DUVET COVER AND COMFORTER

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/122,565, filed on Dec. 15, 2008. The entire disclosure of the above application is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD

[0002] The present disclosure generally relates to bedding. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to a device for retaining a comforter inside of a cover.

BACKGROUND

[0003] This section provides background information that is not necessarily prior art.

[0004] Comforters, quilts, and the like ("comforters") have long been used to keep a user warm, especially during sleep. Generally, these comforters are large and rectangular in shape and correspond to standard bed sizes (e.g., twin, queen, king, etc.). Modern consumers are increasingly interested in quickly and easily changing the appearance and design of a room. A comforter cover (generally, "cover") may be placed over the comforter to quickly and easily change decorative appearance. The duvet cover provides protection and allows for prolonged use of the comforter. The cover may be easily removed from the comforter for laundering. Once removed, the cover is smaller than a comforter because of the lack of filling, and is more easily laundered.

[0005] In order to maintain the ability for installation and removal, the cover should not be permanently fastened to the comforter. The lack of attachment, however, may cause the comforter to bunch or ball inside of the cover while in use. Further, when installing the comforter inside of the cover, it may be difficult to find and match the corners and retain them in place.

SUMMARY

[0006] This section provides a general summary of the disclosure, and is not a comprehensive disclosure of its full scope or all of its features.

[0007] An assembly is provided and may include a cover defining an enclosed inner space accessible through an opening for selectively receiving a comforter including at least one side having a pair of flaps. The assembly may further include at least one first retaining mechanism disposed between the pair of flaps to selectively position the comforter relative to the cover.

[0008] In another configuration, an assembly may include a cover enclosing a comforter within an inner space accessible through a selectively closable opening. An access portion of the cover may be spaced apart from the opening and may be movable between a closed position and an open position. A closure mechanism may selectively retain the access portion in the closed position. At least one retaining mechanism used to retain the comforter relative to the cover may be accessible when the access portion is in the open position.

[0009] Further areas of applicability will become apparent from the description provided herein. The description and specific examples in this summary are intended for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure.

DRAWINGS

[0010] The drawings described herein are for illustrative purposes only of selected embodiments and not all possible implementations, and are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure.

[0011] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a covering arrangement in use on a bed in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0012] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a cover and comforter in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0013] FIG. 3 is a detailed perspective view of the cover of FIG. 2;

[0014] FIG. 3A is a detailed perspective view of a second embodiment of the cover of FIG. 2;

[0015] FIG. 4 is a detailed perspective view of the comforter of FIG. 2;

[0016] FIG. 4A is a detailed perspective view of a second embodiment of the comforter of FIG. 2;

[0017] FIG. 4B is a detailed perspective view of the second embodiment of the comforter of FIG. 2 including a fastening mechanism;

[0018] FIG. 4C is a detailed perspective view of the comforter of FIG. 2;

[0019] FIG. 4D is a cross-sectional view of the comforter of FIG. 2;

[0020] FIG. 4E is a cross-sectional view of the comforter of FIG. 2 including an alternate construction of a retaining mechanism;

[0021] FIG. 4F is a partial top view of a cover for use with the comforter of FIG. 2;

[0022] FIG. 5 is a top view of a modular comforter;

[0023] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of a cover in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0024] FIG. 7 is a detailed perspective view of a fourth embodiment of a cover in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0025] FIG. 8 is a detailed perspective view of a fifth embodiment of a cover in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure;

[0026] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of a sixth embodiment of a cover and comforter in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure; and

[0027] FIG. 10 is a top view of the covering arrangement of FIG. 1 in association with a sheet in accordance with the teachings of the present disclosure.

[0028] Corresponding reference numerals indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0029] The following description is merely exemplary in nature and is not intended to limit the present disclosure, application, or uses. It should be understood that throughout the drawings, corresponding reference numerals indicate like or corresponding parts and features throughout the several views of the drawings.

[0030] Example embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough, and will fully convey the scope to those who are skilled in the art. Numerous specific details are
set forth such as examples of specific components and methods, to provide a thorough understanding of embodiments of the present disclosure. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that specific details need not be employed, that example embodiments may be embodied in many different forms and that neither should be construed to limit the scope of the disclosure. In some example embodiments, well-known processes and well-known structures are not described in detail.

[0031] Referring now to FIG. 1, a cover assembly is shown and generally indicated by reference numeral 10. The (cover) assembly 10 is shown operatively associated with a bed 12. The bed 12 as illustrated in FIG. 1 is depicted as a standard queen-sized bed (i.e., dimensions=87" width×87" length), but it is understood that the covering arrangement 10 may be sized to accommodate any bed, such as, but not limited to, twin-sized beds, king-sized beds, and toddler-sized beds. It should also be noted that the teachings of the present disclosure may be applied to numerous other coverings, such as throw blankets, picnic blankets, pillows, etc. In this regard, it will be understood that the particular (cover) assembly 10 shown in the various drawings is merely exemplary in nature.

[0032] With continued reference to FIG. 1 and additional reference to FIG. 2, the (cover) assembly 10 includes a comforter 14 enveloped by a cover 16. While the cover 16 is depicted as enclosing the comforter 14, it should be understood that the cover 16 may cover any woven or non-woven material including a quilt or a fleece, microfiber, or wool sheet, any of which may include an insulative material. The cover 16 may be formed as a single sheet, or may include multiple sheets joined together, as described and shown, but is merely exemplary in nature.

[0033] In a first embodiment as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, the cover 16 includes a top cover 18, a bottom cover 20, a closing mechanism 24, and a retaining mechanism 26. The top cover 18 and the bottom cover 20 may be formed unitary as a single sheet, or joined at a bottom edge 28 and side edges 30. A bottom cover top edge 32 and a top cover top edge 34 may each contain one-half of the closing mechanism 24 for selectively fastening the top edges 32, 34 to retain the comforter 14. The closing mechanism 24 is a button-and-hole type with buttons 36 sewn along one of the bottom cover top edge 32 and top cover top edge 34 and mating holes 38 located along the other of the bottom cover top edge 32 and top cover top edge 34. The closing mechanism 24, however, may be of any type known in the art, such as, for example, zip-type, snap, magnetic or hook-and-loop closures, but not limited thereto. The retaining mechanism 26 assists in locating and fixing the comforter 14 within the cover 16 as will be further described below.

[0034] The retaining mechanism 26 may be a generally triangular-shaped swatch of fabric 40 having a first half of triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closure 42 fastened therewith. It should be understood that while the retaining mechanism 26 and the hook-and-loop closure 42 are described as having a triangular-shape, other shapes may also be used, such as, for example, trapezoidal, circular, rectangular, etc. Further, while the retaining mechanism 26 is described as having the swatch of fabric 40 and the hook-and-loop closure 42, other materials are contemplated, such as a soft plastic in place of the fabric 40 and/or a snap, a hook and eye, a button and hole, sticky tape, a string and tie, a loop, a clip, or a claw in place of the closure 42. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop closure 42 may be directly joined to the cover 16 without use of the fabric 40.

[0035] The swatch of fabric 40 may be attached along a first side 44 between the top cover 18 and the bottom cover 20 at the side edge 30. A second side 46 of the swatch of fabric 40 may be substantially aligned with the bottom cover top edge 32 and the top cover top edge 34. The bottom cover top edge 32 and the top cover top edge 34 may be fastened through a distance, which corresponds to the length 1 (FIG. 3) of the second side 46 of the swatch of fabric 40.

[0036] Additional swatches of fabric 40 having the first half of hook-and-loop closure 42 may be placed at all four corners 47 of the cover 16 to secure the comforter 14 relative to at least one of the top cover 18 and bottom cover 20. If four swatches of fabric 40 are employed with one swatch of fabric 40 disposed at each corner 47, two of the swatches of fabric 40 will be aligned with side edges 30 and edges 32, 34 and the other two swatches of fabric 40 will be aligned with side edges 30 and edge 28. The swatches of fabric 40 may be fastened to the top cover 18 and/or to the bottom cover 20. The top cover 18 and bottom cover 20 are then fastened together to form the cover 16.

[0037] Referring now to FIG. 4, the comforter 14 will be described in greater detail. The comforter 14 may be formed unitary, such as a nonwoven fabric, or as shown, may include a top fabric 46 joined to a bottom fabric 50 packed with an insulating material 49, such as polyfil, down, fleece, silk, etc., disposed therebetween. The top fabric 48 and bottom fabric 50 may be fastened along each edge 54 to retain the insulating material 49 between the top fabric 48 and bottom fabric 50. A second, mating half of triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closure 56 may be fastened at corners 58 of the comforter 14 and positioned to engage the hook-and-loop closure 42 of at least one of the top cover 18 and bottom cover 20 of the cover 16. The comforter 14 is shown dimensionally equivalent, but slightly smaller than the cover 16.

[0038] In operation, the first half of hook-and-loop closure 42 and the second half of hook-and-loop closure 56 are joined so that the corners 58 of the comforter 14 are removably retained inside of the cover 16 at one or more corners 47 of the cover 16.

[0039] While the first and second halves of hook-and-loop closure 42, 56 are described as being substantially triangular in shape, other shapes may be used. For example, the first and second halves of hook-and-loop closures 42, 56 may include long rectangular strips, crescents, half-circles, and/or circular dots. Additionally, the retaining mechanism 26 may be placed at fixed points on the top 32, 34, edge 28, and/or side edges 30 of the cover 16. For example, the retaining mechanism 26 may be located at the perimeter or may be staggered at fixed points along the interior of the cover 16.

[0040] With reference to FIGS. 3A and 4A, a second embodiment of the present disclosure may include the swatch of fabric 40 of the retaining mechanism 26 with a hook-and-loop closure 142 on both a top and a bottom surface 143, 145. Alternatively, the hook-and-loop closure 142 may be double-sided, thereby omitting the swatch of fabric 40. In either case, the hook-and-loop closure 142 may include either hook on both top and bottom surfaces 143, 145, loop on both top and bottom surfaces 143, 145, or hook on one and loop on the other surface 143, 145.

[0041] The comforter 114 includes flaps 157 including mating hook-and-loop closures 156 disposed along opposing
inner surfaces 149 (FIG. 4C). In operation, the flaps 157 close around the double-sided hook-and-loop closure 142 to position the comforter 114 relative to the cover 16 (FIG. 4F). The flaps 157 may alternatively be formed by folding a corner of the comforter 114 in on itself and positioning a substrate 151 along the folded corner. The substrate 151 may be stitched to the folded corner to aid in retaining the shape of the folded corner (FIG. 4D). Once the substrate 151 is attached to the folded corner of the comforter 114, the hook-and-loop closures 156 may be attached to the substrate 151. In one configuration, the substrate 151 is a swatch of fabric. While a swatch of fabric is disclosed, the substrate 151 could alternatively be formed from any material that provides the folded corner of the comforter 114 with reinforcement such as, for example, plastic.

[0042] The comforter 114 of the second embodiment may also incorporate a fastening mechanism 115. For example, as shown in FIG. 4F, the fastening mechanism 115 may be a swatch of mating hook-and-loop closure fastened towards a corner 117 along the inner surface 149 of the flaps 157 (e.g., located about 7.5 mm from the corner). In this way, the flaps 157 may remain closed for use in a standard designed duvet cover. While the swatch of mating hook-and-loop closure has been shown, it should be understood that other devices for closing the flaps 157 may be used. For example, the flaps 157 may retain an appropriately shaped, double-sided hook-and-loop closure swatch or may incorporate a magnetic closure, snaps, laceing, buttons, zip-type closure, etc.

[0043] While the second embodiment depicts the double-sided hook-and-loop closure 142 as being substantially triangular in shape and located at the corners 147 of the cover 116, it is also contemplated to use rectangular double-sided hook-and-loop closure fabric strips 142 placed along the perimeter of the flaps 157 or along the various edges 128, 132 of the cover 116. In the embodiment where the rectangular double-sided hook-and-loop closure fabric strips 142 are placed along the various edges 128, 132 of the cover 116, the flaps 157 may be located along corresponding edges 154 of the comforter 114 (FIG. 4F).

[0044] The double-sided hook-and-loop closure 142 may also be fastened, instead, to the comforter 114. In this case, the shape of the flaps 157 would be included on the corresponding edges 128, 132 or corners 147 of the cover 116.

[0045] With reference to FIG. 5, a modular comforter system 214 may be used within the cover 16. In this way, a first portion 260 of the modular comforter system 214 may be of a different weight or loft than a second portion 262 of the modular comforter system 214 (e.g., 300 fill and 900 fill). The first and second portions 260, 262 may be separated along a seam 263 or, alternatively, may be fastened to each other along a length 264, such as by a hook-and-loop fastener, button-and-hole closures, sewing, a zipper, etc. This modular comforter system 214 provides multiple and differing insulative properties to the comforter system 214 while utilizing the same cover 16. A heating and/or cooling element 266 may be incorporated into the modular comforter system 214 in either the first or second portions 260, 262 or in both portions 260, 262 to obtain even greater temperature ranges.

[0046] Similar to the comforter 14, the modular comforter system 214 includes a second half of triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closure 256 fastened at corners 258 of the modular comforter system 214. The first and second portions 260, 262 each include two of the triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closures 256, so that the modular comforter system 214 resembles the comforter 14. The modular comforter system 214 can then be attached within the cover 16 to obtain the benefits of retention, as previously noted.

[0047] With reference to FIG. 6, a third embodiment of the present disclosure will be described. A cover 316 includes a top cover 318, a bottom cover 320, a closing mechanism (not shown), and a retaining mechanism 326. The top cover 318 and the bottom cover 320 may be fastened at a bottom edge 328 and side edges 330. A top edge 332 may utilize the closing mechanism for temporarily fastening the top edge 332 to retain the comforter 14, 114, 214, as previously described.

[0048] The top cover 318 may include generally semi-circular-shaped access portions such as opening flaps 368 disposed proximate to each corner 370. The access portions may be moved between an open position and a closed position. When in the closed position, the access portions may engage a closure mechanism to retain the access portion in the closed position. In one configuration, the closure mechanism is a hook-and-loop closure 372, whereby the opening flaps 368 may have a first half of the hook-and-loop closure 372 along an outer perimeter 374, while a mating half of hook-and-loop closure 376 is located at the associated corner 370. The mating half of hook-and-loop closure 376 may be attached to the bottom cover 320. The retaining mechanism 326 may again be a substantially triangular-shaped swatch of fabric 340 having a first half of triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closure 342 fastened therewith. However, the swatch of fabric 340 may also be omitted and the first half of substantially triangular-shaped hook-and-loop closure 342 may be fastened to the bottom cover 320 or, alternatively, the double-sided hook-and-loop closure 142 may be used and attached, as previously described.

[0049] After installing the comforter 14, 114, 214 within the cover 316, the opening flaps 368 are pulled open and the second half of hook-and-loop closure 56, 156, 256 is joined with the first half of hook-and-loop closure 142, 342 at the comforter corners 58, 258. The opening flaps 368 are then closed during use of the covering arrangement 310. Additionally or additionally, the retaining mechanism 326 may incorporate a magnetic closure, snaps, laceing, buttons, zip-type closure, etc., to secure the comforter 14, 114, 214 to the cover 316.

[0050] In a fourth embodiment depicted in FIG. 7, access portions such as opening flaps 468 are located at corners 470. The access portions may be moved between an open position and a closed position. When in the closed position, the access portions may engage a closure mechanism to retain the access portion in the closed position. In one configuration, the closure mechanism is a hook-and-loop closure, whereby a first half of hook-and-loop closure 480 is located on a bottom cover 420 of the cover 416 and is attached along an outer perimeter 482. A mating half of hook-and-loop closure 484 is located on a top cover 418 of the cover 416 along an outer perimeter 486. While the first half of hook-and-loop closure 480 is substantially triangular-shaped, the mating half of hook-and-loop closure 484 is substantially V-shaped and follows the outer perimeter 486. In this way, the comforter 14, 114, 214 may be attached to an inner portion 488 of the first half of hook-and-loop closure 480, while the mating half of hook-and-loop closure 484 may be attached to an outer portion 490 of the first half of hook-and-loop closure 480.

[0051] Referring now to FIG. 8, a fifth embodiment is provided and may include access portions such as flaps 568
located at corners 570. The access portions may be moved between an open position and a closed position. When in the closed position, the access portions may engage a closing mechanism to retain the access portion in the closed position. In one configuration, the closing mechanism is a hook-and-loop closure, whereby a first half of hook-and-loop closure 580 may be attached along an outer perimeter 582 of both a bottom cover 520 and a top cover 518 of a cover 516. A mating half of hook-and-loop closure (not shown) is located on top and bottom surfaces (not shown) of the comforter 14, 114, 214. Attachment of the bottom cover 520 to the bottom surface of the comforter 14, 114, 214 and the top cover 518 to the top surface of the comforter 14, 114, 214 effectively closes the opening flaps 568.

[0052] With reference to FIG. 9, a sixth embodiment of a cover 616 including dual closing mechanisms 624 on either side edge 630 is shown. While the closing mechanisms 624 are shown as button-and-hole type closures as described with respect to the first embodiment, any closing mechanism may be substituted. Dual closing mechanisms 624 on the side edges 630 provide immediate access to the interior corners 692 of the cover 616.

[0053] Additional notable features may be incorporated into the cover 16, 116, 316, 416, 516, 616 of the present disclosure. With respect to material, the bottom cover 20, 320, 420, 520, 620 of the cover 16, 116, 316, 416, 516, 616 may be a water-repellant material (e.g., plastic, polyurethane laminate (PUL)) for use in a wet or damp environment. The bottom cover 20, 320, 420, 520, 620 and the comforter 14, 114, 214 may also be formed from a wicking material (e.g., microfiber, fleece, wool) for use in a damp environment. The backing material allows for drying of bedding, while still providing warmth to the user. The fabric swatch 40 may also be padded for user comfort. For example, the fabric swatch 40 may be a pillow-like feature with interior padding for added user comfort.

[0054] While hook-and-loop closure has been described for use in fastening the comforter 14, 114, 214 to the cover 16, 116, 316, 416, 516, 616, any fastening mechanism may be used in place of or in addition to the hook-and-loop closure, such as, for example, magnetic strips, snaps, zippers, lacing, buttons, etc., to attach the comforter 14, 114, 214 to the cover 16, 116, 316, 416, 516, 616.

[0055] The present disclosure may also be incorporated with existing pre-owned comforters and/or duvets through a kit including the hook-and-loop closures 42, 56. The user may attach the hook-and-loop closures 42, 56 to the pre-owned comforter and/or duvet cover, so that the benefits described in the present application can be realized on existing bedding. Attachment methods may include any fastening mechanism such as adhesives, stitching, tacking, etc. In one example, a tension-style clam having padded ends (not shown) may be fastened to the existing pre-owned comforter to allow for attachment to any of the duvet cover designs as described herein.

[0056] It is also noted that a cover 616 of the present disclosure may further include a button arrangement 692 at a bottom edge 628, as shown in FIG. 10. Corresponding holes 694 are found on sheets 696. Attachment of the buttons 692 to the holes 694 prevents the sheets 696 from moving during use. The button-and-hole arrangement 692, 694 as described may also allow for ease in positioning the sheets 696 relative to the bed 12. It is contemplated that the buttons 692 and holes 694 may be reversed so that the buttons 692 are instead found on the sheets 696. The buttons 692 and holes 694 may be also located along the edges 630 of the cover 616. Magnetic strips, snaps, zippers, lacing, hooks, or buttons may be alternatively or additionally used to prevent movement of the sheets 696.

[0057] The foregoing description of the embodiments has been provided for purposes of illustration and description. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention. Individual elements or features of a particular embodiment are generally not limited to that particular embodiment, but, where applicable, are interchangeable and can be used in a selected embodiment, even if not specifically shown or described. The same may also be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the teachings or disclosure, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An assembly comprising a cover defining an enclosed inner space accessible through an opening for selectively receiving a comforter including at least one side having a pair of flaps, and at least one first retaining mechanism disposed between said pair of flaps to selectively position said comforter relative to said cover.

2. The assembly of claim 1, wherein at least one of said flaps includes a second retaining mechanism in selective engagement with said first retaining mechanism when said first retaining mechanism is disposed between said pair of flaps.

3. The assembly of claim 1, wherein each of said flaps includes a second retaining mechanism and said at least one first retaining mechanism includes a pair of first retaining mechanisms, said second retaining mechanisms in selective engagement with respective ones of said first retaining mechanisms when said first retaining mechanisms are disposed between said pair of flaps.

4. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said at least one first retaining mechanism is attached to said cover.

5. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said first retaining mechanism is at least one of a hook-and-loop fastener, a button, a snap, a magnet, tape, and an adhesive.

6. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said first retaining mechanism includes either a hook portion or a loop portion of a hook-and-loop fastener and at least one of said pair of flaps includes the other of said hook portion and said loop portion.

7. The assembly of claim 6, wherein at least one of said hook portion and said loop portion includes a triangular shape.

8. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said at least one first retaining mechanism is disposed at a corner of said cover.

9. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said at least one first retaining mechanism includes a first retaining mechanism disposed at each corner of said cover.

10. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said at least one first retaining mechanism is disposed at an edge of said cover.

11. The assembly of claim 1, wherein said flaps are formed by folding a corner of the comforter inward on itself to form a pocket lined with a substrate mounting said retaining mechanism.

12. An assembly comprising:

- a cover enclosing a comforter within an inner space accessible through a selectively closable opening;
- an access portion of said cover spaced apart from said opening and movably between a closed position and an open position;
a closure mechanism for selectively retaining said access portion in said closed position;
at least one retaining mechanism to retain said comforter relative to said cover and accessible when said access portion is in said open position.

13. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said retaining mechanism is hidden from view when said access portion is in said closed position.

14. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said retaining mechanism is attached to said cover.

15. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said retaining mechanism is at least one of a hook-and-loop fastener, a button, a snap, a magnet, tape, and an adhesive.

16. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said retaining mechanism includes either a hook portion or a loop portion of a hook-and-loop fastener and said comforter includes the other of said hook portion and said loop portion.

17. The assembly of claim 16, wherein at least one of said hook portion and said loop portion includes a triangular shape.

18. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said at least one retaining mechanism is disposed at a corner of said cover.

19. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said at least one retaining mechanism includes a retaining mechanism disposed at each corner of said cover.

20. The assembly of claim 12, wherein said at least one retaining mechanism is disposed along an edge of said cover.

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