United States Patent [19]

Pursley

[11] **3,793,748**

[45] **Feb. 26, 1974**

[54] **FOOT COVERING**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **36/9 R**
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A43b 1/02**
[58] **Field of Search** ..... 36/1, 2.5 R, 9 R, 9 A, 10, 36/7.1 R

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Attorney, Agent, or Firm—John H. Crowe

[57] **ABSTRACT**

Soft, absorbent slippers suitable for wear by women around the house. Each slipper is made from a single square of terrycloth which has been folded in half, with the loose edges up, and then sewn into the general shape of the slipper. This sewing is accomplished by means of three seams, a curving heel seam at the right end of the folded cloth, a short diagonal toe seam at the lower left corner of the cloth and a longer diagonal instep seam running upwardly from the toe seam to a point near the top edges of the cloth halves. Between the tops of the instep seam and the heel seam the edges of the folded cloth halves are left free to form an opening for the foot. A strip of elastic is fastened at its ends in a downturned fold of cloth around the foot opening to form an elastic rim which holds the slipper in place on the foot. Ornamental cloth flaps extend outwardly from the instep seam to decorate the top of the slipper.

4 Claims, 6 Drawing Figures

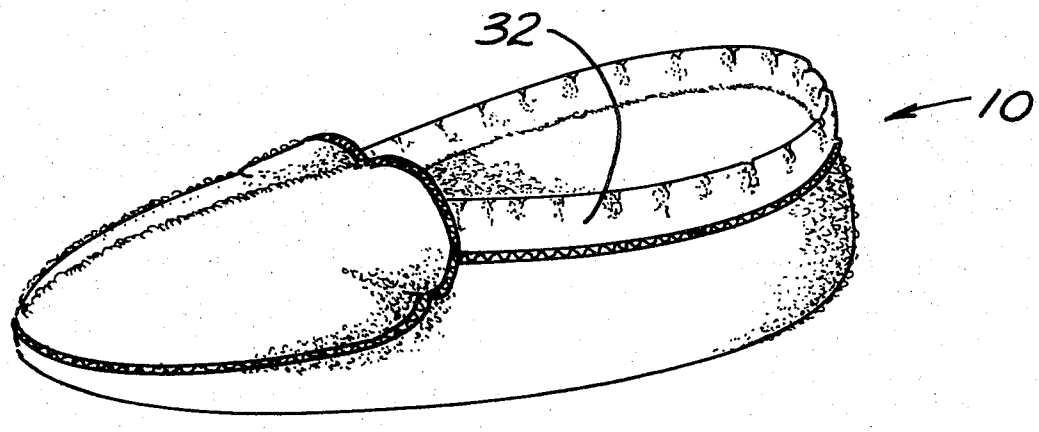


FIG. 1.

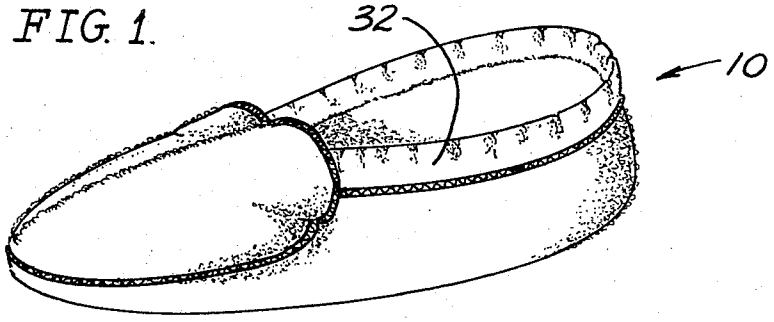


FIG. 6.

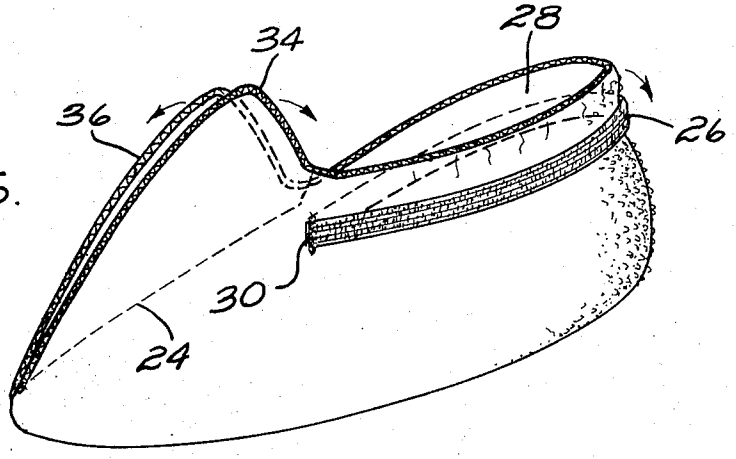


FIG. 2.

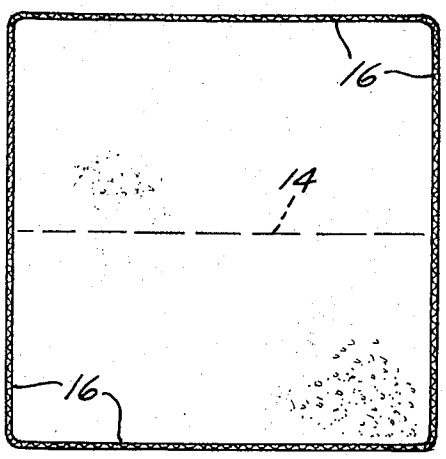
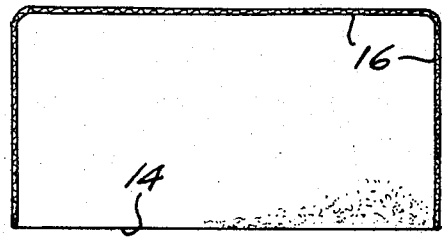


FIG. 3.



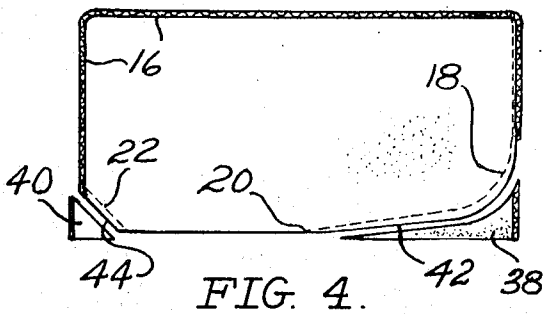


FIG. 4.

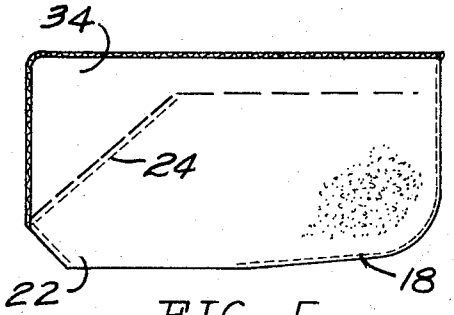


FIG. 5.

FOOT COVERING

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to house slippers, and more particularly to such slippers fashioned from soft, moisture absorbent cloth by a simple, inexpensive process, which are primarily suitable for indoor wear by women after baths or showers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The house slippers of this invention slip easily onto the feet and are designed to remain snugly in place to provide soft, comfortable foot protectors. In their preferred form, the slippers are made from a soft, moisture absorbent, air permeable cloth of a type adapted to keep the feet substantially dry while providing enough warmth to protect them from becoming uncomfortably chilled at cooler temperatures. These properties of the cloth render the slippers particularly suitable for after-bath of -shower wear. Terrycloth is, I have discovered, a preferred material from which to fashion my novel slippers since, in addition to possessing the above-noted properties, it is durable and wear resistant, even when employed in single thickness in the slipper soles, which, as will be seen, comports with preferred slipper design in accordance with this invention.

A particularly advantageous feature of the present invention resides in the ease and simplicity with which my novel house slippers can be made, even by one having only a rudimentary knowledge of sewing. The necessary steps of preparation are, in fact, so simple and easy to carry out (and, again as will be seen, so readily capable of performance as separate and independent operations), that they lend themselves ideally to an assembly line technique for turning out the slippers with minimal plant, equipment and personnel requirements. More specifically, each of the slippers is fashioned from a single square of terrycloth, or the equivalent, by means of a few simple sewing and trimming steps within the capacity of practically anyone with any sewing skill at all. The square of cloth, preferably one with overlocked edges, is first folded double and positioned with its open edges up and its folded edge down. Next, a seam is sewn straight down from a point just left of the upper right-hand corner of the folded material for a distance about two-thirds of the way to its folded edge, then through a curve and into a diagonal which terminates short of the halfway mark along this folded edge. This seam serves to shape the right side of the folded cloth into a heel configuration, and is hereinafter referred to as the heel seam. A short diagonal seam is next sewn across the lower left corner of the folded square. This seam occurs at the "toe" end of the slipper, and will henceforth be referred to as the toe seam.

After the heel and toe seams have been sewn, the folded cloth is everted and a second diagonal seam is sewn from the toe seam to a point near the top edges of the cloth. This latter seam defines the longitudinal center of the top, or instep, of the slipper, hence will be hereinafter referred to as the instep seam. The length and angle of the instep seam are so fixed as to leave sufficient distance between its upper end and the upper end of the heel seam to provide an opening for the foot in the top of the slipper. The ends of a strip of elastic, sized to provide a stretch top around the foot opening, are tacked to the slipper at points either side of the upper end of the instep seam and spaced downwardly

from the top edges of the folded and stitched cloth. These edges are then folded outwardly and downwardly, and sewn to the outer side of the slipper body to provide a tubular fold around the elastic. The elastic is free to slip loosely within this fold and serves to hold the slipper snugly in place on the foot while it is being worn.

Forward of its foot opening, those portions of the two folded halves of the cloth square above the instep seam of the slipper are spread apart and tacked in position to form decorative flaps either side of that seam. The essentially completed slipper is now reversed and the excess cloth extending outwardly from the heel and toe seams is trimmed away in such fashion as to leave cut edges of adequate depth for overlocking. These edges are then overlocked, and the slipper is everted so that the overlocked edges adjacent the heel and toe seams are on the inside. By carrying out these simple folding, sewing and cutting steps, an ordinary square of cloth can be quickly, easily and inexpensively converted into a soft, comfortable lounging slipper in accordance with my invention.

It is thus a principal object of this invention to provide soft, comfortable house slippers which can be easily slipped on or off the feet, yet remain snugly in position on the feet when worn.

It is another object of the invention to provide such slippers which are well ventilated to keep the feet comfortably dry while affording adequate insulation to prevent chilling of the feet at cooler temperatures.

It is yet another object of the invention to provide such slippers of simple and attractive design which can be made inexpensively and with a minimum of skill and effort.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a process by means of which said slippers can be fashioned each from a single square of cloth.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art in the light of subsequent disclosures herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a preferred form of house slipper in accordance with this invention.

FIG. 2 is a view, drawn to a reduced scale, of one side of a square of cloth from which the FIG. 1 slipper was prepared, a horizontal center line of the square being shown on the figure as a dashed line.

FIG. 3 shows the square of cloth folded double along said horizontal center line.

FIG. 4 shows the doubled square of cloth as it appears after two seams have been sewn therein as steps in a preferred process of converting the folded square into the FIG. 1 house slipper, and illustrates, additionally, how excess material is trimmed away from the resulting workpiece, as further steps in the process.

FIG. 5 shows the FIG. 4 workpiece after it has been everted and and additional seam has been sewn therein to convert it into the general form of the final slipper, certain lines along which the material is folded in the finishing stages of the slipper-making process being shown as dashed lines in the figure.

FIG. 6 shows the FIG. 5 workpiece, in the same scale as that of FIG. 1, after an elastic band has been positioned around a foot opening therein, and illustrates, by directional arrow means, the directions in which certain parts of the workpiece material are turned to pro-

vide decorative flaps over the instep of the finished slipper and a tubular fold or sleeve for the elastic band.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Considering now the drawing in greater detail, there is shown generally at **10**, in FIG. **1**, a house slipper of preferred form in accordance with this invention. Slipper **10** is made from a square of terrycloth with overlocked edges, as illustrated at **12** in FIG. **2**, the overlocked edges being shown at **16**. Terrycloth, I have discovered, is an ideal starting material for use in the preparation of my novel house slippers because of its fluffy softness, ability to absorb moisture, permeability and durability. The slippers can, however, be made from any soft fabric or equivalent material suitable for purposes of my invention, as taught herein.

Terrycloth is available in different types and qualities, all of which can be used for the preparation of slippers in accordance with my invention. The known varieties of terrycloth include, for example, velours terrycloth, jacquard terrycloth, and others familiar to those skilled in the art. Velours terrycloth is perhaps the best known terrycloth material since it is used in large quantities for the manufacture of washcloths. This type of terrycloth has opposite surfaces of differing texture, one side of the cloth being of significantly coarser or rougher texture than the other. The coarser or rougher of these two surfaces is of conventional terrycloth character, while the other (velours) surface is of a smoother, more velvety character. Jacquard terrycloth is a more luxurious, expensive material than velours terrycloth, and is widely used for the manufacture of high quality towels.

Because it is readily available, relatively inexpensive, durable and of fairly good quality, velours terrycloth is my preferred starting material for the preparation of slippers in accordance with this invention. Such slippers should preferably be made with the rougher (terrycloth) surface of the cloth out, and the smoother (velours) surface in, because they will wear better and be more comfortable for the feet than slippers made with these surfaces in the reverse order.

I have, to date, made terrycloth slippers in accordance with this invention only in small numbers, and have found that in a small scale operation such as this the preferred starting materials are velours terrycloth washcloths of the sort found in any department, or other, store carrying towels and other bathroom supplies. Such washcloths are generally cut square and are provided with overlocked edges, hence are perfectly suited, when of the proper dimensions (as most are) for conversion to the unique slippers of the present invention. Terrycloth square **12** can thus be thought of as a properly sized washcloth or a piece of terrycloth material which has been specifically cut and edge-trimmed for use in the preparation of slipper **10**.

Slipper **10** is fashioned from the square of cloth **12** by first folding that square double, along a fold line **14**, as illustrated in FIG. **3**. Where the terrycloth has surfaces of differing character, care should be taken at this point to fold the square so that the surface intended as the outer surface on the finished slipper is on the inside of the fold. The reason for this, as will be seen, is that the folded workpiece is everted during the slipper-making process so that the cloth surface originally folded in is on the outside of the slipper when the process is completed. For example, where the terrycloth of square **12** is velours terrycloth, it should preferably be folded into its FIG. **3** form with the coarser (terrycloth) surface in.

After square **12** has been folded, a heel seam **18** is sewn downwardly from a point near the right corner thereof, as seen in FIG. **4**, just to the left of the doubled segments of the righthand side edges **16** of the square, for about two-thirds of the distance to the fold line **14**, and then through a curve and successive diagonal of shallow slope, terminating somewhat short of the middle of the fold line, all as illustrated in FIG. **4**. This seam fastens the two doubled halves of the cloth square together at the right end of the folded square, as seen in FIG. **4**, to shape that end of the material, or, as it will sometimes hereinafter be referred to, workpiece, into a heel for the slipper. The lower terminal point of the heel seam is shown at **20** in FIG. **4**.

A toe seam **22** is next sewn diagonally across the lower left corner of the folded square, again as seen in FIG. **4**. This toe seam helps to shape that end of the folded square opposite its heel end into a toe configuration for the slipper. The folded square, or workpiece, with the heel and toe seams, is now everted (turned inside out), and a diagonal seam **24** is sewn upwardly from the toe seam to a point short of the adjacent top edges of the workpiece (see FIG. **5**). This seam provides the final touch in the conversion of the workpiece into the general shape of slipper **10** by fastening the two halves of the folded square together to form an instep for the slipper, hence will be hereinafter referred to as instep seam **24**. The workpiece now has an enclosure for the foot, with a foot opening **28**, as seen in FIG. **6**. An elastic strip **26** long enough to stretch around the heel of the slipper under slight tension, a relatively short distance below the rim of foot opening **28**, is fastened, at its ends, to the workpiece so as to extend around the slipper as shown in FIG. **6**. The ends of the elastic strip are fastened to the workpiece either side of the upper terminus of instep seam **24**, one of the fastening points being shown at **30** in FIG. **6**.

After the elastic strip **26** has been fastened to the slipper workpiece as described, the workpiece material above the elastic is folded thereover, in the manner indicated by the directional arrow to the right in FIG. **6**, and its terminal edge is sewn to the body of the workpiece to enclose the strip in a fold or sleeve **32**, as shown in FIG. **1**. Elastic strip **26** is free to stretch in the fold **32**, since it is fastened only at its ends, and thereby provides a stretch top for the slipper opening to hold the slipper in place once it is slipped on the foot.

As FIG. **6** best shows, two symmetrical flaps of excess workpiece material **34** and **36**, respectively, extend outwardly from the instep seam **24**. These flaps are spread apart, as indicated by the appropriate directional arrows on FIG. **6**, and tacked to the underlying instep of the slipper to add a decorative or ornamental touch thereto. Finally, the slipper is turned inside out, and excess material is trimmed away from the heel and toe seams. This excess material is shown at **38** and **40**, respectively, in FIG. **4**, and is trimmed far enough from the heel and toe seams to permit the newly formed edges of the remaining material, shown at **42** and **44**, respectively, to be overlocked. These edges are overlocked and the workpiece (now a finished slipper) is again everted so that it assumes the shape shown in FIG. **1**. While the term "overlocked," as used in the above context, has been employed frequently herein,

no explanation of its meaning is necessary because of its familiarity to those skilled in the sewing arts. Suffice it to say that overlocking an edge or border of material is a sewing technique for finishing the edge in a way to prevent subsequent unraveling of the material therealong. A common example of an overlocked edge can be found on the ordinary washcloth of above reference.

The foregoing sequence of steps for transforming the square of cloth **12** into slipper **10** is included only as an example of a preferred, and not the only, way of bringing about this transformation. Thus, it is not necessary to follow that exact sequence of steps, or even to include all of the described steps, in converting the cloth square into a house slipper of substantially the type described and illustrated herein. For example, the excess material adjacent the heel and toe seams of the workpiece can be trimmed away before the workpiece is everted for the instep seam-forming, and subsequent, steps of the slipper-making process.

While my novel house slipper has been herein described and illustrated in what I consider to be the preferred embodiment thereof, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that my invention is not limited to that particular embodiment, but is broad enough in concept to encompass all modifications thereof incorporative of the structural and functional essence of the invention as taught herein. Certain of these modifications have already been mentioned, and others will occur to those skilled in the art in the light of present teachings. Exemplary of the latter are non-critical variations of the shapes, sizes and relative positions of the parts or features of the illustrated slipper; the elimination of certain features of the slipper not critically essential to its proper use and functioning; the inclusion of various features not essential to the proper use and functioning of the slipper in its design; etc. More specific examples of such modifications include slippers with ornamental adornments such as artificial flowers, bows, buttons, strips of colored ribbon, and the like, thereon; slippers without ornamental instep flaps such as flaps **34** and **36** of slipper **10** (or with these flaps sized or arranged differently from flaps **34** and **36**, as, for example, flaps folded or cut to a relatively narrow width, flaps folded into triangular shapes, etc.); slippers with instep seams running upwardly from the midpoints of their toe seams; slippers similar in construction to slipper **10** but with their instep seams sewn in such a way that one of the two flaps corresponding to flaps **34** and **36** extends inwardly into the slipper and the other extends outwardly above its instep (such a slipper is more readily reversable than slipper **10**, although the latter can also be reversed for wear, if desired); slippers without ornamental instep flaps or elastic tops around their foot openings and with snap fastening means affixed at the front of these openings, in lieu of the elastic tops, to keep the slippers in place when worn; etc.

While I have herein stressed the applicability of the novel house slipper of this invention for use by women, particularly after baths or showers, it will, of course, be understood that the slippers are not limited to use by women, and can be made in a size suitable for wear by anyone, such as, for example, a child. The slipper can even be made for wear by men, in which case those without ornamental flaps or elastic tops referred to above would no doubt be more suitable than their fancier counterparts described at greater length herein. Preferably, however, the slippers will be made for feminine wear, and I have found that two sizes will suffice for use by most women, a larger size made from pieces of terrycloth twelve inches square, and a smaller size fashioned from pieces eleven inches square. To give an idea of seam dimensions, and the like, for optimum slipper design, I have discovered that best results are achieved with the twelve-inch squares when the heel seam is sewn straight down from the top edges of the folded square to within 2 inches of its fold line, and then continued through the heel curve and subsequent diagonal to intersection with the fold line 5 inches from its heel end; the toe diagonal seam intersects the fold line and left edges of the folded square at 45° angles and is three-quarters of an inch from the proximal corner of said folded square along the bisector of the corner angle; the elastic strip is a strip of material 9-½ inches long (8-½ inches where the 11-inch square of terrycloth is employed) and ¼-inch wide and is positioned far enough below the defining edge of the foot opening in the slipper workpiece to permit the turning of that edge down one inch to provide the fold or sleeve for the elastic; the instep seam is sewn on a 45° angle with respect to the aforesaid fold line for a distance of 5 inches from the upper end or center of the toe seam (four inches where the piece of starting material is 11 inches square); and the instep flaps are tacked to the slipper approximately 1-½ inches down from the front of the foot opening of the slipper.

It is emphasized, in final summary, that the scope of the present invention extends to all embodiments thereof encompassed by the language of the following claims.

I claim:

1. A soft foot covering suitable for use as a house slipper having a top opening and self-contained means for holding itself in position on the foot when worn as a slipper, said foot covering being formed from a piece of terrycloth of generally square shape doubled about a center fold line which divides the cloth into generally rectangular halves so that two opposite edges thereof are swung toward juxtaposition along a straight line, the folded portions of said cloth being fastened together to form a foot receiving enclosure by fastening means comprising instep and heel seams, the instep seam extending diagonally upwardly, with respect to said center fold line, from the toe end of the foot covering toward the heel end thereof, to a distal terminus positioned in approaching proximity to the juxtaposed opposite edges of said cloth, and the heel seam extending away from said center fold line to a distal terminus positioned at the juxtaposed opposite edges of said cloth, said instep and heel seams serving to fix the front and rear limits of said top opening and to orient this opening at the heel end of the foot covering so that an instep extends forwardly therefrom to the toe of said foot covering;

said soft foot covering having a toe seam extending diagonally across a corner of the folded cloth at one end of said fold line to help shape the toe end of the foot covering, the relative positions of the toe and instep seams being such that the latter extends away from a point of intersection with the former to its distal terminus;

said instep seam extending diagonally toward said heel seam from said toe seam and said heel seam extending from a point on said center fold line through diagonal and heel curve portions to termi-

nation at said juxtaposed opposite edges near a corner of the folded cloth at which those edges terminate, the instep, toe and heel seams being disposed in generally coplanar relationship longitudinally of said foot covering when the latter is in its distended position of use, and said self-contained means for holding the foot covering in position on said foot comprising elastic top means around said top opening.

2. A soft foot covering in accordance with claim 1, in which said elastic top comprises a strip of elastic sized to hold the foot covering snugly, but yieldingly, on the foot, said strip of elastic being stretched around the heel of the foot covering and anchored at its ends either side of the distal terminus of said instep seam, said strip of elastic being, additionally, encased in a tubular fold of material encircling said top opening in which it is loosely expansible, whereby said elastic top can be easily stretched to permit slipping of the foot covering onto and off of the foot.

3. A soft foot covering in accordance with claim 2, in which said toe and heel seams are hidden largely within said foot receiving enclosure, whereas said instep seam runs along the instep of the foot covering, largely outside of said foot receiving enclosure.

4. A soft foot covering in accordance with claim 3, having decorative instep flaps formed by excess terry-cloth material extending outwardly from said instep seam, said excess material being spread apart and tacked to the instep of the foot covering either side of said instep seam.

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