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NESTING MAGNETIC TABLEWARE

Abstract

A system of nesting magnetic tableware comprises two pieces of tableware, each including a well, a substantially planar rim extending from the well, the rim having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a magnet affixed to the rim either above the upper surface or below the lower surface, and a recess corresponding to the magnet in the surface of the rim opposing the surface of the rim to which the magnet is affixed. The magnet of one of the pieces of dishware engages the recess of the other piece of dishware when the two pieces of dishware are nested in a stack and the magnets thereof are placed in proximity to one another.

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Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] This continuation application claims priority to U.S. patent application Ser. No. 18/228,956 entitled “NESTING MAGNETIC TABLEWARE” filed on Aug. 1, 2023, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/395,435 entitled “NESTING MAGENTIC TABLEWARE” filed on Aug. 5, 2022, the entire disclosures of which are hereby incorporated herein. [0002] A portion of the disclosure of this patent document contains material that is subject to copyright protection. The copyright owner has no objection to the reproduction of the patent document or the patent disclosure, as it appears in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office patent file or records, but otherwise reserves all copyright rights whatsoever.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT
Not Applicable
REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTING OR COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING APPENDIX
[0003] Not Applicable
BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION
[0004] The present invention relates generally to tableware. More particularly, the invention pertains to systems and methods for organizing, storing, and transporting tableware for outdoor use.
[0005] People everywhere enjoy cooking, serving, and eating food outside while picnicking, camping, boating, and RVing. However, outdoor food preparation, service, and consumption entails a number of unique problems that are typically not encountered indoors. For example, disposable tableware such as paper plates and bowls can blow away or tip over when subjected to a light breeze. They are also notoriously flimsy and therefore have limited utility in any environment. The same is also true of single use plastic utensils and cutlery. Disposable single use tableware of all kinds also has a marked negative impact on the environment.
[0006] By contrast, currently available reusable metal and ceramic tableware is stronger, less likely to blow away, and better for the environment, but rattles annoyingly and can become damaged or even break if sufficiently shaken during transport. Furthermore, travel-induced jostling can often cause even the most carefully stacked and packed tableware to become inconveniently jumbled inside the camping boxes and drawers commonly used to store and transport such items. Additionally, metal and ceramic tableware tend not to be very compact, which is an important concern for outdoor activities due to the limited storage space available in boats, RVs, backpacks, and the like.
[0007] Accordingly, what is needed are improvements in tableware.
BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION
[0008] This Brief Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description. This Brief Summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter. Features of the presently disclosed invention overcome or minimize some or all of the identified deficiencies of the prior art, as will become evident to those of ordinary skill in the art after a study of the information presented in this document.
[0009] Aspects of the present invention provide a system of nesting magnetic tableware. The system of nesting magnetic tableware can be embodied in a tableware set that includes or more pieces of dishware that are configured to nest within one another and remain magnetically engaged with one another in an organized and tidy stack until separated by a user. In some embodiments, the system of tableware can also include one or more utensils that are configured to magnetically

engage a portion of each piece of dishware so as to make the utensils easier to carry and to hold the utensils conveniently on the dishware, away from unhygienic surfaces, when not in use.

[0010] Each piece of dishware includes a well, a protruding rim, and at least one alignment magnet affixed to the rim. Each alignment magnet can protrude from an upper or lower surface of the rim. The rim of each piece of dishware also has at least one recess in a surface of the rim opposing the surface from which the alignment magnet protrudes. Each recess corresponds to an alignment magnet. Each corresponding recess is vertically aligned with each respective magnet on the same piece of dishware. Each piece of dishware can have multiple vertically aligned magnets and corresponding recesses spaced around the rim thereof, including on opposite lateral sides of the well of the piece of dishware. Each recess is shaped and sized to at least partially receive an alignment magnet of another piece of dishware. As such, when multiple pieces of dishware are nested in a stack with their respective alignment magnets is proximity to one another, each alignment magnet of each piece of dishware is drawn into the corresponding recess of an adjacent piece of dishware and thereby engages the respective alignment magnet of each adjacent piece of dishware in the nested stack. This maintains all the pieces of dishware in an aligned and orderly stack until a user removes a desired piece of dishware for use.

[0011] In one aspect, a system of nesting magnetic tableware comprises a first piece of dishware. The first piece of dishware can include a well, a substantially planar rim extending from the well, the rim having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a magnet affixed to the rim either above the upper surface or below the lower surface, and a recess corresponding to the magnet in the surface of the rim opposing the surface of the rim to which the magnet is affixed.

[0012] In another aspect, a system of nesting magnetic tableware comprises a first piece of dishware and a second piece of dishware. The first piece of dishware can include a well, a rim extending from the well, the rim defining a pair of substantially planar tabs extending from opposing lateral sides of the well, each tab having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a pair of magnets affixed to the pair of substantially planar tabs either above the upper surfaces or below the lower surfaces thereof, and a pair of recesses corresponding to the pair of magnets in the surfaces of the tabs opposing the surfaces of the tabs to which the pair of magnets is affixed. The second piece of dishware can include a well, a rim extending from the well, the rim defining a pair of substantially planar tabs extending from opposing lateral sides of the well, each tab having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a pair of magnets affixed to the pair of substantially planar tabs either above the upper surfaces or below the lower surfaces thereof, and a pair of recesses corresponding to the pair of magnets in the surfaces of the tabs opposing the surfaces of the tabs to which the pair of magnets is affixed. One of the first or second pairs of magnets are pulled into engagement with one of the first or second pairs of recesses when the first and second pieces of dishware are nested in a stack and the first and second pairs of tabs are placed in proximity to one another.

[0013] In yet another aspect, a system of nesting magnetic tableware comprises a first piece of dishware and a second piece of dishware. The first piece of dishware includes a well, a rim extending radially outward from the well, the rim defining a first pair of substantially planar tabs extending from opposing lateral sides of the well, each tab having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a first pair of magnets affixed to the first pair of substantially planar tabs above the upper surfaces thereof, and a first pair of recesses in the lower surfaces of the first pair of substantially planar tabs, each recess sized and shaped to at least partially receive one of the first pair of magnets. The second piece of dishware is configured to nest at least partially within the first piece of dishware, and includes a well, a rim extending radially outward from the well, the rim defining a second pair of substantially planar tabs extending from opposing lateral sides of the well, each tab having opposing upper and lower surfaces, a second pair of magnets affixed to the second pair of substantially planar tabs above the upper surfaces thereof, and a second pair of recesses in the lower surfaces of the second pair of substantially planar tabs, each recess sized and shaped to at

least partially receive one of the first pair of magnets. The first and second pairs of magnets pull the first pair of magnets into engagement with the second pair of recesses when the second piece of dishware is nested with the first piece of dishware and the second pair of tabs are placed in proximity to the first pair of tabs.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] FIG. **1** is a top plan view of a nesting magnetic tableware set including a bowl, a plate, a fork, and a knife constructed in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0015] FIG. **2** is a partially exploded elevated isometric view of the tableware set of FIG. **1**.

[0016] FIG. **3** is a side elevational view of the tableware set of FIG. **1**. The bowl and plate are nested in a stack.

[0017] FIG. **4** is a partially exploded depressed isometric view of the tableware set of FIG. **1**.

[0018] FIG. **5** is a partially exploded elevated isometric view of a nesting magnetic tableware set including a pair of bowls constructed in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention.

[0019] FIG. **6** is a side elevational view of the tableware set of FIG. **5** nested in a stack.

[0020] FIG. **7** is an exploded isometric view of the objects at location **7** of FIG. **5**. The lowermost bowl is omitted for clarity.

[0021] FIG. **8** is an isometric view of the interior of the male portion of the magnet housing of FIG. **7**.

[0022] FIG. **9** is an isometric view of the interior of the female portion of the magnet housing of FIG. **7**.

[0023] FIG. **10** is a partially exploded elevated isometric view of the objects at location **10** of FIG. **5**.

[0024] FIG. **11** is a top plan view of the tableware set of FIG. **5** nested in a stack.

[0025] FIG. **12** is a sectional view taken along line **12-12** of FIG. **11**.

[0026] FIG. **13** is a magnified detail view of the objects at location **13** of FIG. **12**.

[0027] FIG. **14** is a sectional view taken along line **14-14** of FIG. **11**.

[0028] FIG. **15** is a magnified detail view of the objects at location **15** of FIG. **14**.

[0029] FIG. **16** is an isometric view of the objects of FIG. **15**.

[0030] FIG. **17** is a sectional view taken along line **17-17** of FIG. **16**.

[0031] Reference will now be made in detail to optional embodiments of the invention, examples of which are illustrated in accompanying drawings. Whenever possible, the same reference numbers are used in the drawings and in the description referring to the same or like parts.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0032] While the making and using of various embodiments are discussed in detail below, it should be appreciated that many applicable inventive concepts can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments discussed herein are merely illustrative of specific ways to make and use the invention and do not delimit the scope thereof.

[0033] To facilitate the understanding of the embodiments described herein, a number of terms are defined below. The terms defined herein have meanings as commonly understood by a person of ordinary skill in the areas relevant to the disclosure. Terms such as “a,” “an,” and “the” are not intended to refer to only a singular entity, but rather include the general class of which a specific example may be used for illustration. The terminology herein is used to describe specific embodiments of the invention, but their usage does not delimit the invention, except as set forth in the claims.

[0034] As used herein, the phrase “substantially planar” means that the article or surface so

described is flat to the extent that any variance from perfectly flat is within commonly accepted manufacturing practices and tolerances applicable to the industry or product category to which the article or surface belongs. A surface or article need not be perfectly flat to be “substantially flat.”
[0035] As used herein, the phrase “tableware” means dishware and utensils. The term “dishware” means any dish, container, or vessel used for preparing, serving, or eating food, such as plates, bowls, trays, and the like. The term “utensil” means any kitchen utensil, eating utensil, or other hand implement used for preparing, serving, or eating food, such as forks, knives, spoons, and the like.
[0036] As described herein, an upright position is considered to be the position of apparatus components while in proper operation or in a natural resting position as described herein. As used herein, the upright position of a tableware set, including dishware and utensils, is the position in which such items would be when resting on a level table arranged for normal use. That is, a bow or plate in an upright position is generally lowest at its center such that the bowl or plate will hold a volume of liquid in the well of the bowl or plate without spilling. Vertical, horizontal, above, below, side, top, bottom and other orientation terms are described with respect to this upright position during operation unless otherwise specified. The term “when” is used to specify orientation for relative positions of components, not as a temporal limitation of the claims or apparatus described and claimed herein unless otherwise specified. The terms “above”, “below”, “over”, and “under” mean “having an elevation or vertical height greater or lesser than” and are not intended to imply that one object or component is directly over or under another object or component.
[0037] The phrase “in one embodiment,” as used herein does not necessarily refer to the same embodiment, although it may. Conditional language used herein, such as, among others, “can,” “might,” “may,” “e.g.,” and the like, unless specifically stated otherwise, or otherwise understood within the context as used, is generally intended to convey that certain embodiments include, while other embodiments do not include, certain features, elements and/or states. Thus, such conditional language is not generally intended to imply that features, elements and/or states are in any way required for one or more embodiments or that one or more embodiments necessarily include logic for deciding, with or without operator input or prompting, whether these features, elements and/or states are included or are to be performed in any particular embodiment.
[0038] Referring now to FIGS. **1-17**, there is shown a system of nesting magnetic tableware **10**. The system of nesting magnetic tableware **10** is embodied in FIGS. **1-4** by a tableware set including two pieces of nesting dishware, B.sub.1 and P, and two utensils, F and K. In this embodiment, one piece of dishware is a shallow bowl By and the other piece of dishware is a plate P, while one utensil is a fork F and the other is a knife K. However, it is to be understood that the number of utensils and pieces of dishware depicted in the drawings is limited for purposes of clarity, and that in other embodiments, the number of utensils and pieces of dishware can be greater or fewer than shown in the drawings. It is also to be understood that the type of each utensil or piece of dishware can be different than what is shown in the drawings.
[0039] For example, in FIGS. **5-17** the system of nesting magnetic tableware **10** is alternatively embodied by a tableware set including two pieces of dishware in the form of two identical nesting bowls B.sub.2, B.sub.2. The pieces of dishware B.sub.2, B.sub.2 in the tableware set depicted in FIGS. **5-17** are identical in all respects to the pieces of dishware B.sub.1, P in the tableware set depicted in FIGS. **1-4** except that bowls B.sub.2 are deeper than either of bowl B.sub.1 or plate P. It is to be understood that additional bowls B.sub.1, B.sub.2, plates P, and utensils such as fork F and knife K, or even differently shaped dishware and utensils (e.g., a spoon), can optionally be combined to form a tableware set customized to a given user's needs. Dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P and utensils F, K suitable for use in system for nesting magnetic tableware **10** of the present invention can be formed from any desired polymeric or metallic material or combination of materials, including but not limited to polypropylene, carbon fiber, stainless steel, and aluminum.

[0040] Each piece of dishware in a system of nesting magnetic tableware **10** of the present invention, including but not limited to B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P, is configured to nest at least partially within another piece of dishware when stacked, as best shown in FIGS. **3** and **6**. Each piece of dishware in a system of nesting magnetic tableware **10** includes a well **12**, a rim **14**, and one or more alignment magnets **15** affixed to the rim **14**. In the illustrated embodiments, each piece of dishware includes a pair of alignment magnets **15** affixed to the rim **14**. The well **12** defines a space in which a volume of liquid can be contained without spilling when the piece of dishware is in an upright position on a level surface. The well **12** has a depth and a width. Bowl By has a well **12** with a depth greater than that of plate P, while bowls B.sub.2 have a well **12** with a depth greater than that of either of bowl B.sub.1 or plate P. The rim **14** of each piece of dishware is generally planar and extends horizontally outward the from the well **12**. The pieces of dishware forming a tableware set can have any general shape (i.e., footprint), including but not limited to circular, square, and rectangular. In embodiments where the dishware has a generally circular shape, such as the bowls B.sub.1, B.sub.2, and plate P depicted in the drawings appended hereto, the rim **14** extends radially outward the from the well **12**. In some embodiment, all pieces of dishware in the tableware set have rims **14** of similar inner and outer diameters, but the pieces themselves can vary in depth from the rim **14** (i.e., well depth) to form a plate P or different types and sizes of bowls B.sub.1, B.sub.2.

[0041] Referring again to FIGS. **1-17**, the rim of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P includes a substantially planar upper surface **16** and an opposing substantially planar lower surface **18**. Each rim **14** defines a pair of outwardly (i.e., horizontally) protruding tabs **20** at opposing lateral sides of the well **12**. As such, each tab **20** of a pair is part of the rim **14** of a given piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. The pair of tabs **20** serve as handles by which a user can easily carry a given piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P and avoid potential burns caused by hot food in the well **12**. However, in other embodiments, the tabs **20** can be omitted and the rims **14** can have a uniform width around the perimeter of the well **12**. In some embodiments, each rim **14** has a uniform width at least as wide as the diameter of the alignment magnets **15** affixed thereto.

[0042] Each pair of alignment magnets **15** is affixed to the tabs **20** above the upper surface **18** of the rim **14** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. Each alignment magnet **15** is spaced around the rim **14** from each other alignment magnet **15**. As such, each pair of alignment magnets **15** is affixed to the rim **14** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P at opposing lateral sides of the well **12**. A pair of recesses **22** is defined in the lower surfaces **18** of the tabs **20** of each rim **14**. Each recess **22** is vertically aligned with each respective alignment magnet **15** on the upper surface **18** of the rim **14** of the same piece of dishware. As such, each recess **22** in a given piece dishware rim **14** corresponds to each alignment magnet **15**. In other embodiments, the pair of alignment magnets **15** can be affixed to the rim **14** (e.g., at a tab **20**) below the lower surface **18**, and the pair of corresponding recesses **22** can be formed in the upper surface **16** of the rim **14**. As such, the alignment magnets **15** can be affixed to the rim **14** either above the upper surface **16** or below the lower surface **18**, and the corresponding recesses **22** can be formed in the surface of the rim **14** opposing the surface of the rim **14** to which the magnets **15** are affixed.

[0043] Each recess **22** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P is sized and shaped to at least partially receive an alignment magnet **15** of another piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. Thus, the alignment magnets **15** of a first piece of dishware will fit into the corresponding recesses **22** of a second piece of dishware and engage the alignment magnets **15** of the second piece (see e.g., FIGS. **2-3** and **5-6**). Likewise, each alignment magnet **15** of each piece of dishware is sized and shaped to be received in a recess **22** of another piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P or utensil F, K. In this way, the alignment magnets **15** of each piece of dishware are configured to engage the recesses **22** of an adjacent piece of dishware when multiple pieces of dishware are nested in a stack and the alignment magnets **15** of each respective adjacent piece of dishware are placed in proximity to one another, as best shown in FIGS. **2**, **4-5**, and **13**. The alignment magnets **15** of each piece of

dishware pull the magnets **15** of one piece into engagement with the recesses **22** of another piece when multiple pieces of dishware are nested and their tabs **20** are placed in proximity to one another. This maintains each piece of nested dishware in a neat and orderly stack. The use of pairs of protruding alignment magnets **15** and corresponding recesses **22** on each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P provides two points of mating contact between adjacent pieces of dishware in a nested stack. This prevents individual pieces of dishware from spinning or rotating while nested in a stack.

[0044] Each piece of dishware is also configured to mount one or more utensils such as a fork F, a knife K, or a spoon (not shown) on the rim **14** thereof. Each utensil includes a substantially planar handle **26** having an upper surface **16** and a lower surface **18**. A magnet **15** is affixed to the handle above the upper surface **16**. A recess **22** is formed in the lower surface of the handle **26**. The magnet **15** of a piece of dishware can engage the recess **22** of the utensil F, K when the magnet **15** of the utensil F, K is placed in placed in proximity to the tab **20** of the piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. In this way, the utensils F, K are configured to attach to the alignment magnets **15** about the rims **14** of pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P to secure handle of a knife K, fork F, or spoon (not shown) to the piece of dishware so that wind or waves will not dislodge the utensils from the rim **14** of the piece of dishware. This also advantageously prevents utensils from being accidentally dropped on the ground and frees a user's hands from needing to separately carry or hold utensils when not in use.

[0045] Each alignment magnet **15** can be affixed to the respective tab **22** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P by a magnet housing **24**. Each magnet housing **24** can be made from any suitably durable polymeric material, such as polypropylene or acetyl. Each magnet housing **24** contains one alignment magnet **15**. Each magnet housing **24** extends through a hole **21** in the tab **20** of each dishware rim **14** such that the magnet housing **24** extends above the upper surface **16** and below the lower surface **18** of the rim **14**. Each magnet housing **24** also defines each recess **22** in the lower surface **18** of each rim **14**. As best shown in FIG. **13**, the magnet housings **24** affix the alignment magnets **15** to the rim **14** above the upper surface **16** of the tabs **20**. Each magnet housing **24** and the magnet **15** contained therein forms a protrusion **25** that extends above the upper surface **16** of the tab **20**. The protrusion **25** is receivable in the recess **22** of an overlying nested (i.e., adjacent) piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P or utensil F, K. When the protrusion **25** of a first piece of dishware is received in the recess of a recess **22** of an overlying nested piece of dishware, the alignment magnet **15** contained in the magnet housing **24** of the first piece of dishware engages the alignment magnet **15** contained in the magnet housing **24** of the second piece of dishware to secure the two pieces of dishware together. In other embodiments, each magnet housing **24** can affix an alignment magnet **15** below the lower surface **18** of the rim **14** and define a recess **22** in the upper surface **16** of the rim **14**.

[0046] Referring now to FIGS. **7-9** and **13**, each magnet housing **24** is formed a female portion **26** and a male portion **28**. The female portion **26** defines the recess **22** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. The male portion **28** defines the protrusion **25** of each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. The protrusion **25** is receivable in a recess **22** of another piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P or utensil F, K. The male portion **28** also defines an internal cavity **29** in which an alignment magnet **15** is received. The female portion **26** is secured to the male portion **28** to seal the magnet **15** inside the magnet housing **24**. The female portion **26** can be secured to the male portion **28** using methods known in the art, including but not limited to sonic welding, adhesive, friction fits, and the like. The female portion **26** defines a protruding stop **27**. The stop **27** is engaged with a notch **31** formed in one side of the hole **21** in each rim **14**. Engagement of the stop **27** with the notch **31** prevents the magnet housing **24** from rotating or spinning with the hole **21**, and thereby reduces rattling when pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P are nested in a stack for storage or transport.

[0047] Turning now to FIGS. **10-17**, each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P in a system of

nesting magnetic tableware **10** of the present invention can further include one or more bumpers **30**. The bumpers **30** are configured to absorb shock, reduce rocking, rattling, and vibration, and dampen sound produced when multiple pieces of nested magnetic dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P are transported or otherwise moved. Each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P includes a pair of bumpers **30**. A pair of bumpers **30**, combined with a pair of alignment magnets **15** and corresponding recesses **22** as noted above, can provide four points of contact between the rims **14** of adjacent pieces of nested dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P in a stack, thereby maximizing stability of the stack and minimizing sound produced by each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P therein during transport.

[0048] Each bumper **30** of each pair is affixed to the rim **14** at opposing lateral sides of the well **12** and is spaced around the rim **14** substantially equidistantly between the pairs of tabs **20** and alignment magnets **15**. Each bumper **30** extends through the rim **14** both above the upper surface **16** and below the lower surface **18**. Each pair of bumpers **30** on each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P is configured to engage the pair of bumpers **30** on an adjacent piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P when the pair of magnets **15** of one of the pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P is engaged with the pair of recesses **22** in the other piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P. Put differently, four pairs of bumpers **30** on two vertically adjacent (i.e., nested) pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, engage each other to stabilize and dampen vibration of the pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, when the magnets **15** of one piece are engaged with the recesses **22** of another piece, as best shown in FIGS. **11-17**. In this way, each pair of bumpers **30** on each piece of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P engages the pair of bumpers **30** of each respective overlying and underlying piece of dishware when multiple pieces of dishware B.sub.1, B.sub.2, P are nested in a stack.

[0049] To ensure that the bumpers **30** do not become dislodged from the rims **14** of the dishware, the rim **14** of each piece of dishware can include two pairs of secondary apertures **31** defined therethrough at opposing lateral sides of the well **12**. A portion of each bumper **30** can extend through each secondary aperture **31**. In some embodiments, each bumper **30** can include two spaced support posts **32** and two opposing (i.e., upper and lower) extension portions **34**. The support posts **32** extend through each pair of secondary apertures **31**. The upper and lower extension portions **34** connect the support posts **32** above the upper surface **16** and below the lower surface **18** of the rim **14**. Formation of the bumpers **30** around (i.e., through, over, and under) a portion of each rim **14** prevents the bumpers **30** from becoming inadvertently dislodged from the rim **14**. Each bumper **30** can be secured to the rim **14** and the secondary aperture **31** by overmolding. Each bumper **30** can be formed from any durable elastic material, including thermoplastic polyurethane, rubber, and the like.

[0050] This written description uses examples to disclose the invention and also to enable any person skilled in the art to practice the invention, including making and using any devices or systems and performing any incorporated methods. The patentable scope of the invention is defined by the claims, and may include other examples that occur to those skilled in the art. Such other examples are intended to be within the scope of the claims if they have structural elements that do not differ from the literal language of the claims, or if they include equivalent structural elements with insubstantial differences from the literal languages of the claims.

[0051] It will be understood that the particular embodiments described herein are shown by way of illustration and not as limitations of the invention. The principal features of this invention may be employed in various embodiments without departing from the scope of the invention. Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize numerous equivalents to the specific procedures described herein. Such equivalents are considered to be within the scope of this invention and are covered by the claims.

[0052] All of the compositions and/or methods disclosed and claimed herein may be made and/or executed without undue experimentation in light of the present disclosure. While the compositions

and methods of this invention have been described in terms of the embodiments included herein, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that variations may be applied to the compositions and/or methods and in the steps or in the sequence of steps of the method described herein without departing from the concept, spirit, and scope of the invention. All such similar substitutes and modifications apparent to those skilled in the art are deemed to be within the spirit, scope, and concept of the invention as defined by the appended claims.
[0053] Thus, although there have been described particular embodiments described herein it is not intended that such references be construed as limitations upon the scope thereof except as set forth in the following claims.

Claims

1. A system of nesting magnetic tableware comprising: a first utensil including: a first utensil planar handle; and a first utensil magnet housing disposed within the first utensil planar handle, the first utensil magnet housing including: a first utensil male portion having: a first utensil protrusion; and a first utensil female portion having: a first utensil recess, and the first utensil male portion and the first utensil female portion defining a first utensil internal cavity configured to receive a first utensil magnet.
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising: a second utensil including: a second utensil planar handle; and a second utensil magnet housing disposed within the second utensil planar handle, the second utensil magnet housing including: a second utensil male portion having: a second utensil protrusion; and a second utensil female portion having: a second utensil recess, and the second utensil male portion and the second utensil female portion defining a second utensil internal cavity configured to receive a second utensil magnet.
3. The system of claim 2, wherein the first utensil is further comprised of: an opposing first utensil magnet housing disposed within the first utensil planar handle at an end opposite that of the first utensil magnet housing, the opposing first utensil magnet housing including: an opposing first utensil male portion having: an opposing first utensil protrusion; and an opposing first utensil female portion having: an opposing first utensil recess, and the opposing first utensil male portion and the opposing first utensil female portion defining an opposing first utensil internal cavity configured to receive an opposing first utensil magnet.
4. The system of claim 3, wherein the second utensil is further comprised of: an opposing second utensil magnet housing disposed within the second utensil planar handle at an end opposite that of the second utensil magnet housing, the opposing second utensil magnet housing including: an opposing second utensil male portion having: an opposing second utensil protrusion; and an opposing second utensil female portion having: an opposing second utensil recess, and the opposing second utensil male portion and the opposing second utensil female portion defining an opposing second utensil internal cavity configured to receive an opposing second utensil magnet.
5. The system of claim 4, wherein the first utensil, via the first utensil magnet and the opposing first utensil magnet, engages the second utensil, via the second utensil magnet and the opposing second utensil magnet, such that the second utensil can be stacked upon the first utensil.
6. The system of claim 4, wherein the second utensil recess and the opposing second utensil recess are configured to at least partially receive the first utensil protrusion and the opposing first utensil protrusion, such that the second utensil can be stacked upon the first utensil.
7. The system of claim 2, wherein the first utensil and the second utensil are comprised of at least one of a fork, a knife, and a spoon.
8. A system of nesting magnetic tableware comprising: a first utensil including: a first substantially planar handle, a first utensil magnet affixed to the first substantially planar handle; and a second utensil including: a second substantially planar handle, a second utensil magnet affixed to the second substantially planar handle, and wherein the first utensil magnet engages the second utensil

magnet such that the second utensil can be stacked upon the first utensil.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the first utensil is further comprised of: a first utensil magnet housing disposed within the first substantially planar handle, the first utensil magnet housing including: a first utensil male portion having: a first utensil protrusion; and a first utensil female portion having: a first utensil recess, and the first utensil male portion and the first utensil female portion defining a first utensil internal cavity that houses the first utensil magnet.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the second utensil is further comprised of: a second utensil magnet housing disposed within the second substantially planar handle, the second utensil magnet housing including: a second utensil male portion having: a second utensil protrusion; and a second utensil female portion having: a second utensil recess, and the second utensil male portion and the second utensil female portion defining a second utensil internal cavity that houses the second utensil magnet.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the second utensil recess at least partially receives the first utensil protrusion when the second utensil is stacked upon the first utensil.

12. The system of claim 8, wherein the first utensil magnet and the second utensil magnet prevent the second utensil from being dislodged from the first utensil when stacked due to external forces such as wind or movement.

13. The system of claim 8, further comprising: at least one piece of dishware including: a well, a substantially planar rim extending from the well, and at least one dishware magnet affixed to the rim.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the at least one dishware magnet engages at least one of the first utensil magnet and the second utensil magnet.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the at least one piece of dishware further comprises: a pair of tabs at opposing lateral sides of the well; and the at least one dishware magnet is affixed to at least one of the tabs comprising the pair of tabs.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the first utensil magnet and the second utensil magnet engage the pair of tabs via the at least one dishware magnet, such that the first utensil and the second utensil may be stacked upon the pair of tabs.

17. A system of nesting magnetic tableware comprising: a first utensil including: a first substantially planar handle, a first utensil magnet affixed to the first substantially planar handle, and a first utensil recess formed in the first substantially planar handle; a second utensil including: a second substantially planar handle, a second utensil magnet affixed to the second substantially planar handle, and a second utensil recess formed in the second substantially planar handle, wherein the first utensil magnet engages the second utensil magnet such that the second utensil can be stacked upon the first utensil; and at least one piece of dishware including: a well, a substantially planar rim extending from the well, and at least one dishware magnet affixed to the rim.

18. The system of claim 17, wherein the first utensil is further comprised of: a first utensil protrusion extending from the first substantially planar handle, wherein the second utensil recess at least partially receives the first utensil protrusion when the second utensil is stacked upon the first utensil.

19. The system of claim 17, wherein the first utensil magnet and the second utensil magnet prevents the second utensil from being dislodged from the first utensil when stacked due to external forces such as wind or movement.

20. The system of claim 17, wherein the at least one piece of dishware further comprises: a pair of tabs at opposing lateral sides of the well; and the at least one dishware magnet being comprised of a pair of dishware magnets affixed to the pair of tabs, wherein the first utensil magnet and the second utensil magnet engage the pair of tabs via the pair of dishware magnets, such that the first utensil and the second utensil may be stacked upon the pair of tabs.