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Laundry Bag

The invention concerns a laundry bag with an expansion element with at least one suspension part and a filling or removal opening, designed to be slit-like and running essentially in the vertical direction at least in the center beneath the expansion element.

There is an essential distinction to be made, on the one hand, between laundry bags for the storage and transport of dirty laundry to a laundry or cleaner and, on the other hand, clothing bags for storage and transport of clean clothes.

Laundry bags are described, for example, in US 4,630,312 A, DE 43 18 559 C, and DE 30 17 246 C. They consist essentially of a bag-like sack, an opening that is usually arranged in the upper region of the bag and that runs perpendicular, and a suitable closure for the opening.

Clothing bags are known from WO 95/19726 A, US 4,438,844 A, US 4,572,364 A, US 4,252,220 A, US 3,952,847 A, US 4,949,842 A, US 5,002,183 A, and US 3,929,224 A. They have essentially an expansion element and an opening in which the expansion element is supposed to prevent crumpling or wrinkling of the clothing. Moreover, a wide variety of details are disclosed in the invention documents, such as additional reinforcement, especially closures and the like.

A special laundry bag, namely a combination with a clothing bag, is known from US 5,090,559 A, since it is supposed to also be used for the transport of cleaned laundry. In this case the filling opening is situated on the end of the laundry bag opposite the expansion element, which is used for the collection of dirty laundry, as in an entirely normal bag, with a pull cord in order to close the opening. Only for delivery of the washing or cleaned laundry does a clothes hanger have its bent hook guided through a small opening of the laundry bag in the edge opposite the filling opening, so that the laundry bag as a whole can be suspended on it (no longer inverted) and clean clothing to be hung then suspended in the laundry bag on the clothes hanger. Depending on the use, this bag hangs "correctly" or "inverted".

This laundry bag must therefore be stored during its intended use as a collecting bag for dirty laundry in the closet or bathroom, which takes up space and is also generally relatively ungainly. This plays a role, especially in hotels, where both the guests and the service personnel can always see such things, on the one hand, to provide the laundry service of the hotel and, on the other hand, to recognize, without having to specially think about it whether laundry is to be taken care of or not.

To achieve this objective it is necessary to give the laundry bag an external appearance that is visually satisfactory and, if possible, has space for the application of information or advertising without the laundry bag requiring a special place.

The invention seeks to make such a laundry bag available.

This is achieved according to the invention in that the filling slit occupies 40 to 60% of the height of the laundry bag, and that the upper end of the filling slit is situated 10 to 20% of the laundry bag height away from its upper edge. Height of the laundry bag in the case in which the shape of the laundry bag is not rectangular is understood to mean "average height", which can be determined, for example, as an arithmetic mean.

Because of these features, the laundry bag, even with the introduction slit always opened, is pulled taut and flat by its own weight and the weight of the already deposited laundry; it scarcely bulges at all, in contrast to the ordinary laundry bags. It is therefore possible to hang it, for example, on bathroom doors, anteroom doors or, if desired, on the inside of a closet door without it requiring noticeable space. Because of the automatic tightening, a pleasant shape is acquired, whose expanse can also be used for information or advertising. During delivery of the cleaned laundry, as in the already known bag, the laundry requiring hanging can be hung in the interior of the bag and is then protected.

If the laundry bag is used privately, then it is possible to accommodate it not only separately from a suitcase or in a suitcase, but it can also be suspended in the known hanging suitcases specially made for clothing or suits and transported in it. The laundry bag is preferably designed essentially rectangular, in which the upper edge on which the expansion element acts can be easily kinked or curved in order to adjust the expansion element and improve the hanging properties of the laundry bag.

The filling or removal opening can be closable, for example, by means of a zipper or velcro closure, or will be closable at individual points, for example, by means of buttons or velcro strips, in which case it must be kept in mind that the closure elements are washable, as is preferably the entire laundry bag (after removal of the expansion element).

The expansion element can be an ordinary clothes hanger, preferably in a flat configuration, or a clothes hanger-like expansion element that is threaded with its hanging part through a small opening in the middle of the upper edge of the laundry bag. The suspension part, however, can also be a rod, a tube, or a reinforcement or stiffening arranged in the fabric. It is naturally possible to arrange the expansion element [sic; suspension part] outside of the laundry bag and connect it to the expansion element with loops that the laundry bag has in its upper region. However, this will only be used for area support of the laundry bag in exceptional cases.

The suspension part is preferably a hook, but can also consist of at least a loop, an eye, or the like.

The invention is further explained by means of a practical example depicted in the drawing. The single figure shows a front view of a laundry bag according to the invention, in which a small area is broken down in order to show the expansion element.

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A laundry bag 1 has essentially in its upper region a filling and removal opening 2 that is appropriately hemmed for mechanical reasons, or stitched with a reinforcement fabric or the like. An expansion element 3, which is designed slightly curved in the depicted practical example, extends essentially over the entire width of the laundry bag 1 in its interior, for which reason the upper edge 4 of the laundry bag 1 is also made curved to follow this contour. As in an ordinary clothes hanger, the expansion element 3 in its middle upward extending region has a suspension part 5 designed as a hook, which in the depicted case consists of bent wire, as is common in clothes hangers, and is intended to be hung on a rod or the like.

The suspension part 5 is then threaded through a small opening in the middle region of the upper edge 4 in laundry bag 1 and can therefore be threaded back out again, whereupon the expansion element 3 can be removed from the laundry bag 1 through opening 2, the laundry bag can be subjected to ordinary washing or a cleaning process, and the expansion element 3 after removal from the laundry bag 1 can also be cleaned, optionally disinfected as well.

In order to explain the example, the "average height" H of the laundry bag is indicated on the side of the figure.

The laundry bag, expansion element, and suspension part can consist of all the materials from which laundry bags, clothes hangers, and their suspension parts are ordinarily made, preferably those materials that, on the one hand, withstand rough everyday hotel operations and, on the other hand, are easy to clean or wash completely.

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Patent Claims:

1. Laundry bag, which is held along its upper edge by a support part and with a filling and removal opening (2) that is designed to be slit-like and runs essentially in the vertical direction in the center or in the center beneath the support part, in which the length (L) of the filling or removal opening (2) is 40 to 60% of the height (H) of the laundry bag, characterized by the fact that the laundry bag is designed essentially rectangular, that the support part extends in the interior of the laundry bag essentially over its entire width, acting as an expansion element (3) for the laundry bag, with at least one suspension part (5) that extends through a center opening of the laundry bag, and that the upper end of the filling and removal opening (2) is separated from its upper edge by 10 to 20% of the laundry bag height (H).

2. Laundry bag according to Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the filling or removal opening (2) is hemmed, stitched, and with reinforcement fabric or the like.

3. Laundry bag according to Claim 1, characterized by the fact a closure, for example a zipper, velcro closure, or buttons, is provided over at least part of the height of the filling or removal opening (2).

4. Laundry bag according to one of Claims 1 to 3, characterized by the fact that the expansion element (3) is an ordinary clothes hanger or, for example, a rod, a tube, or a reinforcement or stiffening arranged in fabric.

5. Laundry bag according to one of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that the suspension part (5) is designed as a hook.

6. Laundry bag according to one of Claims 1 to 4, characterized by the fact that the suspension part (5) consists of at least one loop.

7. Laundry bag according to one of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that it consists of washable material.