

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An expansion sheet adapted to be held and expanded by an expanding apparatus in the condition where a platelike workpiece is attached to said expansion sheet, said expanding apparatus including a first holding unit and a second holding unit opposed to each other with said workpiece interposed therebetween in a first direction, said first holding unit and said second holding unit being movable away from each other in said first direction, said expanding apparatus further including a third holding unit and a fourth holding unit opposed to each other with said workpiece interposed therebetween in a second direction perpendicular to said first direction, said third holding unit and said fourth holding unit being movable away from each other in said second direction, said expansion sheet having a peripheral area around said workpiece where said expansion sheet is adapted to be held by said first holding unit, said second holding unit, said third holding unit, and said fourth holding unit;

said expansion sheet comprising:

a base sheet; and

an adhesive layer formed on said base sheet, said adhesive layer having adhesion adapted to be reduced by applying ultraviolet light;

the adhesion of said adhesive layer in said peripheral area of said expansion sheet being lower than the adhesion of said adhesive layer in the other area of said expansion sheet;

wherein said expansion sheet is elongated and formed as a sheet roll;

said expansion sheet as said sheet roll being rolled in said first direction;

said peripheral area of said expansion sheet including a plurality of first low adhesion areas arranged at given intervals in said first direction, each first low adhesion area extending in said second direction over the entire width of said base sheet, and a pair of second low adhesion areas extending in said first direction along the opposite side edges of said base sheet.

2. An expanding method for an expansion sheet including a base sheet and an adhesive layer formed on said base sheet, said adhesive layer having adhesion adapted to be reduced by applying ultraviolet light, said expanding method comprising:

a first attaching step of attaching a platelike workpiece to said expansion sheet;

a holding step of holding said expansion sheet by using a first holding unit and a second holding unit opposed to each other with said workpiece interposed therebetween in a first direction and also by using a third holding unit and a fourth holding unit opposed to each other with said workpiece interposed therebetween in a second direction perpendicular to said first direction, before or after performing said first attaching step;

an expanding step of moving said first holding unit and said second holding unit away from each other in said first direction and also moving said third holding unit and said fourth holding unit away from each other in said second direction, after performing said first attaching step and said holding step, thereby expanding said

expansion sheet both in said first direction and in said second direction;

a second attaching step of attaching an annular frame having an inside opening greater in size than said workpiece, to said expansion sheet in the condition where said workpiece is set in said inside opening of said annular frame, after performing said expanding step;

a cutting step of cutting said expansion sheet along said annular frame after performing said second attaching step; and

an ultraviolet light applying step of selectively applying ultraviolet light to only a peripheral area of said expansion sheet where said expansion sheet is adapted to be held by said first holding unit, said second holding unit, said third holding unit, and said fourth holding unit, before performing said holding step, thereby reducing the adhesion of said adhesive layer in said peripheral area of said expansion sheet as compared with the adhesion of said adhesive layer in the other area of said expansion sheet.