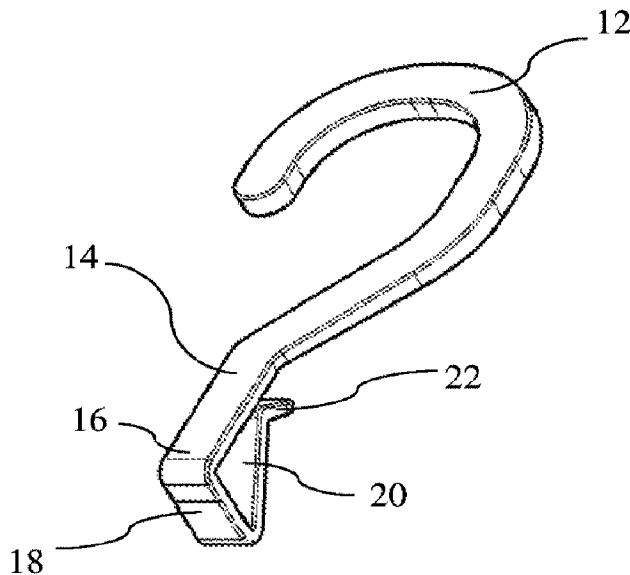




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(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A garment hanger (10) having a rail engaging portion (12) and a stem (14). The stem (14) comprises a first section (16) extending from the rail engaging portion (12) and arranged substantially parallel therewith, a spacer section (18) extending substantially perpendicularly from the first section (16) and a tail section (20) extending from the spacer section (18) and directed towards the first section (16) and/or the rail engaging portion (12). The stem (14) forms a loop with an opening between the end of the tail section (20) and the first section (16) of the stem (14).

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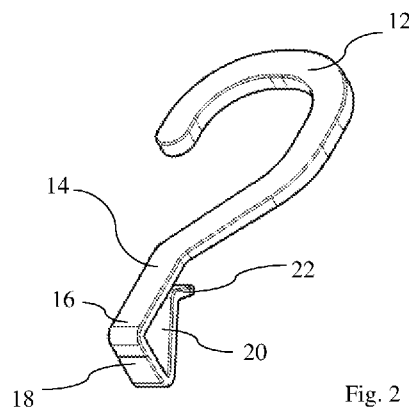


Fig. 2

(57) Abstract: A garment hanger (10) having a rail engaging portion (12) and a stem (14). The stem (14) comprises a first section (16) extending from the rail engaging portion (12) and arranged substantially parallel therewith, a spacer section (18) extending substantially perpendicularly from the first section (16) and a tail section (20) extending from the spacer section (18) and directed towards the first section (16) and/or the rail engaging portion (12). The stem (14) forms a loop with an opening between the end of the tail section (20) and the first section (16) of the stem (14).



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GARMENT HANGER

Field of the Invention

- 5 The invention relates to a hanger, particularly a hanger for hanging garments, bags and/or accessories, and which may be employed in retail stores.

Background to the Invention

- 10 A problem with many existing hanging devices is that if garments are removed from the hanger by customers they often do not rehang the garment properly when reapplying the hanger as many existing hangers are not easy to use to hang the garment properly such that it is neat, tidy and correctly merchandised. However, the hanger needs to be readily removable so that a customer can try on the garment before they purchase it.

15

Should a customer try on a garment but choose not to purchase it, it takes some time to rehang the garment and when such a process is rushed, the garment is often not folded properly and looks messy. Such a messy appearance can reduce potential sales and damage stock. In some stores, staff can be rehangng garments for a considerable period of time each day. Therefore, there is a need to reduce the time taken to rehang a garment.

20

Whilst hangers have been proposed that connect to a garment through a belt loop and stay connected when tried on, such hangers can be problematic when threaded through a plurality of belt loops or when the hanger needs to be engaged or disengaged quickly.

25

GB2485391A (Mainetti UK Limited) discloses a garment hanger for use with items having a belt loop, with the hanger comprising a closable ring of plastics material. However, the closable ring of plastics material may make the application and removal of garments from the hanger complicated and fiddly, thereby being time-consuming.

Summary of the Invention

Accordingly, the present invention is directed to a garment hanger having a rail engaging portion and a stem, wherein, the stem comprises:

- 5 first section extending from the rail engaging portion,
 a spacer section extending substantially perpendicularly from the first section; and
 a tail section extending from the spacer section and directed towards the first section
and/or the rail engaging portion,
 wherein the stem forms an open loop with an opening between the end of the tail
10 section and the first section of the stem.

The present invention provides a readily accessible open loop to engage with a loop of material on a garment. Thus, the garment can be readily affixed to, and removed from, the hanger.

- 15 The loop is an open loop that is not fixedly connected to, and does not engage with, the stem, thereby allowing opening to be readily accessed to engage or disengage a garment. More preferably, a gap is formed between the tail section and the stem.

- 20 The rail engaging portion may be in the form of a hook having a space for engaging a rail, for example, in a store. The spacer section may extend from the first section of the stem in a direction that is non-parallel to the span of the rail engaging portion. This allows the garments to lay in a direction that is not perpendicular with the span of the rail engaging portion, thereby reducing the space taken up by the hung garment.

- 25 Advantageously, the spacer section is substantially flat, or planar, and it may be an extended or an elongate portion on which the garment can rest, when in use. This provides a convenient location for the loop of a garment to rest and the spacer is of sufficient length to allow the loop of material of the garment to lay flat, thereby not deforming the loop when
30 the garment is on the hanger. Thus, the length of the flat section of the spacer on which the

garment loop may rest may be more than 5mm in length to accommodate, for example, a belt loop.

5 In a preferred embodiment, the opening of the loop is positioned substantially above the spacer section, when the hanger is allowed to rest, or fall, in its natural hanging position. In such an arrangement, the opening is arranged in a linear position opposite the spacer section. Thus, in use, when the rail engagement section engages a rail, the weight of the garment results in the spacer section being at the lowest point and the opening is arranged between the spacer and the rail. This aids with retaining the garment on the hanger, when
10 in use on a rail, because the weight of the garment pulls the garment away from the opening, or gap, making it less likely to become disengaged.

It is advantageous that the opening between the tail section and the first section of the stem is less than half of the length of the spacer section and, particularly advantageous where the
15 opening is less than a quarter of the length of the spacer section. Such a relationship reduces the risk of the garment disengaging from the hanger.

Preferably, a tail flange is provided on the tail section and that extends in a direction away from the stem and the spacer section. The tail flange is employed to provide a guide, or to
20 create a funnel section, to guide garments into the open loop of the stem section more readily. This reduces the precision required by a user when affixing the hanger and they can simply slide the garment loop close to the hanger and the tail flange will guide the garment loop into the opening of the hanger. The apex between the tail flange and the tail section may be sufficiently close to the first section of the stem that it forms a small gap
25 that makes it difficult for a garment to disengage without manual manipulation. Where that is the case, due to the angles formed in the stem, a user is able to ready manipulate the garment towards the gap and the material is able to elastically deform to allow the garment onto or off the hanger with minimal effort.

In an advantageous arrangement, the width of the stem is less than the bight of the rail engaging section and it is also advantageous where the width of stem is substantially uniform or it may narrow, or taper, towards the tail section. These arrangements allow the hanger to be more easily applied to a garment.

5

The hanger is, preferably, a garment hanger, although it may be used on accessories or bags.

The invention extends to a garment hanger assembly comprising:

10

a garment hanger as described herein and provided with an aperture therein; and connection means;

wherein a loop of the garment engages the loop of the hanger and the connection means passes through the aperture in the garment hanger and engages the garment.

15

The use of an aperture in the hanger and connection means, for example, a string, chain or kimble, allows for the hanger to be connected independently to the garment. This results in the garment being able to be supported on a rail by the hanger and then the hanger being connected via the connection means to the garment. Thus, the garment can be disengaged from the hanger whilst still being connected thereto, thereby reducing the risk of the hanger being incorrectly applied to another garment.

20

The hanger may be provided with one or more sections to which a sizer and/or a label may be applied. For example, a sizer, which indicates the size of a garment, may be clipped to the rail engaging portion, the stem or the tail. Additionally, or alternatively, a larger section or flange may be provided, for example between the rail engaging portion and the stem, to which a sticker, label or other item may be applied. The sizer, if used, may attach to the label section, if present.

25

Brief Description of the Drawings

An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

5 Figure 1 is a diagram showing a front view of a hanger in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the hanger of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a side view of the hanger of Figure 1; and

Figure 4 shows the hanger of Figure 1 in use.

10

Detailed Description of Exemplary Embodiments

Figures 1 to 4 show a hanger 10 for hanging a garment on a rail, comprising a rail engaging portion in the form of a hook 12, and a stem 14. The stem 14 extends substantially parallel and/or planarly with the plane of the bight, or span, of the hook 12.

The stem 14 has a lower end 16, which is connected to a first end of a planar elongate spacer section 18 that extends rearwardly from the stem, that is, substantially orthogonally behind the plane of the span of the hook 12, to create a “shelf”. The other end of the spacer section 18 is connected to a first end of a tail section 20 that extends in a direction towards the first section 16 and/or the hook 12 to create a substantially triangular open loop with a gap opposite the spacer section 18. The second end of the tail section 20 is provided with a tail flange 22 that extends away from the first section 16.

25 The internal angle A between the first section 16 and the spacer section 18 is substantially 90 degrees. The angle B between the spacer section 18 and the tail section 20 is 90 degrees or, preferably, less. The angle C between the tail section 20 and the tail flange 22 is substantially between 30 and 120 degrees. This creates a substantially triangular open loop having a gap G between the second end of the tail section 20 and the first section 16 and

arranged above the spacer section 18, the width of the gap being less than the length S of the spacer section 18.

5 The hanger 10 is constructed from a resiliently yieldable material so that it can elastically deform to allow a loop of a garment to pass through the gap G. That yieldable material may be, inter alia, plastics material or metal. The parts of the hanger below the hooks are substantially fixed relative to one another so that the hanger holds its shape and is relatively rigid, albeit that it can elastically flex, when required.

10 In use, one or a plurality of loops 28 of a garment 30 are fed onto the hanger 10. This is achieved by pushing the, or each, loop through the gap G. When the loop is thicker than the gap G, the hanger elastically yields in order to allow the loop into the triangular open loop formed by the stem 14. Because gap G elastically returns to its original size, the loops are held on the hanger and have a low chance of passive disengaging therefrom. The
15 garment can be hung on a rail 32 via hook 12.

The tail flange 22 helps to guide the loop of the garment into the gap G by forming a secondary, guide wall that converges on the gap G. The tail flange 22 can also be used to open the gap G wider by putting pressure on the tail flange 22, for example by using a
20 thumb, thereby allowing a user to more easily attach the garment to, or remove the garment from, the hanger 10.

Hook 12 has a span, or bight, H intended to engage a garment display rail 32 and the width of the stem 14 and parts connected thereto may be less than that of the span H.

25 Additionally, the width of the stem is, preferably, uniform.

The spacer section 18 is substantially flat, but could be curved convexly or concavely on one or both sides (internal and/or external to the loop), if required.

The tail section may be substantially parallel with the first section thereby creating a U-shaped open loop, although it is preferable that it extends towards the first section to create a substantially triangular-shaped open loop with an aperture therein positioned adjacent the stem.

5

The second end of the tail section is not fixedly attached to the first section, thus, even if the second end of the tail section was to touch the first section of the stem, it is still an open loop that can be readily enlarged to engage or disengage the hanger from a garment.

10 The hanger may be provided with an aperture in it, for example in the stem, possibly at the first section 16, through which retaining means may pass. The retaining means, which may be in the form of a loop, string, chain, tie, kimble tag or other flexible member, can be employed to attach the hanger to the garment independently from the tail section. One way in which this may be enabled is to pass the retaining means through a loop of the garment
15 and through the aperture of the hanger or to puncture the garment with the retaining means and also passing the retaining means through the hole. Thus, even if the garment is removed from the hanger, the hanger is still attached to the garment via the attachment means.

20 The hanger may comprise a body section between the rail engaging portion and the stem, wherein the body is shaped to allow for the application of a label or other information.

A “garment” is generally considered to be an item of clothing that may be worn by a person. Therefore, it may include, but is not limited to, trousers, shorts, jeans, skirts,
25 jackets, jumpers or shirts. Accessories, such as hats, sunglasses, bags and belts are not considered to be garments, although the hanger may, in some circumstances be employed on these items.

CLAIMS

1. A garment hanger having a first side and a second side and comprising:
a rail engaging portion with an arcuate rail engaging hook; and
a section extending from the rail engaging portion having a garment engaging loop extending from the second side of the garment hanger in a direction away from the first side of the garment hanger;
the garment engaging loop comprising a spacer section and a tail section extending from the spacer section and looping back towards the second side of the garment hanger to form an open loop with an opening arranged between the tail section and the second side of the garment hanger;
wherein a plane of a span of the garment engaging loop is non-parallel with a plane of a span of the rail engaging hook; and
wherein the garment engaging loop is constructed from a resiliently yieldable material so as to be capable of elastic deformation to increase the distance between the tail section and the second side of the garment hanger, thereby more readily allowing a loop of a garment to pass onto the garment engaging loop.
2. The garment hanger according to claim 1, wherein the plane of the span of the garment engaging loop is substantially perpendicular to the plane of the span of the rail engaging hook.
3. The garment hanger according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein, when the garment hanger is allowed to hang naturally, the opening is positioned above the spacer section.
4. The garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the opening between the tail section and the section extending from the rail engaging portion is less than half of the length of the spacer section.

5. The garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein a tail flange is provided on the tail section and that extends in a direction away from the spacer section.
6. The garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the span of the section extending from the rail engaging portion is less than a bight of the rail engaging section.
7. The garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein a width of the section extending from the rail engaging portion is substantially uniform.
8. The garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the spacer section comprises a flat portion or a curved portion.
9. A method of hanging a garment comprising:
providing a garment hanger according to any one of claims 1 to 8;
threading the tail of the garment engaging loop through at least one loop of material of a garment; and
hanging the garment on a display rail in a retail store.
10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the garment hanger engages two loops of the garment.
11. The method according to claim 9, wherein the loop of the garment is a belt loop.

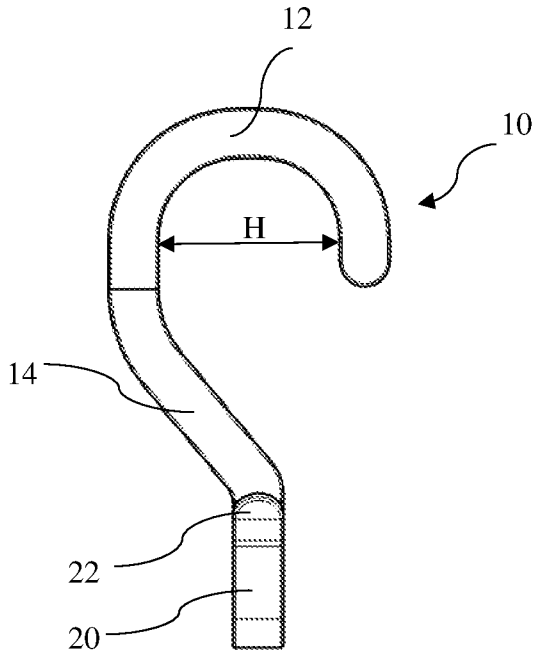


Fig. 1

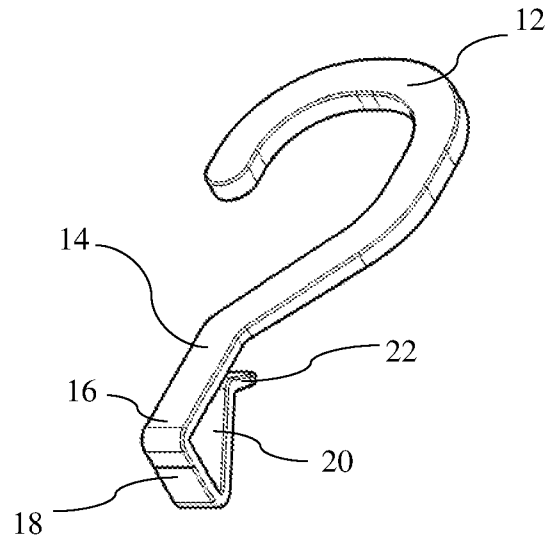


Fig. 2

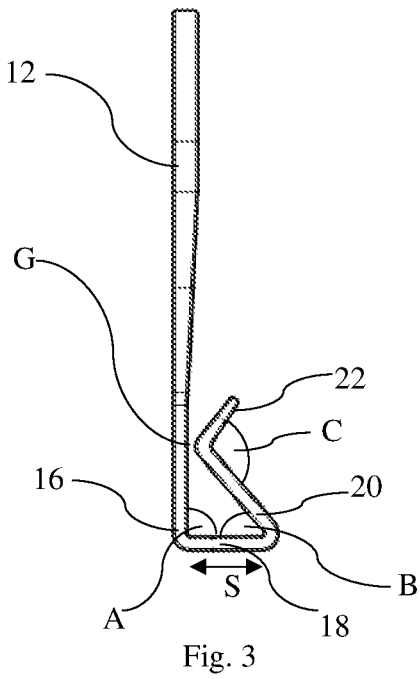


Fig. 3

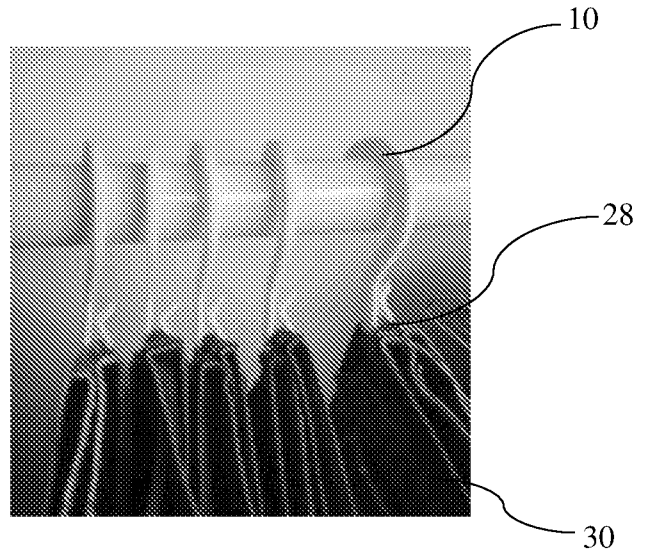


Fig. 4

