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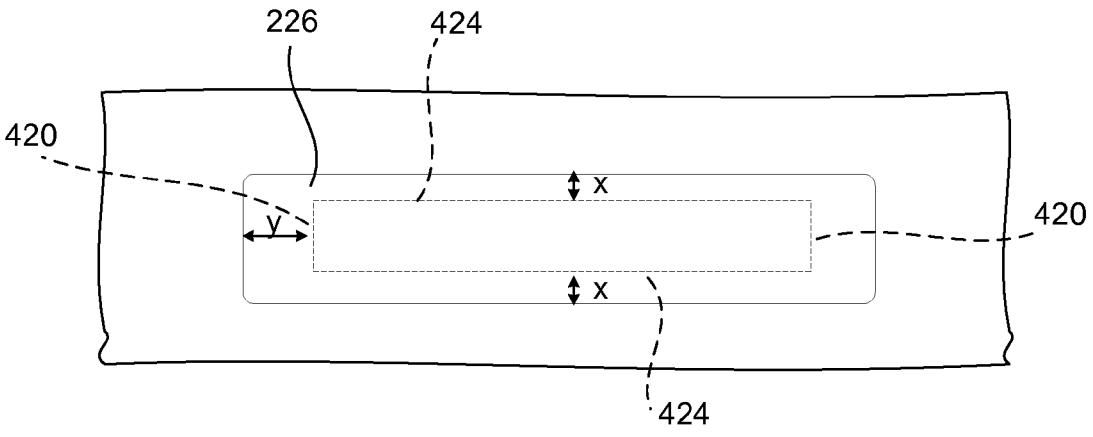
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(54) **Title:** LINE END SHORTENING REDUCTION DURING ETCH



(57) **Abstract:** A method for etching features in an etch layer is provided. A patterned photoresist mask is provided over the etch layer, the photoresist mask having at least one photoresist line having a pair of sidewalls ending at a line end is provided. A polymer layer is placed over the at least one photoresist line, wherein a thickness of the polymer layer at the line end of the photoresist line is greater than a thickness of the polymer layer on the sidewalls of the photoresist line. Features are etched into the etch layer through the photoresist mask, wherein a line end shortening (LES) ratio is less than or equal to 1.

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