The present invention is directed to a glove that provides protection for the fingernails of the wearer without reducing the flexibility in the remainder of the glove or reducing the wearer's manual dexterity or sense of touch. The glove comprises protector pads positioned in the fingernail regions on the inside of the glove to prevent the fingernails from contacting and rubbing or chafing against the inner surface of the glove. The protector pads can be made of a soft or smooth material so as not to scrape, abrade or otherwise damage the nails.
GLOVE WITH FINGERNAIL PROTECTORS

[0001] This application claims priority to Canadian Patent Application No. 2,676,341, filed Aug. 21, 2009, which application is incorporated by reference herein.

FIELD

[0002] The present invention relates generally to gloves, and more particularly to gloves with protector pads positioned in the fingernail regions of the glove to protect a wearer’s fingernails. The protector pads provide protection for the fingernails without reducing the flexibility in the remainder of the glove or reducing the wearer’s manual dexterity.

BACKGROUND

[0003] A person’s fingertips and fingernails are susceptible to damage when performing manual tasks. Some types of manual work can be particularly hard on the fingers and fingernails. These can include, for example, gardening, yard work, cleaning, household chores, home repair and renovations, and moving furniture and other large or heavy objects. Therefore people often wear protective gloves to protect their hands, fingers and fingernails. However, existing gloves can still damage the fingernails of a wearer. For example, the inner surface of the glove can rub and chafe against the nail thereby scratching, abrading or chipping the nail. Such damage is particularly undesirable where the wearer wishes to preserve a coating of nail polish or the effects of a manicure.

[0004] Most existing protective gloves do not provide specific protection for the wearer’s fingernails. However, even the gloves that do provide additional fingernail or fingertip protection suffer from a number of drawbacks. In some gloves, the additional protection is located on the outer surface of the glove. Although some protection is provided, such exterior protection does not prevent the fingernails of the wearer from rubbing or scraping against the inner surface of the glove. In other gloves, the protection is positioned on the inside of the glove. However, in some gloves this protection fails to protect the delicate surface of the fingernails. In other gloves, the internal protection substantially or completely encases the fingertip, which reduces the flexibility of the glove fingers and the wearer’s manual dexterity.

[0005] It can therefore be appreciated that a need exists for a glove that provides protection for the fingernails without reducing the flexibility in the remainder of the glove or reducing the wearer’s manual dexterity or sense of touch.

SUMMARY

[0006] The present disclosure provides a glove that addresses the problems described above. In particular, the present glove comprises protector pads positioned in the fingernail regions of the glove to protect a wearer’s fingernails. The protector pads prevent the fingernails from contacting the inner surface of the glove and also provide an additional layer of material to protect the nails. The protector pads can be made of a soft or smooth material so as not to scrape, abrade or otherwise damage the nails, and to provide a protective cushion for the nails. The positioning of the protector pads in the fingernail regions of the glove provide protection for the nails without reducing the flexibility in the remainder of the glove or reducing the wearer’s manual dexterity.

[0007] In one aspect, the present disclosure is directed to a glove, comprising a palm portion, a back portion, a plurality of flexible finger stalls extending outwardly from the palm and back portions, each finger stall having an inner surface, an outer surface, and a fingernail region, and protector pads disposed in the fingernail region of the finger stalls, the protector pads having a contact portion that is exposed to a wearer’s fingernail and is positioned and dimensioned to prevent a wearer’s fingernail from contacting the inner surface of the glove.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] The present disclosure will be better understood having regard to the drawings in which:

[0009] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the back side of one embodiment of the glove;

[0010] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the palm side of the embodiment shown in FIG. 1;

[0011] FIG. 3A is a sectional side view of one of the finger stalls of at least one embodiment of the glove;

[0012] FIG. 3B is a sectional side view of one of the finger stalls of the embodiment shown in

[0013] FIG. 3B with a wearer’s finger inserted;

[0014] FIG. 4 is a sectional top view of one of the finger stalls of at least one embodiment of the glove; and

[0015] FIG. 5 is a sectional side view of one of the finger stalls of another embodiment of the glove.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0016] The present glove is described in one embodiment in the following description with reference to the Figures. While the described embodiment is in the form of a work glove, the scope of the present disclosure is not intended to be limited to work gloves. The present glove can be used for other applications and in other fields, including but not limited to safety gloves, protective gloves, cleaning gloves, sports gloves, cold weather gloves, and winter gloves.

[0017] The various features and components of the present glove are now described with reference to the Figures.

[0018] As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, in at least one embodiment, the glove 10 comprises a palm portion 22, a back portion 24, a wrist portion 26, and a plurality of finger stalls 30 extending outwardly from the palm and back portions 22, 24. As shown in FIGS. 3A and 3B, each finger stall 30 comprises an inner surface 34, an outer surface 36, and a fingernail region 32 on the back side of and at the distal end of the stall 30. The fingernail region 32 is further identified as the area encircled by broken line A in FIG. 1 and broken line B in FIG. 3A.

[0019] As illustrated in FIGS. 3A and 3B, in at least one embodiment the protector pad 40 is disposed on the inside of each finger stall 30 at the fingernail region 32. The protector pad 40 prevents a wearer’s fingernail, and in particular the surface of the fingernail, from contacting the inner surface 34 of the glove 10. The contact portion 42 of the protector pad 40 is the area of the pad that is exposed to and contacts a wearer’s fingernail. The contact portion 42 can be non-abrasive so as not to damage the finger or the nail. In the absence of a protector pad 40, the wearer’s fingernail can rub and chafe against the inner surface 34 of the glove, which can scratch, scuff or abrade the nail.

[0020] Having regard to FIGS. 3A, 3B, 4 and 5, each protector pad 40 can be dimensioned to prevent an average wear-
er’s fingernail from contacting the inner surface 34 of the finger stall 30. In at least one embodiment, the pad 40 does not extend beyond the finger nail region 32, which is also identified as the area encircled by broken line A in FIG. 1 and broken line B in FIG. 3A. In addition, the protector pad 40 can be of a thickness sufficient to provide cushioning and protection for the fingernail, but not so thick that it makes the finger stalls 30 bulky or hinders a wearer’s manual dexterity.

[0021] The contact portion 42 of the protector pad 40 is non-abrasive so as not to scratch or otherwise damage the nail. The protector pad 40 can be made of a smooth or soft, and flexible material for absorbing an impact and for providing comfort for the fingernail and fingertip. As illustrated in FIG. 5, in at least one embodiment, the protector pad 40 comprises a multi-layer construction, comprising at least a contact layer 44 and a cushion layer 46, wherein at least part of the contact layer 44 constitutes the contact portion 42 of the pad 40 and is therefore exposed to a wearer’s fingernail. The contact layer 44 is disposed in the interior of the stall 30. As illustrated in FIG. 5, in at least one embodiment, the cushion layer 46 is disposed on the exterior of the finger stall 30 so not to reduce the area in the fingernail region 32 of the stall 30 for a wearer’s finger, or to otherwise interfere with a wearer’s finger. The protector pad 40 can further comprise an outer layer 48 on the exterior of the stall 30 for covering and protecting the cushion layer 46. The cushion layer 46 can be positioned between the outer surface of the finger stall 30 and the outer layer 48 of the pad 40.

[0022] The contact portion 42 of the protector pad 40 can be constructed of a smooth or soft material that is non-abrasive so as not damage the nail. The contact portion 42 can be made of polyester, nylon, rayon, cotton, wool, or any other suitable material known in the art. The cushion layer 46 can be soft and flexible for absorbing an impact and for providing comfort for the fingernail and fingertip, and can be made of a sponge-like or foam-like material, or any other suitable material.

[0023] The glove 10 itself, meaning the palm and back portions 22, 24, and the finger stalls 30, can be constructed of any suitable material or materials known in the art, whether natural or synthetic, which include but are not limited to fabrics, rubber, latex, leather, or synthetic leather. In at least one embodiment, the glove 10 is made of synthetic materials that are breathable and water resistant. As illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, in at least one embodiment, the palm portion 21 and the back portion 24 can be composed of different materials. For example, the palm portion 22 can be made of a durable material, such as leather or synthetic leather, and the back portion 24 of a more flexible and breathable material, such as polyester.

[0024] As illustrated in FIG. 2, the outer surface of the palm portion 22 of the glove 10 can comprise a friction-enhancing surface. This surface can be any suitable friction-enhancing surface known in the art. However, in at least one embodiment, the outer surface of the palm portion 22 comprises a plurality of protuberances 60, which can be made of silicon, rubber, vinyl, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or any other suitable friction-enhancing material.

[0025] Furthermore, the glove 10 can comprise means to secure it to a wearer’s hand or wrist, or to otherwise provide a tighter fit. As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, in at least one embodiment, the glove 10 can comprise a pair of straps 52, 54, which extend outwardly from opposite sides of the wrist portion 26 of the glove 10. The free ends of the straps 52, 54 can be coupled together using a hook and loop fastener such as Velcro®, or using any other suitable means known in the art. However, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that a different number of straps can be used. In addition, as shown in FIG. 1, the glove 10 can comprise an elastic tensioner 58 disposed in or on the wrist portion 26 of the glove 10 to effect a better fit on the wearer’s hand and wrist.

[0026] The previous detailed description is provided to enable any person skilled in the art to make or use the present invention. Various modifications to those embodiments will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art, and the generic principles defined herein may be applied to other embodiments without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention described herein. Thus, the present invention is not intended to be limited to the embodiments shown herein, but is to be accorded the full scope consistent with the claims, wherein reference to an element in the singular, such as by use of the article “a” or “an” is not intended to mean “one and only one” unless specifically so stated, but rather “one or more”. All structural and functional equivalents to the elements of the various embodiments described throughout the disclosure that are known or later come to be known to those of ordinary skill in the art are intended to be encompassed by the elements of the claims. Moreover, nothing disclosed herein is intended to be dedicated to the public regardless of whether such disclosure is explicitly recited in the claims.

What is claimed:
1. A glove, comprising:
a palm portion;
a back portion;
a plurality of flexible finger stalls extending outwardly from the palm and back portions, each finger stall having an inner surface, an outer surface, and a fingertip region; and
protector pads disposed in the fingernail region of the finger stalls, the protector pads having a contact portion that is exposed to a wearer’s fingernail and is positioned and dimensioned to prevent a wearer’s fingernail from contacting the inner surface of the glove.
2. The glove of claim 1, wherein the protector pads are disposed within the finger stalls.
3. The glove of claim 1, wherein the protector pads comprise a multi-layer construction, the multi-layer construction comprising at least a cushion layer and a contact layer, the cushion layer positioned between the contact layer and the inner surface of the glove, where at least part of the contact layer constitutes the contact portion of the protector pad.
4. The glove of claim 1, wherein the protector pads comprise a multi-layer construction, the multi-layer construction comprising at least a cushion layer and a contact layer, the cushion layer disposed on the exterior of the finger stall and the contact layer disposed on the interior of the finger stall, where at least part of the contact layer constitutes the contact portion of the protector pad.
5. The glove of claim 4, wherein the protector pads further comprise an outer layer, the outer layer disposed on the exterior of the finger stall, wherein the cushion layer is disposed between the outer layer and the outer surface of the finger stall.
6. The glove of claim 1, wherein the contact portion of the protector pads is soft and non-abrasive.
7. The glove of claim 1, wherein the contact portion comprises polyester.
8. The glove of claim 3, wherein the cushion layer comprises a foam-like or sponge-like material.

9. The glove of claim 1, wherein the outer surface of the palm portion comprises a plurality of friction-enhancing protruberances.

10. The glove of claim 1, wherein the glove further comprises at least one strap for securing the glove to the hand or wrist of a wearer.

11. The glove of claim 2, wherein the glove further comprises at least one strap for securing the glove to the hand or wrist of a wearer.

12. The glove of claim 3, wherein the glove further comprises at least one strap for securing the glove to the hand or wrist of a wearer.

13. The glove of claim 4, wherein the glove further comprises at least one strap for securing the glove to the hand or wrist of a wearer.

14. The glove of claim 5, wherein the glove further comprises at least one strap for securing the glove to the hand or wrist of a wearer.

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