of said covers is hinged.

13. A jewelry case according to claim 12, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with a tether which prevents it from opening beyond a measured point.

14. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with fastening means for securing the covers in a closed position.

15. A jewelry case according to claim 12, wherein:

each of said covers is provided with fastening means for securing the covers in a closed position.

16. A jewelry case according to claim 13, wherein:

said attachment means includes a magnet.

17. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

said attachment means includes a plurality of snaps.

18. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

said attachment means includes VELCRO.

19. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

at least one cover has a pouch attached to it.

20. A jewelry case according to claim 11, wherein:

at least one cover has a pouch removably attached to it.

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