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(71) Applicant: **Speedy Products Ltd.**
Pendleton, Salford M6 6WY (GB)

(72) Inventor: **The designation of the inventor has not yet been filed**

(74) Representative: **Shaw, Laurence**
5th Floor,
Metropolitan House,
1 Hagley Road,
Edgbaston
Birmingham B16 8TG (GB)

(54) **Curtain cord tidy**

(57) A cord tidy for the free ends of the gathering cords of a curtain header tape (rufflette tape). The device comprises a plastics material tubular spool through which the cords may be threaded and then wound onto

the spool and secured via a notch or slot in the spool. One end of the spool may be trumpet shaped for easy entry of the cords and to facilitate use for adjusting the gathering tension in the cords.

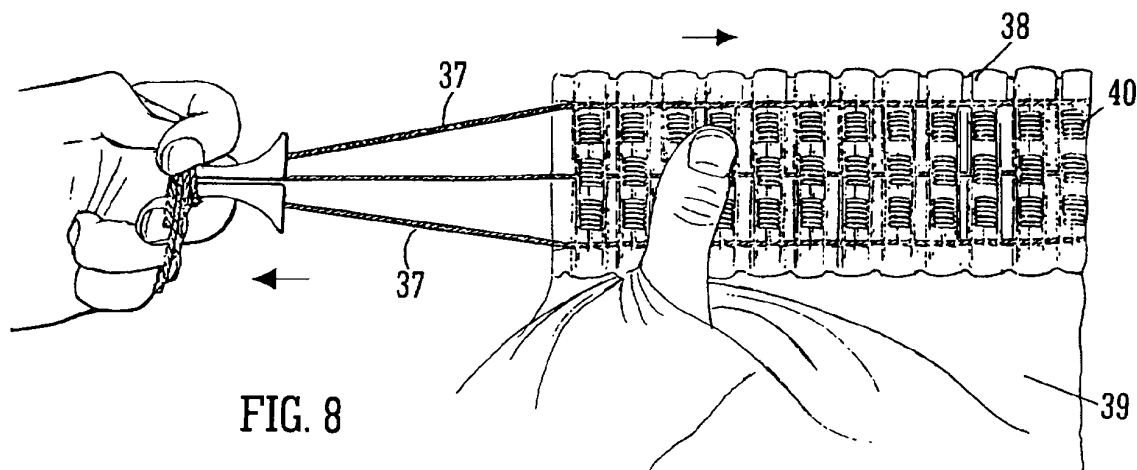


FIG. 8

Description

[0001] This invention relates to a cord tidy for use with items made of fabric, for example, curtains having cords or strings through them to produce a gathered arrangement. More particularly but not exclusively the invention relates to a cord tidy for curtains of the type having a header tape sometimes called "Rufflette" tape.

[0002] Header tape is a well known means by which curtains can be attached to and hung from a curtain rail. The tape is attached to the curtain transversely at its top edge, e.g. by stitching or adhesion, and contains one or more rows of holes or stitches into which clips or hangers can be fitted. The clips can then be attached to the curtain rail or sometimes to rollers or sliders which are, in turn, mounted on the rail or onto rings fitted onto a decorative curtain rod. By having a choice of rows into which to position the clips, the height of the curtain may be adjusted relative to the rail.

[0003] It is also known to attach one or more cords or strings to run the length of the header tape, i.e. across the width of the curtains. The cords may be passed through passageways in the tape or between the tape and curtain but are frequently attached by stitching in and out of the tape. The cords are used to 'gather' the curtains, i.e. to pull them into a concertina-like folds arrangement which may be regarded as more visually attractive and/or may be needed to fit the curtains to the width of the window.

[0004] The cords are usually knotted adjacent the edge of the curtains and any excess cord is left hanging freely or may be inserted between the tape and the curtain. This can cause problems when it is necessary to remove the curtains for washing or dry cleaning as the knots can be difficult to untie and/or the cords may be difficult to untangle.

[0005] According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a device for receiving and tidying the free end of a curtain gathering cord, the device being of generally tubular form having an opening at each end and with at least one slot formed therein whereby a cord can be passed through the interior of the device from one to the other end, wrapped around the spool and then engaged in the slot.

[0006] According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a device for adjusting and tidying the free end of a curtain gathering cord, the device being of generally elongated tubular form having one end with at least one notch formed therein whereby a cord can be passed through the interior of the device via an opening into said interior at the other end of the device, wrapped around the spool and then engaged in the slot, said opening being substantially wider in one direction transverse to the direction of length of the device than it is transverse to said one direction and said direction of length.

[0007] Advantageously, the device is generally cylindrical at said one end and near the other end the device

is flatter or oval in cross-section. Preferably the transition from cylindrical to a flatter or oval cross-section is gradual.

[0008] In another aspect the invention provides a device carrying a wound cord as described in the immediately preceding paragraph.

[0009] In a yet further aspect the invention provides a curtain having a header tape, the header tape having one or more gathering cords attached thereto and one end of each cord being wound on a device as described above.

[0010] The wound device can conveniently be left to hang from the edge of the curtain or it can be pushed out of sight between the fabric of the curtain and the header tape. Also, the device could have more than one notch say at the other end of the device so that the wound device can be attached to the header tape or the cord.

[0011] When it is desired to remove the curtains for cleaning, it is a simple matter to unwind the cord from the device.

[0012] The invention may, if desired, be used at both edges, i.e. the vertical sides, of the curtain in use. However, it may not be necessary, depending, for example, on the width of the curtains as it may be sufficient in practice to leave one end of the cord at one edge of the curtain knotted with a free amount of cord at the other edge to use for the desired gathering.

[0013] It is preferably made of plastics material although this is not essential and wood or metal, for example, may be used, if desired.

[0014] Embodiments of the invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figures 1 and 2 are respectively a front view and a perspective view of a cord tidy;

Figures 3, 4 and 5 are respectively a front view, a plan and an end view of a cord adjusting and tidying device;

Figure 4 is a rear view of part of a curtain showing the device of Figures 3 to 5 in use.

Figure 7 is a front view of another cord adjusting and tidying device;

Figures 8 and 9 are two views of the Figure 7 device and part of a curtain shown in the device in use, and

Figure 10 is a perspective view of the Figure 7 device.

[0015] Figures 1 and 2 show a cord tidy in the form of an elongate tubular spool 1 made of plastics material and having an outside diameter of about ten millimetres. One end portion 2 of the spool 1 flares out over about

five millimetres so that its end is about 13 millimetres in diameter. The end is smoothly rounded off as shown at 3. At the other end of the spool 1, there is an annular flange 4 having an outside diameter of about fifteen millimetres and a depth d of about four millimetres. The inner diameter of the spool is about seven and a half millimetres over most of its length but, at the end portion 2, the inner surface of the spool flares out in correspondence with the outer surface.

[0016] Two V-shaped slots or notches 5 are formed at diametrically opposite positions in the flange 4, the notches extending through the depth of the flange and into the adjacent end portion of the spool 2 by a short distance.

[0017] In use the free ends of the curtain gathering or rufflette strings (not shown) are inserted through the flared end of the tubular spool 1 and engaged with one of the notches 5, wound onto the outside of the member 1 and then engaged with the other notch 5. The member 1 may then be left to hang at the rear of the curtains or it may be tucked between the gathering (rufflette) tape and the curtain.

[0018] Figures 3, 4 and 5 show a cord adjusting and tidying device in the form of a tubular spool 11 made of plastics material. From about the middle of the spool to near but just before the end 12, the spool is cylindrical and has an outside diameter of about ten millimetres. At the end 12, there is an annular flange 14 having an outside diameter of about fifteen millimetres and a depth d of about four millimetres. Near the end 12, the inner diameter of the tubular member is about seven and a half millimetres.

[0019] From about the middle to the other end 13 of the spool 11, the member becomes progressively flattened, i.e. so that in the elevation of Figure 3 it is trumpet shaped. In the end view, the end 13 and the opening 16 therein are generally oval. The inner surface of the interior of the spool is generally in correspondence with the outer surface.

[0020] Two V-shaped notches 15 are formed at diametrically opposite positions in the flange 14, the notches extending through the depth of the flange and into the tubular spool 11 by a short distance.

[0021] In Figure 6, a curtain 20 has a rufflette tape 21 attached adjacent its upper edge by stitches 25. The tape has three cords 22, 23, 24 extending across its width. The curtain is in its fully extended, i.e. non-gathered configuration.

[0022] In use, the ends of the rufflette strings 27 are inserted through the end 13 of the spool 11 and then the spool 11 can be held in one hand while the ends of the strings can be pulled gently with the other hand so as to tension and adjust the strings as required. The strings may then be engaged with one of the notches 15, wound onto the outside of the spool 11 and then engaged with the other notch 15.

[0023] The wound tubular spool 11 may be left to hang at the rear of the curtains or it may be inserted between

the curtain fabric and tape 21. It could also be fixed to the rufflette tape, say by having a notch thereon, e.g. a notch (not shown) at the end 13, engaged with a free part of one of the cords 22, 23 or 24.

[0024] The rufflette tape has rows of exposed loose stitches 26 to form loops for receiving the curtain clips (not shown).

[0025] The cord adjusting and tidying device 30 of Figures 7 to 10 again comprises a generally tubular spool 31 which, in the view shown, is trumpet-shaped, i.e. it flares out at one end 32 as shown. At the other end of the spool 31 there are two laterally extending portions 33 forming a finger grip the use of which can be seen in Figure 8. A slot 34 is formed right along one side of the spool 31 and opening into its interior. A short slot or notch 35 may be provided in the opposite side of the spool at the end 32. The central portion 36 of the spool 31 may be cylindrical merging into a flattened flared out shape to form the trumpet shaped end 32 similarly to the embodiment of Figures 3 to 5. Alternatively, the central portion 36 may have a cross-sectional shape which is rectangular or rectangular with pronounced rounding off at the corners as shown in Figure 10.

[0026] In use, the free ends of the three gathering cords 37 of a rufflette header tape 38 stitched to the top edge of a curtain 39 are threaded through the device 30 from the end 2 and wound onto the central portion 36. The device may then be gripped by the fingers of one hand as shown in Figure 8 and gently pulled while the curtain and tape are held by the other hand. This hand can also be used to even out the gather of the curtain if necessary. The cords can then be loosened from being wound around the device 30 and pulled through it so that the device is close to the curtain. Then the free ends of the cords can be wound onto the device and fixed by being engaged in slot 34 and/or slot 35.

[0027] As before, the tape 38 has loose stitches 40 for receiving curtain hooks or clips (not shown).

[0028] It will be appreciated that the invention is not limited to the embodiments shown.

[0029] The spool tube may be of different shape.

[0030] Slots may be positioned at both ends of the tube.

[0031] The slots may be of different shape and more than one slot may be formed at an end of the tube.

Claims

1. A device for receiving and tidying the free end of a curtain gathering cord, the device being of generally tubular form having an opening at each end and with at least one slot formed therein whereby a cord can be passed through the interior of the device from one to the other end, wrapped around the spool and then engaged in the slot.
2. A device for adjusting and tidying the free end of a

curtain gathering cord, the device being of generally tubular form having one end with at least one slot formed therein whereby a cord can be passed through the interior of the device via an opening into said interior at the other end of the device, wrapped around the spool and then engaged in the slot, said opening being substantially wider in one direction transverse to the direction of length of the device than it is transverse to said one direction and said direction of length.

3. A device according to Claim 2, wherein the device is generally cylindrical at said one end and near the other end the device is flatter or oval in cross-section.
4. A device according to Claim 3, wherein the transition from cylindrical to a flatter or oval cross-section is gradual.
5. A device according to Claim 1, wherein said slot extends right along one side of the device.
6. A device according to Claim 1, wherein said device comprises portions adapted to form a finger grip for holding the device.
7. A curtain having a header tape for forming a gathered configuration of the curtain tape, the tape having one or more gathering cords attached thereto and one end of each cord being wound on a device according to Claim 1.

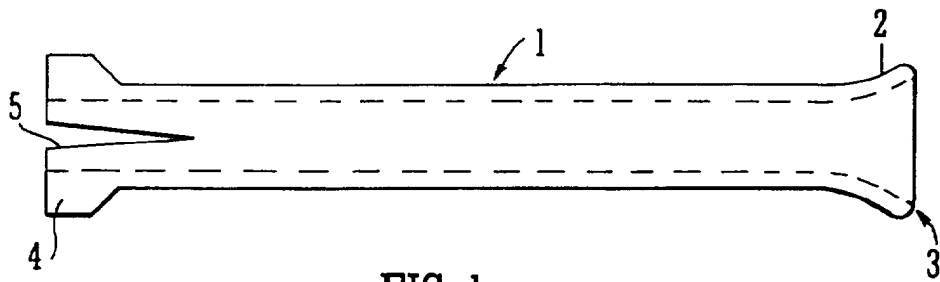


FIG. 1

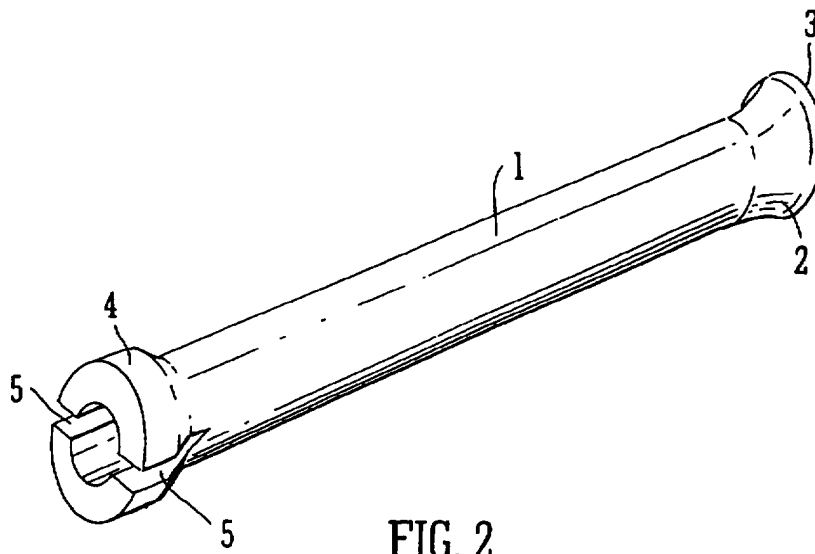


FIG. 2

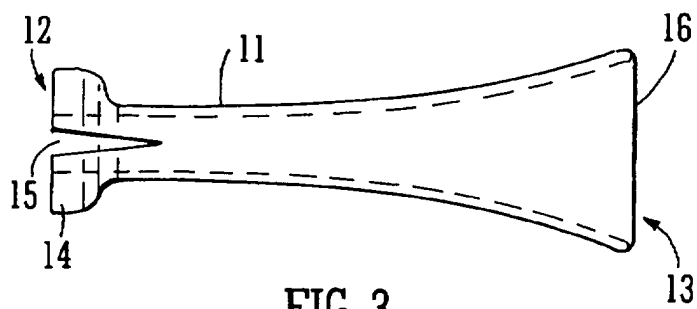


FIG. 3



FIG. 4

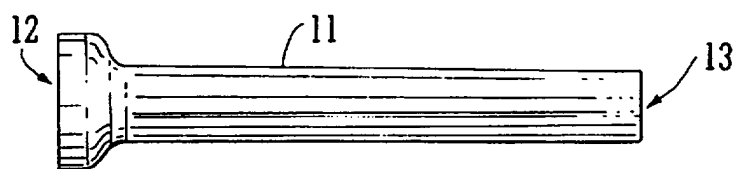


FIG. 5

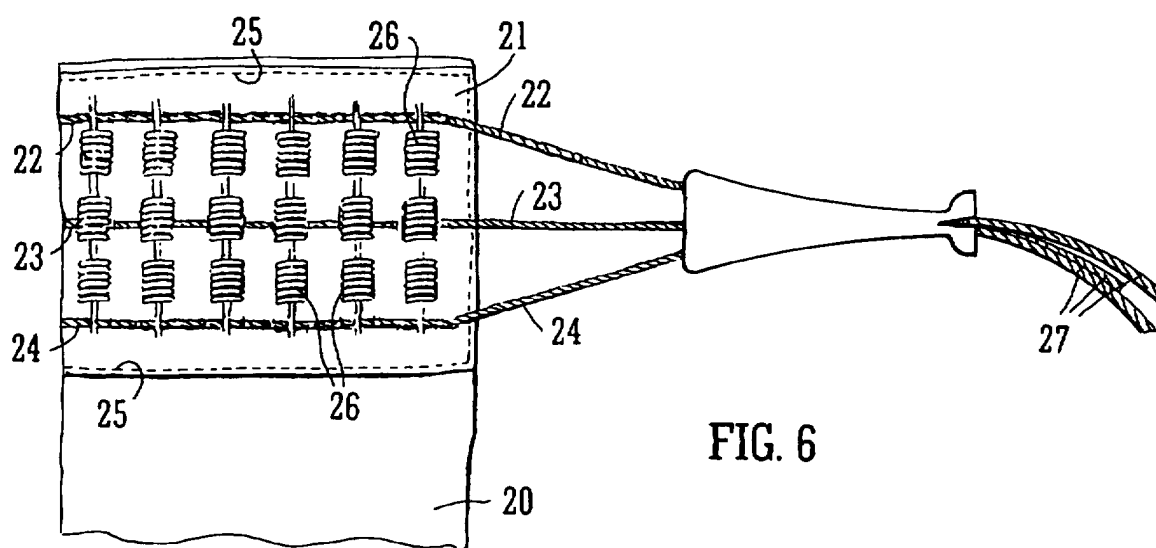


FIG. 6

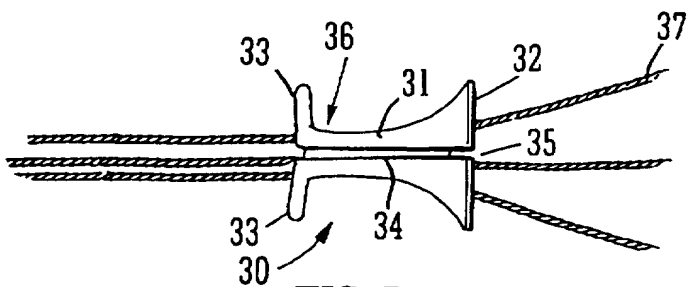


FIG. 7

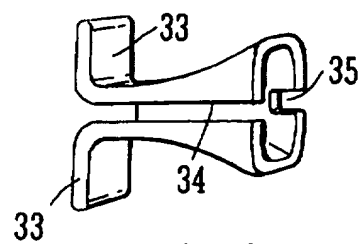


FIG. 10

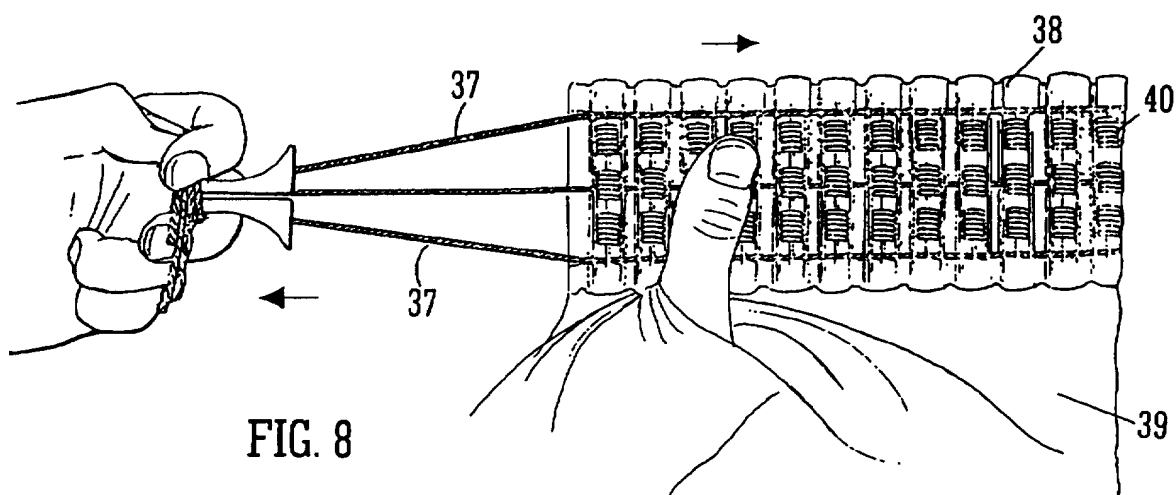


FIG. 8

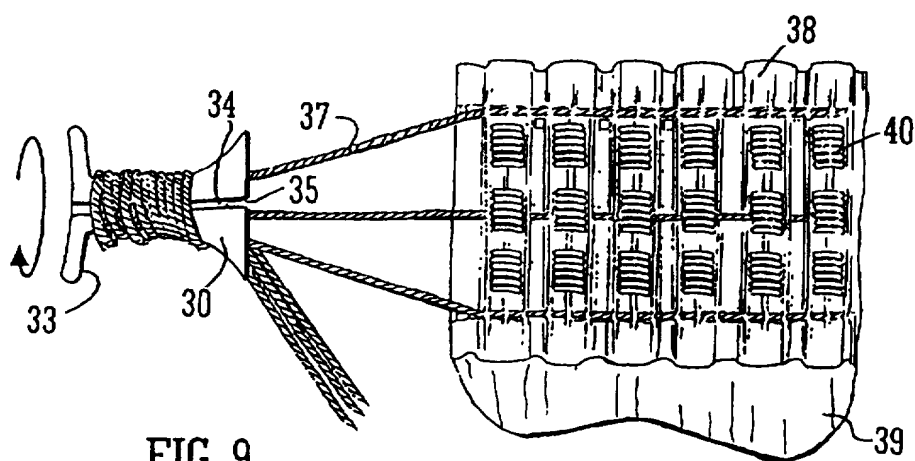


FIG. 9