collapsing inward and against the cups' curved shape, and becoming tangled with other bras within the same bag. In addition, padded bras (especially those using air, water, gel, or silicone) can be easily punctured, thus causing leakage to the bra cups. The bra's hooks can also come loose and snag on other bras placed within the same bag. The time and money needed to replace a damaged bra can also be substantial.

Given all these inconveniences, many women have chosen to wash their bras by hand. However, hand washing is very time-consuming and impractical. It can also cause back, hand, and wrist pain. Most bras that are hand washed have to be air-dried, which causes huge water deposits where they are hung and thus slippery surfaces and more unnecessary cleanup.

Some devices are known for washing bras in washing machines. The density of the plastics used for many known devices is less than that of water. Because such devices tend to readily float, a substantial portion of such devices – as well as the garment in the device – may be above the surface of the wash water during washing.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a first aspect, there is provided a bra-washing device, comprising: a shell; a divider removably insertable into the shell; the shell includes two shell portions; the shell portions are pivotally coupled to one another; a rim of one of the shell portions includes a lip, a rim of the other shell portion includes a channel, the lip on one of the shell portions couples into the channel in the other shell portion when the shell is closed; at least a portion of the divider is kept in a fixed relationship to the shell when the divider is inserted into the shell, the divider is configured to keep one cup of the bra in one location of the shell and the other cup of the bra in another location of the shell; and a latch mechanism configured to hold shell closed, the latch mechanism including a tongue and a loop on one portion of the shell; and a receptacle on the other portion of the shell, the receptacle configured to receive the tongue and the loop, wherein the receptacle comprises a rail configured to contact the loop, wherein contact between the loop and rail inhibits the latch mechanism from opening accidentally during washing.

Various embodiments of garment-washing devices are disclosed. In an embodiment, a bra-washing device includes a shell and a divider that can be inserted into the shell. The divider keeps one cup of the bra in one location of the shell and the other cup of the bra in another location of the shell. The divider may be kept in a substantially fixed relationship with respect to the shell.

In an embodiment, a system for washing garments includes a shell and two or more inserts that can each be interchangeably coupled to the shell. Each insert includes a three-dimensional form that is different from the three-dimensional form(s) of the other inserts.

In an embodiment, a bra-washing device includes a shell and a form that couples to the shell. The shell and the form each have a plurality of openings. The openings in the shell are sized to inhibit a bra strap from extending through the shell through the openings. At least some of the openings in the form are larger than the openings in the shell.

In an embodiment, a device for washing a garment in a washing machine includes a shell and a form that can be coupled to the shell. The form holds at least a portion of the garment in a location in the shell. The device has a buoyancy such that substantially all of the garment is maintained below the surface of water in a washing machine when the device and the garment are placed in the washing machine.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

A better understanding of the present invention may be obtained when the following