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(54) **APPAREL ACCESSORY FOR TROUSERS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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An accessory for trousers worn low on the hips, for concealing otherwise exposed surfaces such as the midriff or underwear, and for retaining the trousers on the hips. The accessory comprises a panel of fabric or other flexible material, configured to encircle the waist and to overlap the top of the trousers. The accessory has an elastic waistband and an attaching element for engaging and retaining the trousers. In alternative embodiments, the retaining element may comprise hook and loop fastener or belt loops. In a further alternative embodiment, the upper edge of the accessory may bear lace. In still other alternative embodiments, the accessory may be pleated, may have an optional zipper, may be provided in a form that bulges out from the body when worn, may be elastic, and may have these features in any combination. The accessory may be provided with trousers as a visually matched set.

(21) Appl. No.: **10/623,770**

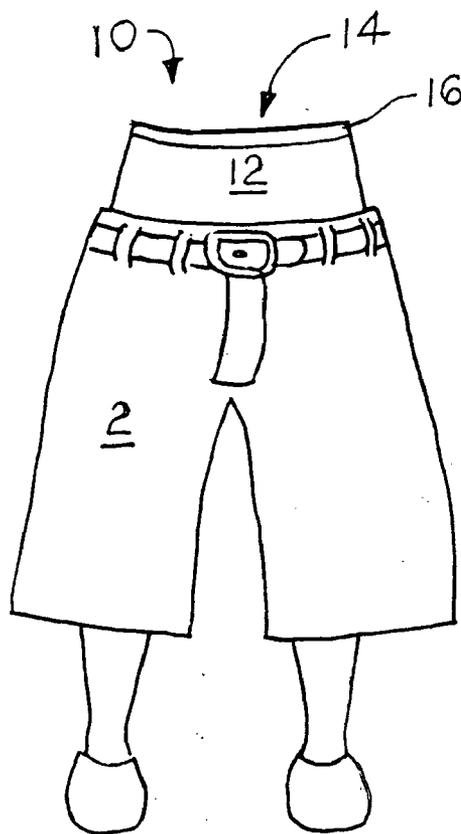
(22) Filed: **Jul. 22, 2003**

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/397,021, filed on Jul. 22, 2002.

Publication Classification

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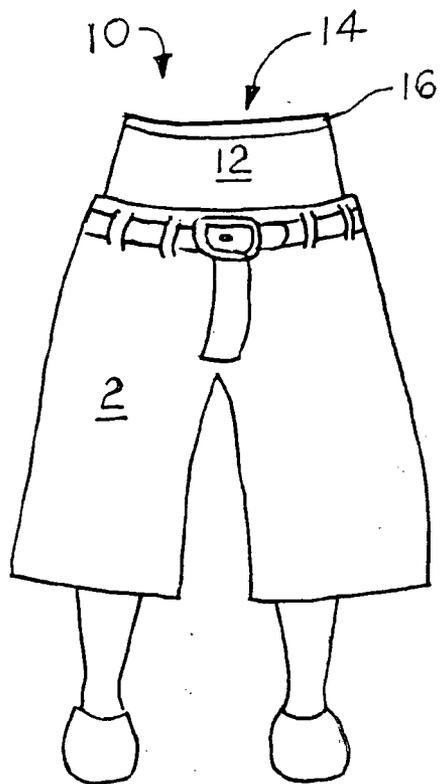


FIG. 1

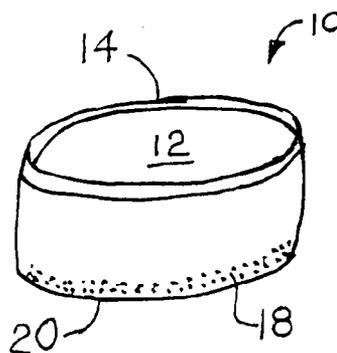


FIG. 2

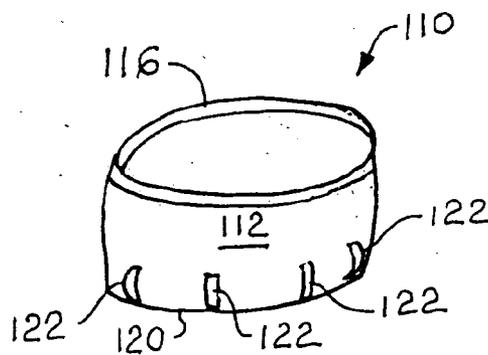


FIG. 3

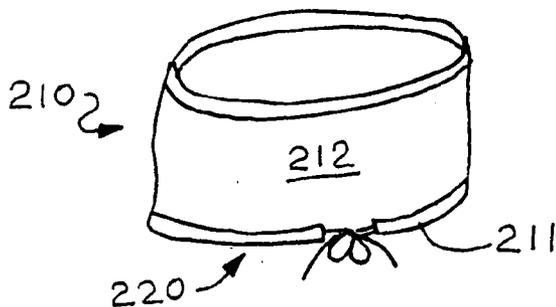


FIG. 4

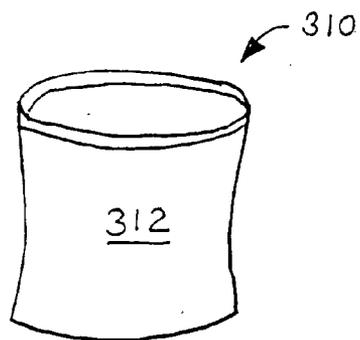


FIG. 5

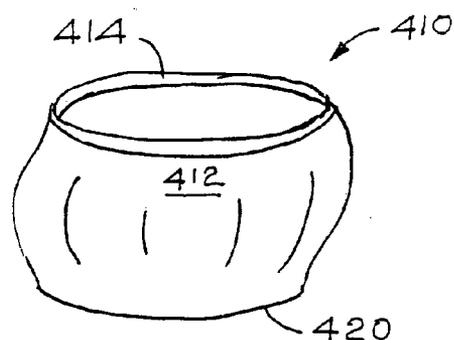


FIG. 6

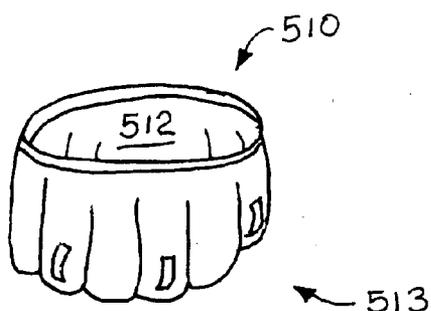


FIG. 7

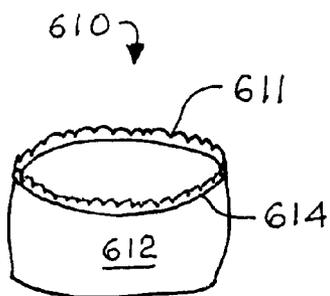


FIG. 8

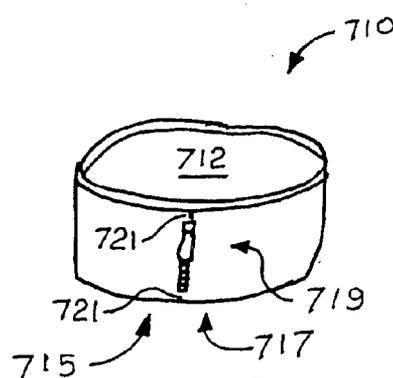


FIG. 9

APPAREL ACCESSORY FOR TROUSERS

[0001] This invention claims priority to provisional application serial No. 60/397,021, entitled Apparel Accessory For Trousers and filed on Jul. 22, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to apparel and more particularly to an accessory for trousers worn low on the hips.

[0004] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0005] A recent trend in apparel is that of wearing trousers, such as so called short trousers, low on the hips. Wearing sagging trousers in this manner exposes the midriff, if bare, which may or may not be objectionable, may expose underwear, which is usually deemed objectionable, and threatens to lose engagement of the trousers with the hips, which is usually objectionable. Selecting trouser sizes more appropriate for accommodating this trend does not satisfy the above noted objections. Tightening a belt worn on the sagging trousers entails objections of its own, and therefore also does not answer the objections. There is a need in the prior art to satisfy the above noted objections.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides an accessory for use with sagging trousers worn low on the hips. This accessory satisfies the previously noted concerns and provides additional benefits. The accessory comprises a piece of fabric or other flexible material which attaches to sagging trousers and extends above. The accessory has its own apparatus for constricting about the waist, to take the place of a belt conventionally worn at the waistband of trousers.

[0007] Accordingly, it is one object of the invention to provide an accessory for sagging trousers worn low on the hips which accessory prevents the trousers from disengaging from the wearer.

[0008] It is another object of the invention to provide an accessory which conceals underwear and the exposed midriff of a wearer of sagging trousers.

[0009] It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

[0010] These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] Various other objects, features, and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein:

[0012] **FIG. 1** is an environmental, front elevational view of one embodiment of the invention, showing the novel accessory and trousers as they would be worn together.

[0013] **FIG. 2** is a front perspective view of the upper portion of **FIG. 1**.

[0014] **FIG. 3** is a front perspective view of another embodiment of the invention.

[0015] **FIG. 4** is a front perspective view of still another embodiment of the invention.

[0016] **FIG. 5** is a front perspective view of a further embodiment of the invention.

[0017] **FIG. 6** is a front perspective view of yet another embodiment of the invention.

[0018] **FIG. 7** is a front perspective view of another embodiment of the invention.

[0019] **FIG. 8** is a front perspective view of still a further embodiment of the invention.

[0020] **FIG. 9** is a front perspective view of another embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0021] **FIG. 1** of the drawings shows an article of apparel in the form of an accessory **10** which is worn in conjunction with trousers **2** worn low on the hips. Accessory **10** provides an extension extending above trousers **2** so as to cover and conceal the midriff of the wearer, which would be revealed in the absence of accessory **10**. Accessory **10** provides the further function of retaining trousers **2** on the hips of the wearer by engaging trousers **2**.

[0022] Accessory **10** comprises a panel **12** of flexible material such as a fabric which is configured to encircle the waist of a person wearing trousers **2** low on the hips. Panel **12** has an upper edge **14** and a lower edge which is concealed beneath trousers **2** in the depiction of **FIG. 1**. A constricting element for retaining accessory **10** on the body, such as elastic waistband **16**, is located near upper edge **14**. An attachment element is located at the lower edge of panel **12**, and is not seen in **FIG. 1**.

[0023] **FIG. 2** shows accessory **10** isolated from trousers **2** and from the wearer. Panel **12** has one member **18** of hook and loop fastener or attachment material located at lower edge **20**. Hook and loop member **18** provides an attachment element which is disposed to engage trousers **2** so as to prevent disengagement of trousers **2** from the hips. This is accomplished by providing complementing hook and loop material (not shown) inside trousers **2**, if the constituent material of trousers **2** is insufficiently nappy to engage member **18** unassisted. It should be noted that member **18** may be located on either the outer surface or the inner surface of panel **12**. In these two embodiments, accessory **10** will selectively engage either trousers **2** or underwear (not shown).

[0024] **FIG. 3** shows an alternative embodiment of the invention wherein hook and loop member **18** of **FIG. 2** is replaced in accessory **110** by a series of belt loops **122** located along and near lower edge **120** of panel **112**. In other respects, accessory **110** is equivalent to the embodiment of **FIG. 2**, having a panel **112** of flexible material and an elastic waistband **116**. Loops **122** are disposed to receive a belt (not shown) used with trousers worn low on the hips so as to

releasably attach the trousers to panel 112 of accessory 110, and to prevent disengagement of the trousers from the hips.

[0025] Referring now to FIG. 4, there is shown an embodiment of the invention wherein accessory 210 is generally similar to its predecessors, but differs in that the attachment element comprises a drawstring 211 located along and near lower edge 220 of panel 212. Drawstring 211 may be constricted over trousers worn low on the hips so as to prevent disengagement of the trousers from the hips.

[0026] The nature of the constituent material of any of the embodiments of the invention may be varied. In the embodiment of FIG. 5, panel 312 of an accessory 310 which is in other ways comparable to the prior embodiments is fabricated from a resiliently elastic material. This is indicated in the view of FIG. 5 by vertical elongation of panel 312.

[0027] In a further variation, as shown in FIG. 6, accessory 410 has a panel 412 of flexible material which is arranged to bulge outwardly between the upper edge 414 thereof and the lower edge 420 thereof when accessory 410 is worn.

[0028] Another variation is shown in FIG. 7, wherein the constituent material of panel 512 of accessory 510 has pleats 513. In other respects, accessory 510 is comparable to any of the prior embodiments.

[0029] FIG. 8 illustrates an embodiment of the invention wherein accessory 610 is adorned with lace 611 at the upper edge 614.

[0030] As seen in FIG. 9, an accessory 710 has a constituent flexible panel 712 of flexible material, a proximal end 715, a distal end 717, and a slide fastener 719 disposed to releasably join proximal end 715 to distal end 717. It will be understood that ends 715 and 717 may either entirely separate from one another or alternatively define a slit therebetween, with slide fastener 719 functioning as a closure so that the slit is selectively opened and closed. In the embodiment incorporating the slit, proximal end 715 is joined to distal end 717 above and below the slit either by stitching 721, as depicted, or alternatively in some other way such as by forming panel 712 as an annulus.

[0031] The invention may be regarded either as the accessory of any of the described embodiments, or alternatively as a matched set of an accessory of any of the described embodiments in combination with trousers. As employed herein, a matched set signifies that the components are similar in a significant characteristic such as appearance, constituent material, size, or compatibility in attachment.

[0032] It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

We claim:

1. An article of apparel to be used with trousers worn low on the hips, comprising:

- a panel of flexible material configured to encircle the waist of a person, having an upper edge and a lower edge;

an elastic waistband located near said upper edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to constrict about the waist of a person wearing trousers low on the hips; and

a hook and loop type attachment element located at said lower edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to engage the trousers worn low on the hips so as to prevent disengagement of the trousers from the hips.

2. An article of apparel to be used with trousers worn low on the hips, comprising:

a panel of flexible material configured to encircle the waist of a person, having an upper edge and a lower edge;

an elastic waistband located near said upper edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to constrict about the waist of a person wearing trousers low on the hips; and

a series of belt loops located along and near said lower edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to receive a belt used with the trousers worn low on the hips so as to releasably attach the trousers to the panel of flexible material and to prevent disengagement of the trousers from the hips.

3. An article of apparel to be used with trousers worn low on the hips, comprising:

a panel of flexible material configured to encircle the waist of a person, having an upper edge and a lower edge;

an elastic waistband located near said upper edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to constrict about the waist of a person wearing trousers low on the hips; and

a drawstring located along and near said lower edge of said panel of flexible material, disposed to constrict over trousers worn low on the hips so as to prevent disengagement of the trousers from the hips.

4. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material is resiliently elastic.

5. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material is arranged to bulge outwardly between the upper edge thereof and the lower edge thereof.

6. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material has pleats.

7. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material has lace at said upper edge of said panel of flexible material.

8. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material bulges outwardly when worn.

9. The article of apparel according to claim 1, 2, or 3, wherein said panel of flexible material has a proximal end, a distal end, and a slide fastener disposed to releasably join said proximal end to said distal end.

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