United States Patent

Carson

[15] **3,695,690**

[45] **Oct. 3, 1972**

[54] **FURNITURE COVERING ARRANGEMENT**

[72] Inventor: **Robert M. Carson,** Pasadena, Calif.

[73] Assignee: **Marge Carson, Inc.,** Rosemead, Calif.

[22] Filed: **June 11, 1971**

[21] Appl. No.: **152,249**

[52] **U.S. Cl.**.....**297/218,** 297/219, 297/DIG. 6, 297/227

[51] **Int. Cl.**.....**A47c 31/10**

[58] **Field of Search**.....297/219, 223, 229, 225, 218, 297/227, 228, DIG. 6

[56] **References Cited**

UNITED STATES PATENTS

794,145	7/1905	Ellington	297/219
2,373,071	4/1945	Waranch	297/219 X
2,546,109	3/1951	Puchalsky	297/219 X
2,797,742	7/1957	Cleary	297/219 X
3,066,321	12/1962	Kintner	297/DIG. 6
3,248,147	4/1966	Testa	297/218

Primary Examiner—Francis K. Zugel
Attorney—Gausewitz, Carr & Rothenberg

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A furniture covering arrangement in which covering material is in two sections adapted to fit on opposite sides of a chair, sofa or the like, with the two sections overlapping at the center of the back where they are held together and to the frame by pressure-engageable tension-releasable fasteners, with additional fasteners holding the edges of the material sections to other portions of the frame, including the inner corners of the arms, where they are accessible through cutouts at the forward and rearward surfaces of the seat back, a removable rail at the forward edge of the seat portion carrying a removable skirt which extends downwardly along the front face of the frame.

19 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures

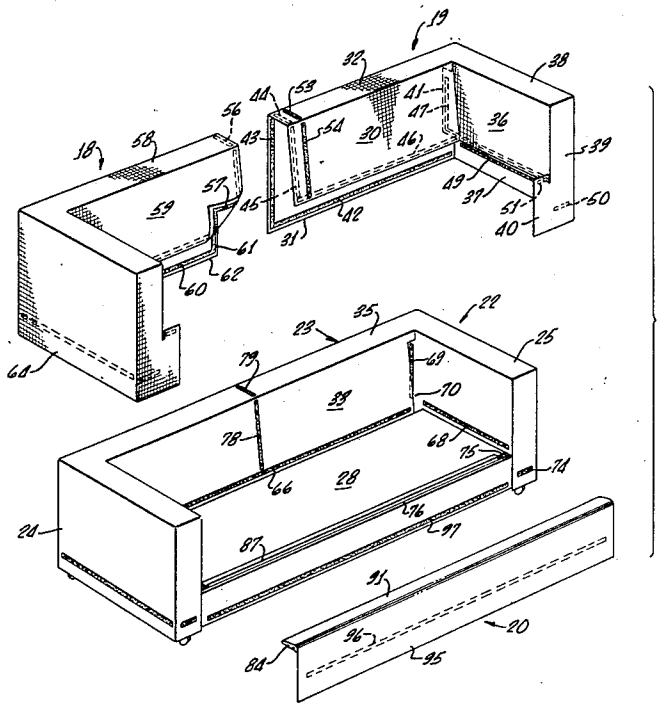


FIG. 1.

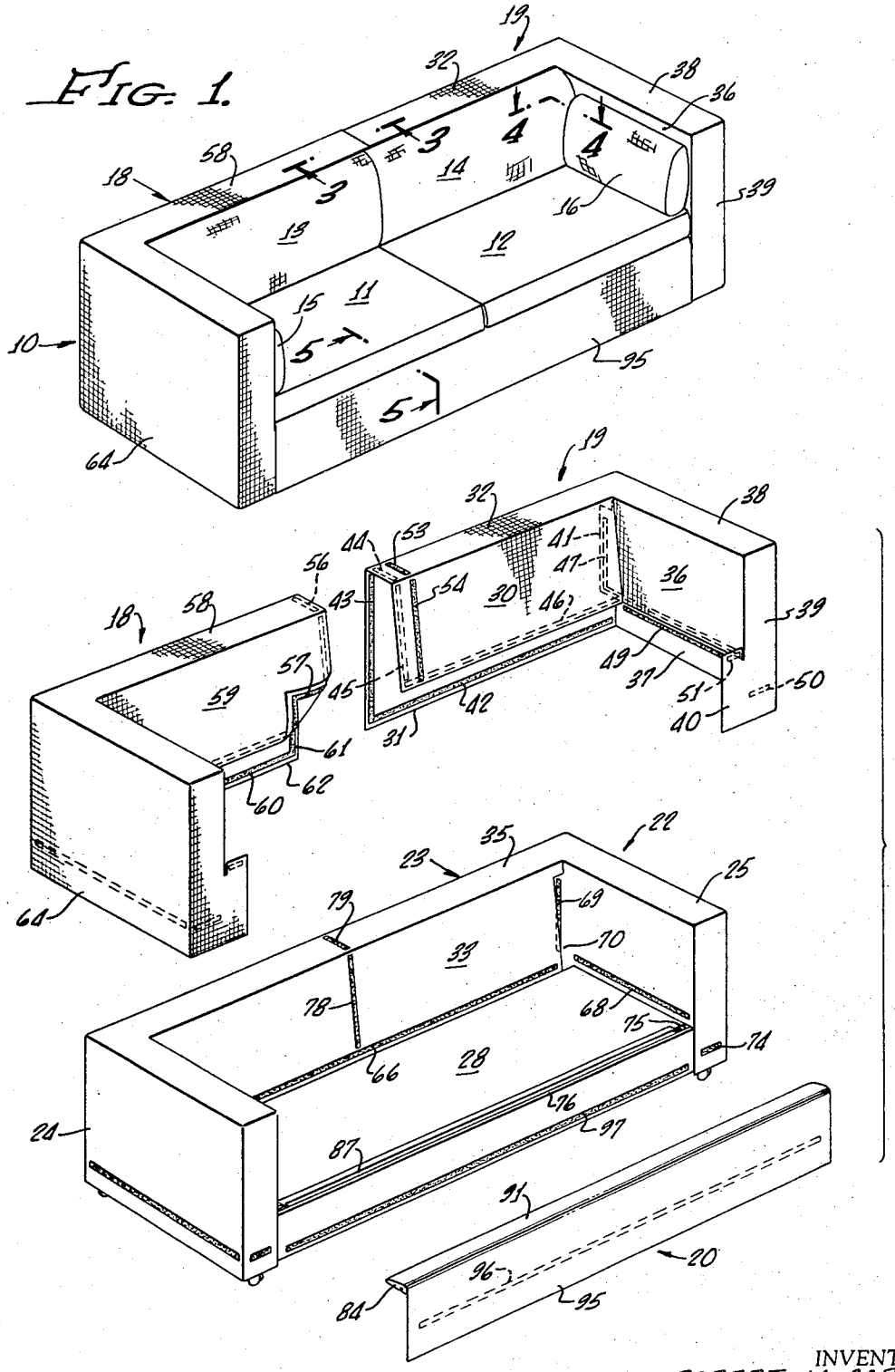


FIG. 2.

INVENTOR.
ROBERT M. CARSON
BY Jansweig, Sixbey & Flanagan
ATTORNEYS.

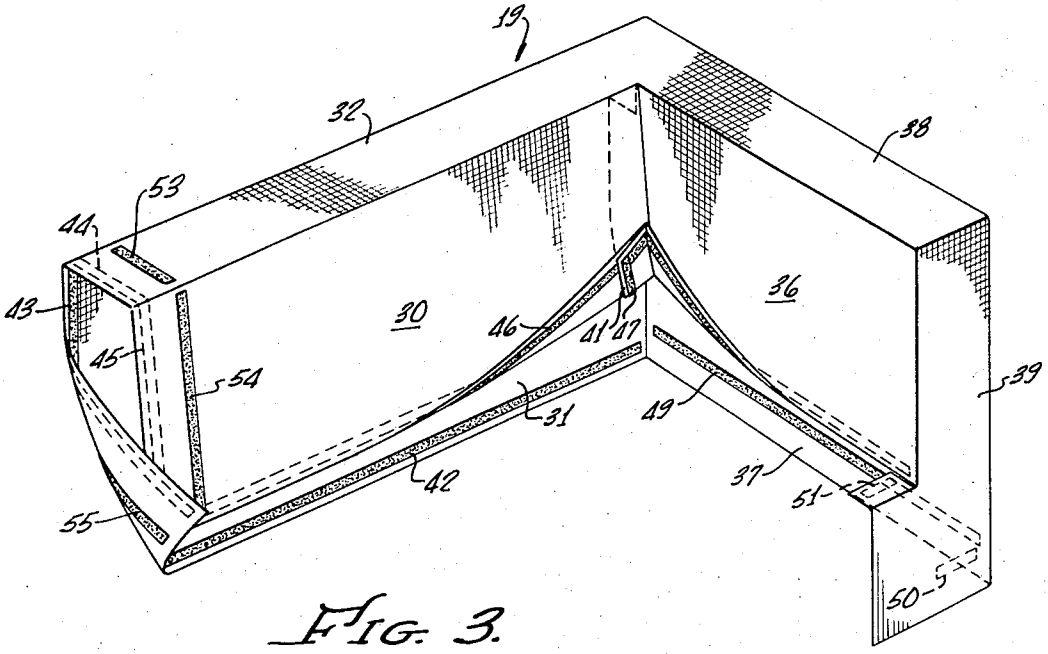


FIG. 3.

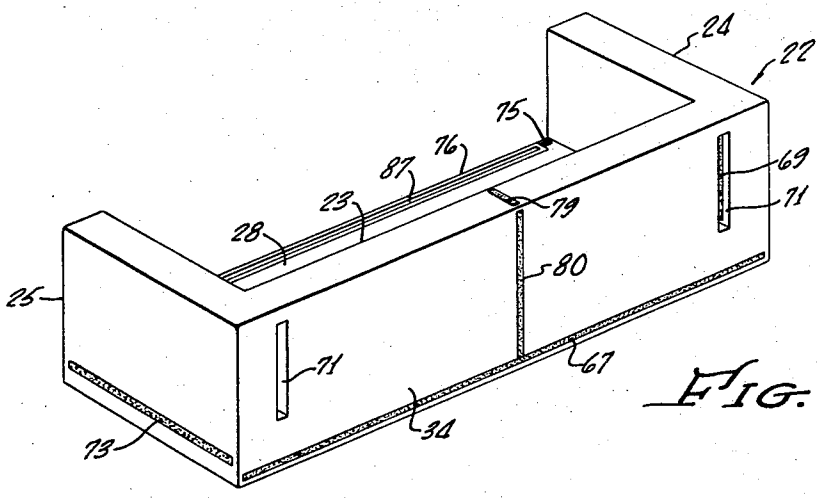


FIG. 4.

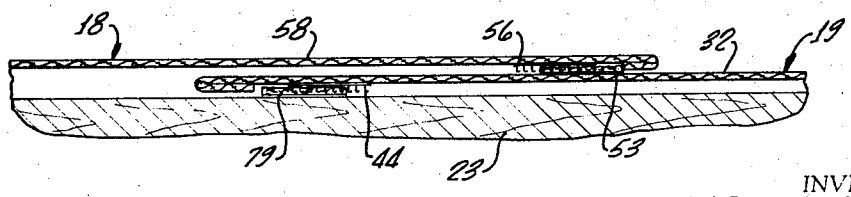


FIG. 8.

INVENTOR.
ROBERT M. CARSON

BY Jamieson, Burr & Rothenberg
ATTORNEYS.

FIG. 7.

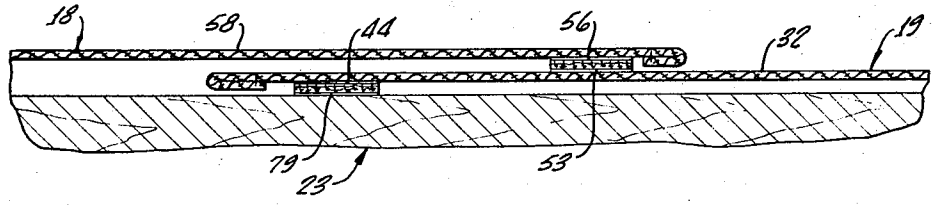
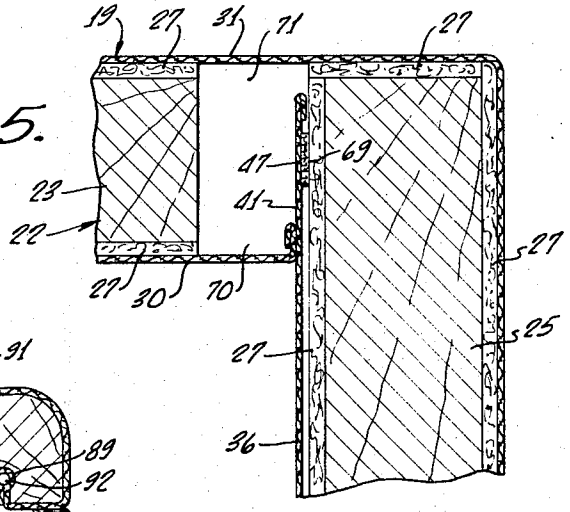


FIG. 5.



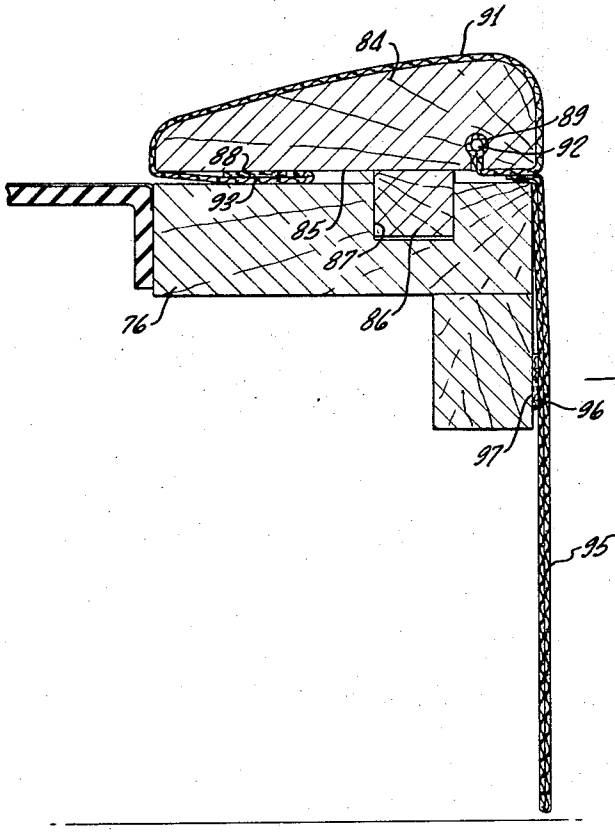


FIG. 9.

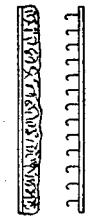


FIG. 6.

INVENTOR.
ROBERT M. CARSON
BY Jamesewitz, Carr
& Hansberg
ATTORNEYS.

FURNITURE COVERING ARRANGEMENT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention pertains to a removable furniture covering arrangement.

2. Description of Prior Art

In conventional upholstered furniture, such as chairs, love seats or sofas, the covering material is attached to the framework on a semipermanent basis. It is a major operation to remove and replace the upholstery, requiring the services of a skilled technician. Consequently, replacement of the upholstery is both time consuming and a major expense, with the cost frequently approaching that of a new comparable article of furniture. Cleaning the upholstery likewise is neither a simple nor an economical operation, and requires transporting the furniture to a special shop equipped to perform the cleaning operation. Again, there is an inconvenience in having the furniture removed, cleaned and then returned.

It has been proposed to provide furniture with some sort of removable covering, which can be taken off for cleaning and replacement, thereby reducing costs and simplifying maintenance. Most of these furniture covering arrangements have generally resembled slipcovers, being one-piece fabric assemblies to fit over the furniture frame. With them, it is virtually impossible to obtain a result which provides the furniture with an appearance comparable to that of conventional upholstery. Frequently, the covering is relatively loose, so that wrinkles are formed, detracting from the appearance of the item. Some looseness is needed, however, in order to allow the covering to be installed and removed. On the other hand, when made sufficiently tight to avoid wrinkling, installation may become impossible or, at best, very difficult. Shrinkage of the material can render such coverings unusable by making them too small to fit. Continued problems also have centered around making such furniture coverings at a reasonable cost.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an improved removable furniture covering arrangement which gives the appearance of upholstered furniture, yet which can be attached and removed at will by unskilled personnel. The covering is conventional flexible sheet material used in upholstering, formed in two principal sections which are adapted to fit over the furniture frame, extending inwardly from the two opposite sides to overlap at the center of the back. They are attached to the framework by a suitable fastening means, which is pressure-engageable and tension-releasable, such as that marketed under the trademark "Velcro" by American Velcro, Inc., Manchester, New Hampshire. At the overlapping portion, "Velcro" fasteners are included on the exterior of the underneath layer of material and on the inner surface of the outside layer. The overlapped connection gives the appearance of a sewn seam at the center of the back, at the same time eliminating the need for close tolerances in the covering material. The amount of overlap may change without altering the exterior appearance of the furniture or the ability to form a secure attachment at the joint. The "Velcro" fastenings do not require precise orientation in order to securely hold the edges of the material. It is always possible to stretch the material tightly along the back, eliminating wrinkles, because the material is in two overlapping sections separately attached.

At the side edges of the back are openings through which the side panels of the covering material extend from the arms to engage additional fastenings. Slots in the rear surface of the seat back permit the side panels of the material to be grasped and pulled taut along the surface of the arm.

Along the lower front of the furniture at the bottom forward edge of the seat is an elongated rail or beam having a tongue in its bottom surface which enters a groove in the forward horizontal portion of the framework. Additional material is wrapped around the beam, held at the rearward edge by a fastening strip and extending into a slot at the forward portion of the undersurface of the beam to position and hold it at that location. A skirt stitched onto this portion of material extends down over the forward lower frame portion to which it is held by another fastener.

This furniture covering arrangement allows installation by unskilled people, producing nevertheless a neat appearance comparable to that of a conventionally upholstered item of furniture. Installation requires only a few moments of time. This means that it is possible to remove the covering material for cleaning **16**, replacement without transporting the framework along with it. New covering may be applied to the furniture at a minimum cost. With this invention, it becomes practical to change the covering on the furniture to suit changes in decor of the room or the whim of the owner. The covering assembly can be applied to a framework which is of relatively simple and low-cost construction, so that the entire furniture article, while having ample strength and durability, is inexpensively manufactured and sold.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a sofa made in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. **2** is an exploded view of the arrangement of FIG. **1** with the covering removed from the frame;

FIG. **3** is an enlarged perspective view of one section of the covering for the sofa;

FIG. **4** is a perspective view showing the rearward part of the frame;

FIG. **5** is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along line **5—5** of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **6** is a fragmentary view of the mating fastening strips which may be used in holding the covering to the frame;

FIG. **7** is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along line **7—7** of FIG. **1**;

FIG. **8** is a view similar to FIG. **7**, but with the fastening strips slightly misaligned yet still secured together; and

FIG. **9** is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken along line **9—9** of FIG. **1**.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The arrangement of this invention may be used in covering an item of furniture, such As the sofa **10** illustrated in FIG. **1**. The sofa **10** includes removable seat cushions **11** and **12**, back cushions **13** and **14** and side cushions or pillows **15** and **16**, which may be of conventional design. Preferably, the covers of these cushions are made removable to go along with the removable covering described below.

The remainder of the covering on the sofa **10** is in two principal sections **18** and **19**, together with a smaller lower forward portion **20**. The covering fits over a support frame **22** which has an upstanding back **23** and opposed parallel sides or arms **24** and **25**. These portions of the frame may be made appropriately of plywood boards on the outsides of which are bonded plastic foam sheets **27**, as seen in FIG. **5**. The horizontal surface **28** intermediate the sides **24** and **25** of the frame **22** may be a fabric with springs beneath it as in conventional furniture construction.

The covering sections **18** and **19**, which re of conventional upholstering material, are generally similar, each made complementary to the portion of the back and the arm over which it is to fit. The section **19** of the covering includes a front panel **30** and a back panel **31** interconnected by an upper part **32**, dimensioned to fit complementarily over the right-hand portion of the back **23**, as illustrated in FIG. **2**. When installed, the front panel **30**, back panel **31** and upper section **32** engage the forward face **33**, rearward surface **34** and upper surface **35**, respectively, of the seat back **23**.

The covering section **19** also includes inside and outside panels **36** and **37** integrally connected by an upper horizontal portion **38** adapted to fit over the arm **25** of the frame. The side portion of the covering section **19** also includes a front end panel **39**, which at its lower portion includes a lateral extension **40**.

A flap **41** extends from the inner edge of the inner side panel **36**, beyond the connection between the side panel and the adjacent edge of the front panel **30**. The top panel **38** for the arm **25** is connected to the upper panel **32** for the seat back, and the vertical edge of the outer panel **37** is connected to the vertical edge of the rearward back panel **31**.

On its undersurface, the covering section **19** is provided with several fastening strips, preferably of the type marketed under the trademark "Velcro" and illustrated generally in FIG. **6**. These fastening devices include a plurality of small hook elements on one strip which is to mate with material on a second strip in which the hooks become embedded. The fasteners are pressure-engageable, will resist shear forces and are tension-releasable so that they are readily separable by pulling them apart. They become secured at any location where the two mating parts come in contact, requiring no exact alignment or orientation. A secure attachment can be obtained even though less than the entire areas of the two sections are brought into engagement.

On the inner surface of the covering element **19**, there are"Velcro" fastening strips **42** and **43** on the lower horizontal edge portion and end vertical edge portion, respectively, of the back panel **31**. The top section **32** includes a similar fastening strip **44** at its free edge, while, additionally, there is a fastening strip **45** adjacent the vertical edge of the front panel **30**. A fastening strip **46** is at the lower edge of the front panel **30**.

The inner side panel **36** includes a fastening strip **46** at its lower horizontal edge and an additional vertical fastening strip **47** on the flap **41** at its free edge.

The outer side panel **37** is provided with a fastening strip **49** spaced a short distance above its lower horizontal edge. An additional short fastening strip **50** is located at the lower edge of the front panel **39**, and a fastening strip **51** is attached to the upper edge of the flap **40 40**.

In addition to these fastening strips on the under surface of the covering section **19**, there are similar strips **53** and **54** on the outside of the top section **32** and the front panel **30**, as well as an outer fastening strip **55** on the rear panel **31**. The outer fastening strips are parallel to the inner fastening strips **43**, **44** and **45**, but spaced inwardly from them.

The section **18** of the covering material includes fastening strips **56** and **57** on the undersurfaces of the top section **58** and the front panel **59** of the back portion of the covering. Also, there are fastening strips **60** and **61** on the inside of the lower horizontal edge and the vertical edge, respectively, of the rearward panel **62**. However, there are no exterior "Velcro" fastenings on the section **18** of the covering. The part of the covering section **18** for the sofa back, represented by the panels **58**, **59** and **62**, is not quite as long as the corresponding part of the upholstery section **19**.

The arm portion **64** of he upholstery section **18** has fastening strips at locations corresponding to those on the arm portion of the section **19**.

The frame **22** includes a "Velcro" strip **66** extending along the full length of the lower edge of the forward surface **33** of the back **23**. There is also a fastening strip **67** along the lower edge portion of the rear surface **34** of the back. On the inner surface of the arm **25** there are a horizontal fastening strip **68** at the lower inside edge and a vertical fastening strip **69** at the inner corner portion. The latter strip is behind the front surface **33** of the back **23**, which is provided with a cutout **70** at its side edge to give access from the front to the space around the strip **69** (see FIG. **5**). In addition, an elongated opening **71** in the back panel allows the area of the strip **69** to be reached from the rear of the frame **22**.

The arm **25** also is provided with a horizontal fastening strip **73** on its outside lower edge and a short horizontal fastening strip **74** at the lower part of the forward surface. A short strip **75** of the fastening material is positioned on the board **76** that extends along the forward edge of the sofa frame in front of the fabric **28**.

A vertical fastening strip **78** is on the forward surface **33** of the back portion **23** of the frame, positioned just slightly beyond the midpoint of the back toward the arm **24**. Aligned with the fastening **78** are similar strips **79** and **80** on the top surface **35** of the back **23** and the rearward surface **34** of the back **23**, respectively.

The arm **24** is provided with fastening strips corresponding to those described above on the arm **25**. Also, the back **23** is provided with additional openings **70** and **71** at its edge adjacent the arm **24**.

In covering the back and arms of the frame **22**, the section **19** of the covering material is applied to the frame first. It is positioned over the right-hand portion of the frame as the device is shown in FIG. **2**, so that the fastening strips on the undersurface engage and are secured to the fastening strips on the frame.

For the arm **25**, the strip **47** of the panel **36** and the strip **49** of the panel **37** mesh with the fastening strips **68** and **73** on the inner and outer surfaces of the arm. The lower forward edge fastening strip **50** of the forward portion **39** of the covering material engages the fastening strip **74** on the forward lower edge of the arm, while the upper part of the flap **40** is bent over so that the strip **51** engages the strip **75** of the frame.

The inner free edge flap **41** of the inside panel **36** of the arm portion of the covering material **19** is extended through the cutout **70** in the back **23** so that its fastening strip **47** engages the fastening strip **69** on the arm **25**. The slot **71** in the rearward panel **34** of the back **23** allows the flap **41** to be grasped from the rear so that it may be drawn taut along the inner surface of the arm **25** in effecting the engagement between the fastening strips **47** and **69**, assuring a wrinkle-free surface along the arm. This is accomplished before the back panel **31** is attached to the rear portion **34** of the back **23**.

Along the sofa back **23**, the edge strips **43**, **44** and **45** of the rear panel **31**, the top section **32** and the forward panel **30** engage the fastening strips **80**, **79** and **78**, respectively, on the back **23**. The lower edge strip **42** on the back panel **31** engages the right-hand portion of the strip **67** on the back surface **34** of the sofa back **23**. Similarly, the lower strip **46** engages the right-hand portion of the strip **66** at the lower horizontal edge of the forward surface **33** of the back **23**.

After the section **19** has been secured to the frame **22** in this manner, the section **18** of the covering is applied to the left-hand portion of the frame, as the sofa is shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**. The attachments of the fastening strips on the section **18** are generally the same as those for the upholstery section **19**. However, the fastening strips **56**, **57** and **61** at the outer edges of the panels **58**, **59** and **62**, respectively, of the covering section **18** do not engage fastening strips on the frame **22** but, instead, mesh with those on the exterior of the upholstery section **19**. Thus, the fastening strip **56** engages the strip **53** on the upper panel **32** of the section **19**, as shown in FIG. **7**. The forward vertical edge strip **57** of the panel **59** of the section **18** engages the strip **54** on the exterior of the panel **30** of the section **19**. The rearward vertical strip **61** meshes with the rearward exterior vertical strip **55** on the rear panel **31** of the upholstery section **19**. The panels of the section **18** are proportioned so that the edge of the section **18** is positioned at the center of the back **23**.

When the covering has been applied in this manner, it presents a neat appearance on the arms and back of the sofa, giving the effect of conventional upholstering. The attachment of the covering sections is accomplished in only a few minutes, yet is secure and without wrinkles. Skill or training is not required in attaching the upholstery material to the frame. The hemmed free edge of the section **18** at the center of the sofa back is unobtrusive and gives the appearance of a stitched seam.

Considerable advantage is realized from forming the covering in two sections **18** and **19**, rather than attempting to make this a unitary piece of material. The overlap between the back portions of the sections **18** and **19** makes allowance for dimensional variations in the covering material, such as may occur from the tolerances involved in fabrication or from shrinkage of the material. For example, if the dimension of the back portions of the upholstery sections **18** and **19** should be reduced, the overlap still will remain, and the fastening strips will mate sufficiently to effect a secure connection, as shown in FIG. **8**. The exterior appearance remains the same.

The lower forward portion **20** of the covering assembly includes an elongated member **84**, which may be of wood, having rounded upper corners and sloping from its forward edge to its rearward edge. This member has a flat undersurface **85** and a longitudinally extending tongue **86** attached to the surface intermediate its edges. The member **76** at the forward edge of the seat portion of the frame **22** is provided with a rabbet **87** that is adapted to receive the tongue **86**. The member **84** is provided with a fastening strip **88** extending longitudinally along the lower surface **85** inwardly of its rearward edge. A slot **89** extends inwardly from the lower surface **85** and longitudinally of this member adjacent its forward edge. The slot **89** is rounded at its inner portion and of reduced width adjacent the surface **85**.

A piece of the covering material **91** fits around the member **84**, being provided with a piping **92** which fits within the slot **89** (see FIG. **9**). Also included on the material **91** is a fastening strip **93** which engages the fastening strip **88** on the undersurface **85** of the member **84**, thereby holding the material **91** to the member **84**.

There is, in addition, a doubled-over skirt **95** which is stitched to the lower forward edge portion of the material **91**. The inner surface of the skirt is provided with a fastening strip **96** which is adapted to engage a horizontal mating strip **97** at the lower forward edge portion of the frame.

The assembly of the covering material sections **91** and **95** attached to the member **84** is readily installed on the frame **22** merely by introducing the tongue **86** into the rabbet **87**. Then, with the cushions in place, the forward skirt is securely held to the frame **22** and, again, a neat appearance is achieved, resembling fully that of a conventionally upholstered sofa. At the same time, the unit is removable by lifting the tongue **86** out of the groove **87** and separating the fastening strips **96** and **88**. The piping **92** is pulled out of the slot **89**.

Similarly, the principal covering sections **18** and **19** can be removed from the frame by pulling the mated fastening strips apart. This allows the upholstering material in its entirety to be taken off the frame **22** and replaced without difficulty by an unskilled person. It is possible, therefore, to have the covering material cleaned without requiring the removal of the item of furniture from the home and at a greatly reduced cost. It is a simple matter also to change the covering material for replacement as it is worn or to provide a different pattern or color to suit the decor of the room or taste of the owner. Irrespective of these advantages, the entire assembly of the sofa **10** and the covering materials are

producible at a relatively low cost. While described as applied to a sofa, the arrangement of this invention can be used as well for a love seat, chair or other article of furniture, with or without arms.

The foregoing detailed description is to be clearly understood as given by way of illustration and example only, the spirit and scope of this invention being limited solely by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An article of furniture comprising
a support structure, said structure defining
a substantially horizontal portion and an upstanding portion extending from said substantially horizontal portion,
said upstanding portion having opposite side edges,
a covering fro said upstanding portion, said covering including
a first section of flexible sheet material
and a second section of flexible sheet material,
said first section engaging one of said side edges and overlying said upstanding portion inwardly thereof,
said second section engaging the other of said side edges and overlying said upstanding portion inwardly thereof,
said first and second sections having inner edges intermediate said side edges,
said inner edge of said first section overlapping said inner edge of said second section,
a first fastening means removably securing said inner edge of said second section to said upstanding portion, and a second fastening means removably securing said inner edge of said first section to the exterior of said second section.

2. A device as recited in claim 1 in which said inner edge of said first section is substantially at the midpoint of said upstanding portion.

3. A device as recited in claim 1 in which said first and second fastening means are pressure-engageable and tension-releasable.

4. A device as recited in claim 3 in which said first and second fastening means include means to permit engagement at different positions of said first and said second sections relative to said frame and to each other.

5. A device as recited in claim 4 in which
said upstanding portion includes
a front surface,
a back surface,
and a top edge surface,
said first and second sections of flexible sheet material each including
a front portion,
a back portion,
and a top edge portion overlying said front surface, said back surface and said top edge surface, respectively.

6. A device as recited in claim 5 in which
said first fastening means includes
a first elongated strip means on said upstanding portion,
and a second elongated strip means on the inner surface of said second section,
said first and second strip means being attachable together along the lengths thereof,
and said second fastening means includes
a third elongated strip means on the outer surface of said second section,
and a fourth elongated strip means on the inner surface of said first section,
said third and fourth strip means being attachable together along the lengths thereof.

7. A device as recited in claim 6 in which
said second elongated strip means is adjacent said inner edge of said second section,
and said third elongated strip means is inwardly of said second elongated strip means relative to said inner edge of said second section.

8. A device as recited in claim 6 in which
said first elongated strip means includes
an upstanding fastening strip on said front surface,
and a generally horizontal fastening strip on said top edge surface,
and said second elongated strip means includes
a fastening strip on the undersurface of said front portion,
a fastening strip on the undersurface of said back portion,
and a fastening strip on the undersurface of said top edge portion of said second section engaging said fastening strips on said front surface, said back surface and said top edge surface, respectively.

9. A device as recited in claim 8 in which
said third elongated strip means includes
a fastening strip on the exterior of said first portion,
a fastening strip on the exterior of said back portion,
and a fastening strip on the exterior of said top edge portion of said first section of flexible sheet material,
and said fourth elongated strip means includes
a fastening strip on the undersurface of said front portion,
a fastening strip on the undersurface of said back portion,
and a fastening strip on the undersurface of said top edge portion of said second section engaging said fastening strips on the undersurfaces of said front portion, said back portion and said top edge portion, respectively, of said first section.

10. A device as recited in claim 9 including in addition
a generally horizontal fastening strip along the lower edge portion of said front surface,
a generally horizontal fastening strip along the lower edge portion of said back surface,
a fastening strip along the lower edge portion of the inner surface of said front portion of said first section and a fastening strip along the lower edge portion of the inner surface of said second section engaging said fastening strip along said lower edge portion of said front surface,
and a fastening strip along the lower edge portion of the inner surface of said back portion of said first section and a fastening strip along the lower edge portion of the inner surface of said back portion of

said second section engaging said fastening strip along said lower edge portion of said back surface.

11. A device as recited in claim 4 in which

said upstanding portion includes opposed outer side portions at said side edges, and an intermediate back portion,

said first and second sections of said flexible sheet material extending over said side portions,

said inner edge of said first section over lapping said inner edge of said second section at the intermediate part of said back portion,

and including fastening means securing said first and second sections to said side portions.

12. A device as recited in claim 11 in which

said upstanding portion includes opening means between said back portion and said side portions,

said first and second sections include parts extending through said opening means,

and including fastening means on said side portions inwardly of said opening means,

and fastening means on said parts engaging said fastening means inwardly of said opening means.

13. A device as recited in claim 12 in which

said back portion includes a front surface and a rearward surface,

and said opening means includes an elongated aperture at either side edge portion of said front surface.

14. A device as recited in claim 13 in which said opening means includes an aperture at either side edge portion of said rearward surface for permitting said first and second sections of flexible sheet material to be pulled taut along said side portions.

15. A device as recited in claim 14 in which

said fastening means inwardly of said opening means and said fastening means on said parts are pressure-engageable and tension-releasable,

said fastening means inwardly of said opening means includes an upstanding fastening strip on either of said side portions,

and said fastening means on said parts includes an upstanding fastening strip on the inner surface of the edge portion of each of said parts.

16. A device as recited in claim 1 including in addition

a rigid member extending longitudinally along the forward edge of said horizontal portion,

an additional section of flexible sheet material,

and additional fastening means connecting said additional section of flexible sheet material to said member so that said additional section provides a skirt extending along the forward portion of said framework beneath said horizontal portion.

17. A device as recited in claim 16 in which

said rigid member includes a longitudinally extending tongue on the undersurface thereof,

and in which said support structure includes a longitudinally extending groove removable receiving said tongue for thereby positioning said member at said forward edge of said horizontal portion.

18. A device as recited in claim 16 in which

said additional section of flexible sheet material extends around the top of said rigid member and under the rearward edge thereof,

and said additional fastening means includes a fastening strip on the undersurface of said rigid member adjacent the rearward edge thereof,

and a fastening strip on said additional section of flexible sheet material beneath said rigid member engaging said fastening strip on said rigid member.

19. A device as recited in claim 18 in which

said rigid member includes an elongated slot in said undersurface thereof adjacent the forward edge thereof,

and in which said additional section of flexible sheet material includes a piping removably received in said slot for holding and positioning said additional section of flexible sheet material.

* * * * *