CLAIMS

1. An article support device supporting a plurality of types of articles thereon comprising:

a placing surface configured to support both a first article and a second article having a larger bottom portion than a bottom portion of said first article thereon;

a first positioning member comprising at least a pair of pins protruding from said placing surface, and configured to be engaged with holes in the bottom portion of said first article, to position the bottom portion of said first article, to enter positioning grooves provided radially in the bottom portion of said second article, when said second article is positioned on the placing surface, and not to interfere with said second article, and

a second positioning member protruding from said placing surface for positioning said second article,

wherein said second positioning member is arranged at a position where interference with said first article is prevented when said first article is positioned on the placing surface by said first positioning member.

2. The article support device according to claim 1,

wherein said second positioning member comprises at least a pair of guiding members protruding from the placing surface, and configured to guide an outer perimeter of the bottom portion of said second article.

3. The article support device according to claim 2,

wherein each of the pair of guiding members includes a pair of tapered surfaces different in inclination direction, and the pairs of tapered surfaces are configured to guide corners of the outer perimeter of the bottom portion of said second article.

4. The article support device according to claim 3,

wherein both said first article and said second article are containers for accommodating semiconductor wafers, and said second article is configured to accommodate semiconductor wafers having a larger diameter compared with those accommodated in said first article.

5. The article support device according to claim 4,

wherein said first article is provided with positioning grooves radially in the bottom portion thereof, and

the article support device is configured to position the bottom portion of said first article and the bottom portion of said second article without coming into contact with the positioning grooves of said first article nor the positioning grooves of said second article.

6. A method for placing two types of articles on a support device,

the support device comprising: a placing surface configured to support both a first article

and a second article having a larger bottom portion than a bottom portion of said first article thereon; a first positioning member; and a second positioning member, both protruding from said placing surface,

said first positioning member comprising at least a pair of pins protruding from said placing surface, and configured to be engaged with holes in the bottom portion of said first article, to enter positioning grooves provided radially in the bottom portion of said second article when said second article is positioned on the placing surface, and not to interfere with said second article,

the method comprising:

a step for positioning the first article using the first positioning member and placing the first article on the placing surface while interference between the second positioning member and the first article is avoided, and

a step for positioning said second article using the second positioning member and placing the second article on the placing surface while interference between the first positioning member and the second article is avoided.

7. The method for placing two types of articles on a support device according to claim 6,

wherein said second positioning member comprises at least a pair of guiding members protruding from the placing surface configured to guide an outer perimeter of the bottom portion of said second article.