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(54) **SHOE SYSTEM WITH SCARF TIE**

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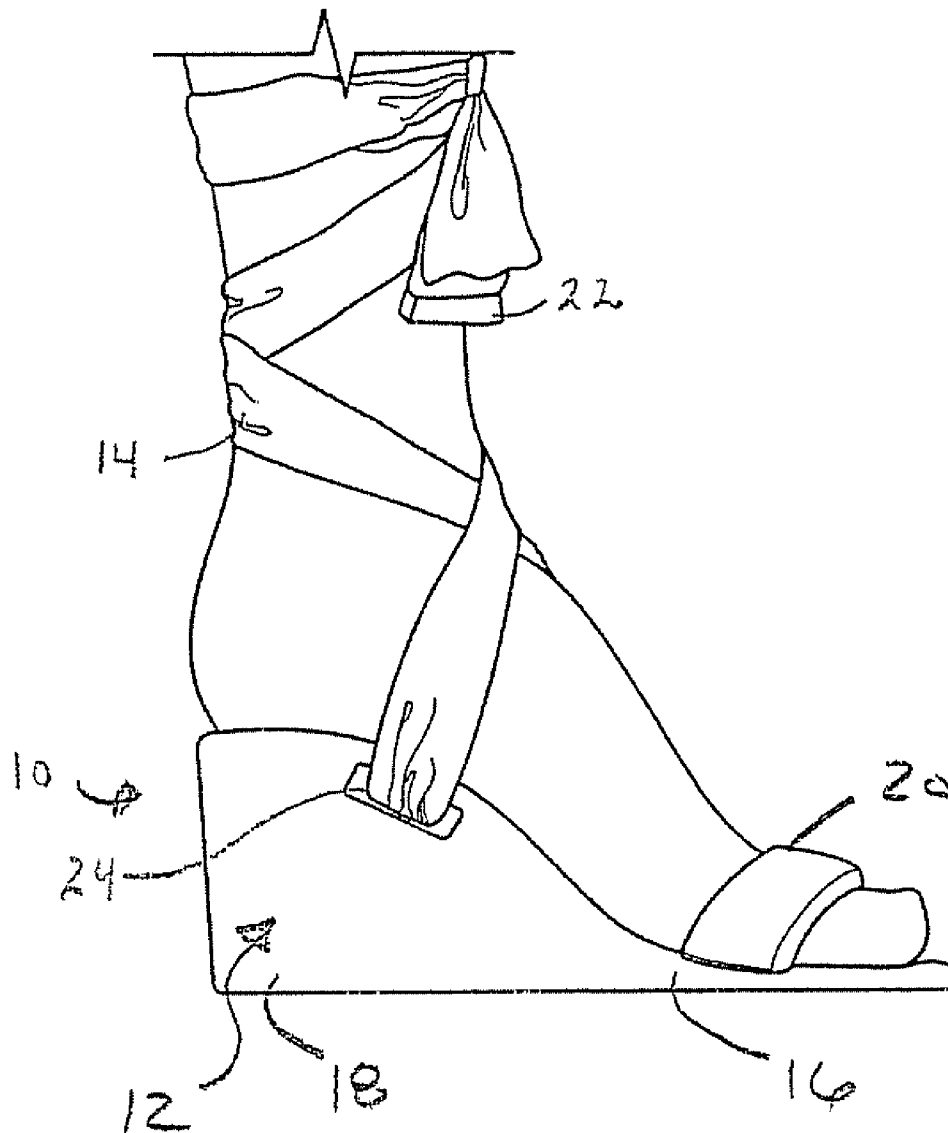
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ABSTRACT

A shoe system having one or more shoe bases and one or more interchangeable scarves. The interchangeable scarves are used to secure at least a portion of a shoe base to the wearer. Each scarf member is constructed from a pliable material and includes a rigid aglet at one or both ends thereof which has cross-sectional shape which substantially matches or mates with the cross-sectional shape of an aperture formed in each shoe base, or on an extension thereof, comprising the shoe system.

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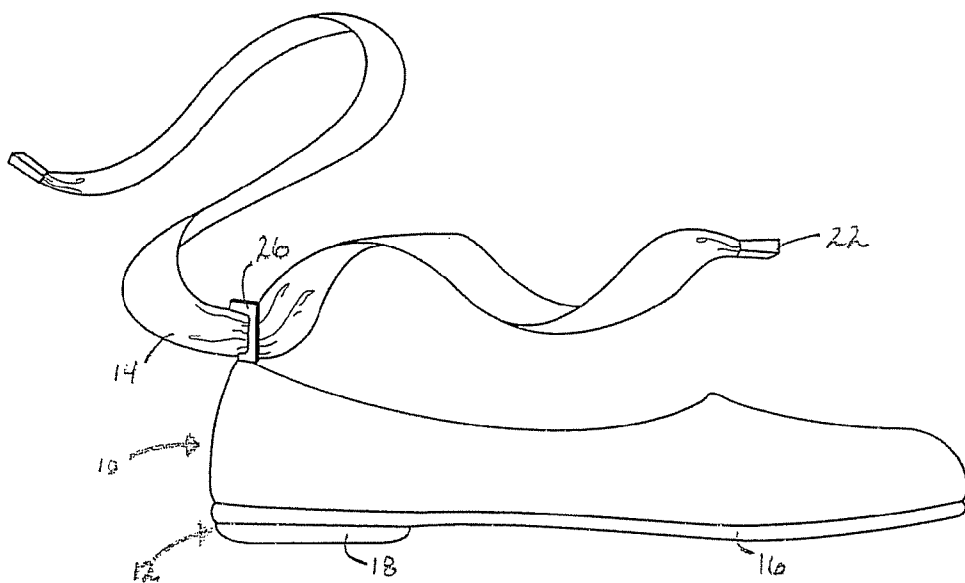
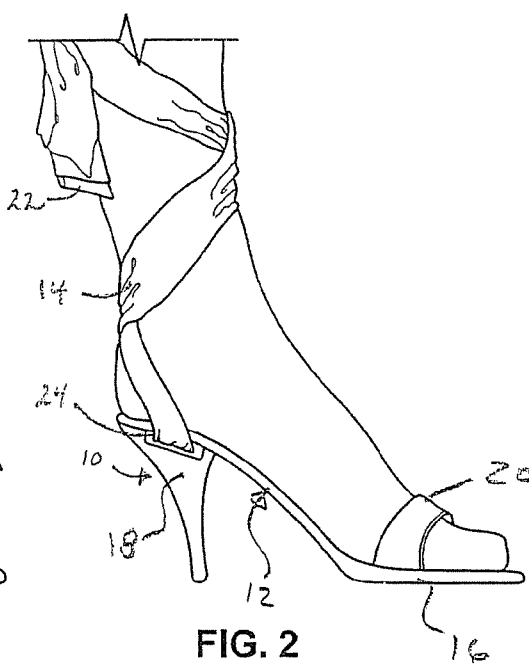
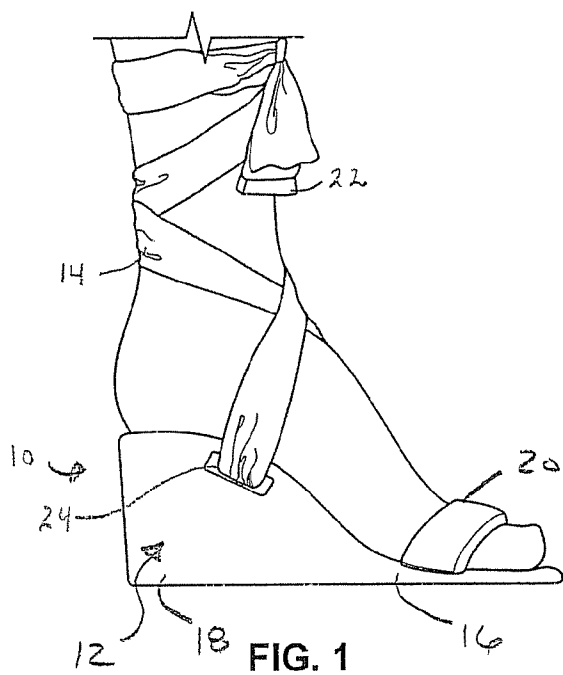


FIG. 6

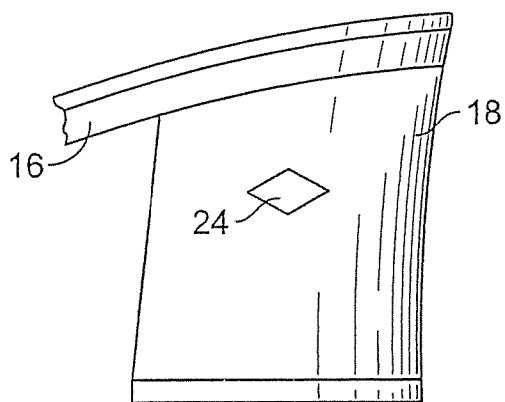


FIG. 3

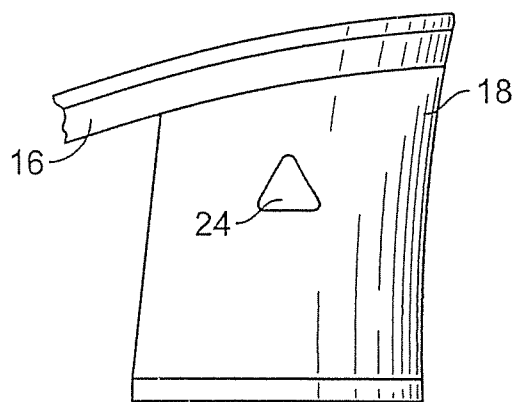


FIG. 4

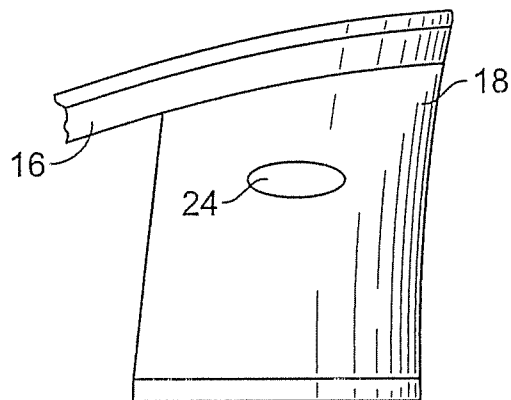


FIG. 5

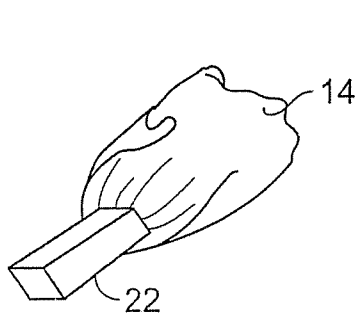


FIG. 7

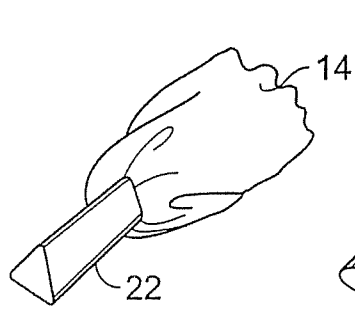


FIG. 8

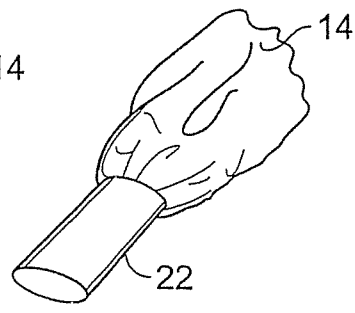


FIG. 9

SHOE SYSTEM WITH SCARF TIE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] In general, this invention relates to footwear. More specifically, this invention relates to a shoe system having one or more shoe bases and one or more interchangeable scarves. The interchangeable scarves are used to secure at least a portion of a shoe base to the wearer. Each scarf member is constructed from a pliable material and includes a rigid aglet at each end having a cross-sectional shape which substantially matches or mates with an aperture formed in each shoe base, or on an extension thereof, comprising the shoe system.

[0003] 2. Description of Related Art

[0004] Many shoe designs are the subject of numerous patents or applications. Several of those patents or applications disclose designs that include a strap or tie that can be permanently affixed to or removably attached to the shoe base to assist in securing the shoe base to the wearer. In the designs which have the strap or tie permanently affixed to the shoe base, only that single strap or tie can be used with a particular shoe base. There is no concern that the strap or tie will become accidently separated from the shoe base and lost because it is permanently affixed thereto.

[0005] In other designs, the strap or tie is removably attached by being threaded through an aperture in the shoe base. Removal and replacement with another strap or tie of a different color or style is possible, however, all of these designs disclose straps or ties that can accidently become separated from the shoe base and lost.

[0006] United States Patent Application No. 2002/0078600, for example, discloses a sole **12** having a slot **24** wherein a strap **26** is inserted and secured over the wearer's foot in an adjustable manner using a Velcro® fastener. The slot **24** is substantially rectangular in shape so as to facilitate the easy insertion and removal of the strap **26**. The strap **26** is non-pliable in the sense that it is constructed from a material is sufficiently rigid so as not to loose its cross-sectional rectangular shape throughout its length. The strap will therefore continually mate with the slot **24** and, according to the disclosure, different straps can then be substituted so as to alter the aesthetic appearance or fit of the shoe. As is clearly illustrated in FIG. 1, the size of the slot **24** is also substantially larger than the cross-section of the strap **26**, such that no means for preventing accidental separation of the strap **26** from the shoe sole **12** is disclosed once the Velcro® which is used to secure the wearer's foot to the sole is released. Accidental separation of the strap **26** from the shoe sole **12** is therefore clearly possible.

[0007] Similarly, U.S. Pat. No. 2,381,389 discloses a plastic shoe having a base member **12** with slots **15** formed there through for receiving straps **14**. The straps **14** can be formed into loops through which the wearer's foot is inserted. Although the focus of the '389 patent is on the plastic construction of the shoe body itself, the straps **14** can also be easily changed to match the dress of the person wearing the shoe. Again, however, there are no means shown for affixing the strap to the base member nor preventing the strap from accidental separation.

[0008] U.S. Design Pat. No. 172,976 illustrates a shoe design having an ankle tie which is threaded through the shoe's heel, but which cannot be readily and repeatedly substituted with another tie because of the knots which are formed at the ends of the ties to prevent the tie from separating with the heel.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 2,469,708 shows a similar ankle tie, but with knotted ends that appear to be small enough to pass through the eyelets pivotally mounted around the side edges of the sole of the shoe. As a result, interchangeability of ties is again provided, but accidental separation is again very probable.

[0010] U.S. Design Pat. No. 499,240 illustrates an example of a shoe design having straps which are permanently affixed to the shoe base. No adjustability or interchangeability is provided with this design, but the straps will not become accidentally separated and lost. Additional examples of this type of design are disclosed in U.S. Design Pat. Nos. 118,617; 131,587; 186,842; 262,750; and 469,948.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] Accordingly, it is a general objective of the present invention to provide a shoe system having one or more shoe bases and one or more interchangeable scarves.

[0012] It is a more specific objective of the present invention to construct each scarf member from a pliable material and provide each scarf member with an aglet at each end having a cross-sectional shape which substantially matches or mates with an aperture formed in each shoe base, or on an extension thereof.

[0013] It is yet a further specific objective of the present invention to provide such a shoe system having at least one scarf component which can be interchanged with at least two or more shoe bases, or at least two or more scarves that can be interchanged with at least one shoe base, in a manner which permits easy removal and replacement of the scarf component while, simultaneously, preventing accidental separation and loss of the scarf member.

[0014] Summarily stated, the invention comprises at least one scarf member constructed of a pliable material, and at least one shoe base having an aperture extending entirely through a width thereof. Further, each scarf member has two ends, each of which has fixed thereto a rigid aglet. The cross-sectional shape of each aglet is substantially the same as the cross-sectional shape of the aperture which extends through the width of the shoe base. Aligning an aglet end of the scarf with the aperture of the shoe base is therefore required to permit the scarf to be secured to and removed from the shoe base. This design permits different scarves to be interchanged with different shoe bases or removed for cleaning, but the need to key the aglet at the end of the scarf to the aperture in the shoe base in order to remove and detach the scarf from the shoe base prevents the scarves from accidently separating from the shoe base and becoming lost. Alternatively, the aperture through which the aglet end of the scarf is threaded can be provided in an extension off of the shoe base, rather than in the shoe base itself.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] The features of the present invention which are believed to be novel are set forth with particularity in the

appended claims. The organization and manner of operation of the invention, together with further objects and advantages thereof, may best be understood by reference to the following descriptions taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which like reference numerals identify like elements, and in which:

[0016] FIG. 1 is an elevational view of an example of the present invention shown on the foot of the wearer.

[0017] FIG. 2 is an elevational view of an example of the present invention shown on the foot of the wearer similar to FIG. 1, but having a shoe base of a different style.

[0018] FIGS. 3-5 are elevational views of examples of the shoe base portion of the embodiment of the invention shown in FIGS. 1 and 1A illustrating various sample shapes for the aperture that extends through the shoe base.

[0019] FIG. 6 is an elevational view of an alternative embodiment of the present invention not shown on the foot of the wearer.

[0020] FIGS. 7-9 show partial perspective views of several different examples of aglet shapes at the scarf ends which can be included as part of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] While the invention will be described in collection with a preferred embodiment, it will be understood that it is not intended to limit the invention to that embodiment. On the contrary, it is intended to cover all alternatives, modifications and equivalents as may be included within the scope and spirit of the invention.

[0022] Turning to FIG. 1 there is shown an example of the present invention generally referred to by reference numeral 10 which comprises a shoe system with a scarf tie. The shoe system includes a shoe base 12 and a scarf member 14. As illustrated, the shoe base 12 includes a sole portion 16 and a heel portion 18. A vamp 20 is also secured to the shoe base 12 to hold the forepart of the wearer's foot in place. It is important to note at this point, however, that almost any shoe style is intended to fall within the scope of the present invention and that the illustrated high-heel sandal style of shoe base 12 is merely an example being used to describe to concept of the invention. One variation of shoe style is shown in FIG. 2 which illustrates a high heeled base 12.

[0023] As best illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, the scarf member 14 is preferably constructed from a pliable textile material or fabric such as silk or cotton. The pliability of scarf member allows for it to be tied around the foot, ankle and/or leg of the wearer in a large variety of styles and manners. For example, the scarf member can include single or multiple knots and can be wrapped once or several times around the wearer's foot, ankle and/or leg or twisted depending on the personal preferences of the wearer. Numerous colors and designs of scarves to match the apparel of the wearer can also be provided within the scope of the invention.

[0024] Importantly, each end of the scarf member 14 is provided with a rigid aglet section 22. The aglet 22 is designed to gather, cover and provide rigidity to the ends of the scarf member 14 and, as will be more fully explained below, acts in cooperation with the shoe base 12 to allow

different scarves to be interchanged with different shoe bases or removed for cleaning, but at the same time prohibits the scarf 14 from becoming accidentally separated from the shoe base 12 and lost.

[0025] With reference to FIGS. 3-5, it can clearly be seen that the shoe base 12 is further provided with an aperture 24 which extends entirely through the width of the heel 18. The shape of the aperture 24 is the same as the shape of the aglet 22 on the scarf member 14, but the outer dimension of the aperture 24 is slightly larger than the outer dimension of the aglet 22, the reason for which will become clear below.

[0026] Turning to FIG. 6, there is shown an alternative embodiment of the present invention wherein the aperture 24 through which the aglet end 22 of the scarf 14 is threaded is provided in an extension 26 off of the shoe base 12, rather than in the shoe base itself. The shoe base 12 shown in FIG. 6 is of a ballet slipper style, but it should again be noted that, as with the shoe system illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, this embodiment of the present invention is intended for use with any shoe style.

[0027] FIGS. 7-9 illustrate several examples of shapes for the aglets 22 (and corresponding shoe base apertures 24) attached to ends of a series of scarf members 14.

[0028] Referring back to FIG. 1, it should now be apparent that in order to attach and remove the scarf member 14 from the shoe base 12, the aglet 22 at one end of the pliable scarf member 14 needs to be aligned with the aperture 24 of the shoe base 12. Once aligned, the rigidity of the aglet 22 and the slightly larger outside dimension of the aperture 24 permits the scarf member 14 to be threaded or dropped through the length of the aperture 24, pulled out for the desired distance and tied around the leg of the wearer in the desired fashion. When the wearer desires to separate the scarf member 14 from the shoe base 12 so that another scarf member 14 can be substituted or so that the scarf member can be cleaned, an aglet 22 at one end of the scarf member 14 is again aligned with the aperture 24 of the shoe base 12 and the scarf can then be drawn back through the aperture and removed. Because of the pliability of the material from which the scarf member is constructed and because of the matching cross-sectional shape of the aglet 22 and the aperture 24, it is highly unlikely that the scarf member 14 will become accidentally separated from the shoe base and lost or damaged. Attachment and removal of the scarf 14 from the base 12 in the embodiment shown in FIG. 2, wherein the aperture 24 through which the aglet end 22 of the scarf 14 is threaded is provided in an extension 26 off of the shoe base 12, rather than in the shoe base itself, occurs in a similar manner.

[0029] Preferably, the shoe system 10 of the present invention has at least three components comprising at least two or more shoe bases and one or more interchangeable scarves, or at least two or more interchangeable scarves and at least one or more shoe bases. Such combinations can be sold as a kit, or separately as commercially desired. Whether purchased in a kit or separately, the invention offers an economical solution to purchasing different styles of footwear. By combining different scarves with one or more shoe bases, the wearer can achieve multiple looks ranging from very casual to very formal without having to purchase an entirely different shoe for each occasion. The invention also offers

the convenience of being able to go from office wear to evening wear with the change of a scarf rather than carrying another pair of shoes.

[0030] Finally, while particular embodiments of the invention have been shown and described in detail above, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that changes and modifications of the present invention in its various aspects may be made without departing from the invention in its broader aspects, some of which changes and modifications being matters of routine engineering or design, and others being apparent only after study and analysis.

I claim:

- 1. A shoe system comprising:
 - at least one scarf constructed from a pliable material;
 - at least one shoe base having an aperture extending entirely through a width thereof;
 - said scarf having two ends, at least one end of which having a rigid aglet secured thereto;
 - wherein a cross-sectional shape of the aglet is substantially the same as a cross-sectional shape of said aperture extending through the width of said shoe base; and
 - wherein aligning an aglet end of the scarf with the aperture of the shoe base is required to permit the scarf to be secured to and removed from the shoe base.
- 2. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a stiletto style.
- 3. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a wedge style.
- 4. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a flat style.
- 5. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglet is non-circular and symmetrical.
- 6. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglet is a free-form.
- 7. The shoe system as recited in claim 1, wherein the scarf is formed of cloth.
- 8. A shoe system comprising:
 - at least one scarf constructed from a pliable material;
 - at least one shoe base having an aperture formed through an extension thereof;
 - said scarf having two ends, at least one end of which having a rigid aglet secured thereto;

wherein a cross-sectional shape of the aglet is substantially the same as a cross-sectional shape of said aperture; and

wherein aligning an aglet end of the scarf with the aperture located on the extension of the shoe base is required to permit the scarf to be secured to and removed from the shoe base.

- 9. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a stiletto style.
- 10. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a wedge style.
- 11. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a flat style.
- 12. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglet is non-circular and symmetrical.
- 13. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglet is a free-form.
- 14. The shoe system as recited in claim 8, wherein the scarf is formed of cloth.
- 15. A shoe system comprising:
 - one or more scarves constructed from a pliable material;
 - one or more shoe bases having an aperture associated therewith;
 - each of said scarves having two ends, at least one of which ends has rigid aglet secured thereto;
 - wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglet is substantially the same as a cross-sectional shape of said aperture associated with said shoe base; and
 - wherein aligning an aglet end of a scarf with the aperture of the shoe base is required to permit the scarf to be secured to and removed from the shoe base.
- 16. The shoe system as recited in claim 15, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a stiletto style.
- 17. The shoe system as recited in claim 15, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a wedge style.
- 18. The shoe system as recited in claim 15, wherein said at least one shoe base is of a flat style.
- 19. The shoe system as recited in claim 15, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglets is non-circular and symmetrical.
- 20. The shoe system as recited in claim 15, wherein the cross-sectional shape of the aglets is a free-form.

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