Claims

1. A method for detecting the presence or absence of an ophthalmic lens (10) within a receptacle (1), the method comprising the steps of:

detecting infrared radiation coming from at least a portion (3) of said receptacle (1) where said ophthalmic lens (10) is supposedly accommodated,

analyzing said detected infrared radiation in a spectral portion in which absorbance (AL) of a material said ophthalmic lens (10) is made of is significantly different from absorbance (AR) of a material said receptacle (1) is made of, and

from said analysis of said spectral portion detecting the presence or absence of a said ophthalmic lens (10) within said receptacle (1);

wherein said step of detecting infrared radiation comprises detecting infrared radiation in a wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 10 μm; and

wherein said receptacle (1) is illuminated by ambient light only.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting infrared radiation in said wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 10 μm is performed using a filter which is permeable in said wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 10 μm.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed using an infrared sensor.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed using an infrared camera.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein said absorbance (AL) of said material said ophthalmic lens (10) is made of is more than 2% higher than said absorbance (AR) of said material

said receptacle (1) is made of, and more than 10% higher than said absorbance (AW, AS) of said liquid.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed from beneath a bottom (4) of said receptacle (1).

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed from a lateral side of said receptacle (1).

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed with said receptacle being filled with a liquid.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said receptacle (1) is part of a contact lens package comprising said receptacle (1) and a removable cover which is attached to a top surface (2) of said receptacle (1), and wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation is performed with said removable cover being attached to said top surface (2) of said receptacle (1).

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting said infrared radiation coming from at least a portion of said receptacle (1) is performed by detecting said infrared radiation coming from said whole receptacle (1).

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting infrared radiation comprises detecting infrared radiation in a wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 8.3 μm.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting infrared radiation comprises detecting infrared radiation in a wavelength range of about 7.7 μm to about 8.3 μm.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of detecting infrared radiation comprises detecting infrared radiation in a wavelength range of about 8.7 μm to about 10 μm.

14. A lens detection station for detecting the presence or absence of an ophthalmic lens (**10**) in a receptacle (**1**), the lens detection station comprising a detector adapted and arranged to detect infrared radiation coming from at least a portion (3) of said receptacle (**1**) where said ophthalmic lens (**10**) is supposedly accommodated, said detector further being adapted for analyzing said detected infrared radiation in a spectral portion in which absorbance (AL) of a material said ophthalmic lens (**10**) is made of is significantly different from absorbance (AR) of a material said receptacle is made of, and said detector further being adapted for detecting from said analysis of said spectral portion the presence or absence of a said ophthalmic lens (**10**) within said receptacle (**1**); and

wherein said detector is adapted for detecting said infrared radiation in ambient light only and in a wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 10 μm.

15. The lens detection station of claim **14**, wherein said detector is an infrared camera.

16. The lens detection station of claim **14**, comprising a filter which is permeable in said wavelength range of about 6.6 μm to about 8.3 μm, or is permeable in said wavelength range of about 8.7 μm to about 10 μm.