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GIRDLES AND LIKE UNDERGARMENTS

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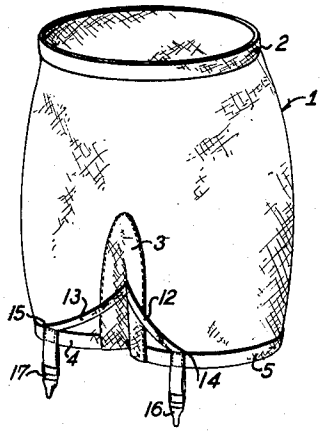


Fig. 1

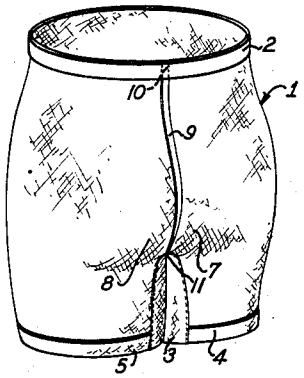


Fig. 2

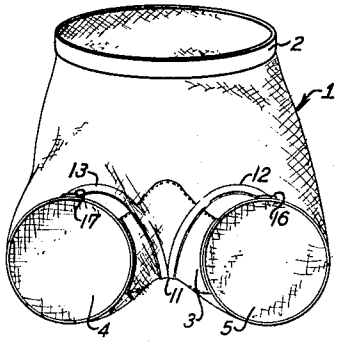
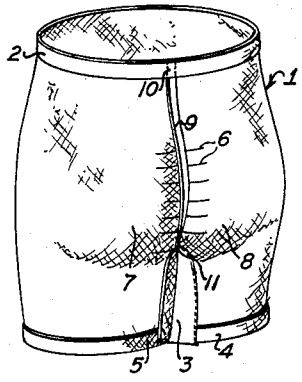


Fig. 3

Fig. 4



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GIRDLES AND LIKE UNDERGARMENTS

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4 Claims. (Cl. 128—523)

My present invention relates to that class of feminine undergarments adapted to be worn as a foundation and abdominal support and generally referred to as girdles, corselettes, panty-girdles and the like, and has particular reference to feminine undergarments of this general type which are adapted to encircle, in closely embracing or compressing relation, the torso of the wearer from the upper portion of the thighs to at least the region of the waist. Where, in the present specification and in the subjoined claims, I use the term "girdle," it is to be understood that I refer, generally to the several types of undergarments above specified.

Undergarments of the type to which the present invention relates are generally made of elastic material such as rubber, or are woven or knitted of elastic threads, and, as usually constructed, serve to compress the abdomen, hips and buttocks of the wearer. Due to the compressive action of the elastic material of which such undergarments are generally made, the wearing thereof compresses the abdomen and hips, which is desirable, and also compresses and flattens the buttocks, which is undesirable. Such undergarments impart to the rear portion of the torso of the wearer a box-like, flat configuration, in which the normal natural curves and contours of the buttocks are restrained or flattened and a straight ridge or line is established along the lower edge of the rear portion of the undergarment below the flattened or compressed buttocks of the wearer, which ridge or line is objectionable because of its visibility through the dress, skirt or slacks worn over the undergarments, especially when such outergarments are of the tight fitting variety. This compression and flattening of the buttocks and the presence of the relatively straight ridge or line visible along the lower edge of the rear portion of the overlying garment is not in accordance with the dictates of modern fashion, which prescribe that this restraining compression and flattening of the buttocks should not be tolerated.

The aforementioned disadvantages of girdles of the prior art have been recognized, and numerous attempts have been made to provides girdles devoid of these disadvantages. Such prior attempts have, however, involved comparatively complicated constructions which increase materially the difficulties of manufacturing procedures, with a resulting increase in costs. Various combinations of elastic and non-elastic panels, various combinations of "one way" and "two way" stretch panels, various means for providing pocket-like portions to receive the buttocks, etc. have been proposed, in fact the prior art has even gone to the extent of providing a conventional girdle with two contiguous oval shaped pads secured to the exterior of the rear portion of the girdle and adapted to overlie the flattened, compressed buttocks of the wearer to simulate the natural curves and contours thereof. It has also been proposed to provide a girdle with contiguous contoured or semicontoured cups or pockets to receive the buttocks, which pockets are separated by a vertically-disposed, non-elastic tape which extends downwardly from

the waistline at the rear of the girdle and terminates at the rear of the crotch portion thereof. A further expedient employed by the prior art resides in the provision of right and left rear panels joined together by a central vertical seam, which panels have darts, pleats or gathers along the seam in the region of the buttocks, which pleats or gathers extend from the central seam in a direction transverse of the seam, and which pleats or gathers are dimensioned to form cup-like pockets adapted to snugly receive the buttocks. None of these prior art devices are, however, entirely efficient or effective in the purposes for which designed, and all leave much to be desired in their atempts to preserve and accentuate the natural and normal curves and contours of the buttocks of the wearer of the girdle.

With the foregoing in mind, it is the primary object of my present invention to provide an undergarment or girdle of the elastic or compressive type which will serve effectively to compress, restrain and support the abdomen and hip portions of the wearer but will not flatten the buttocks of the wearer to an extent such as to destroy or detract from the natural and normal shape, configuration or contour of the buttocks.

It is an object of my present invention to provide a compressive girdle or like undergarment designed to closely embrace the torso of the wearer to compress, restrain and support the abodmen and hip portions of the wearer but which will not bind or compress the buttocks together or produce the objectionable flattened appearance across the rear portion of the torso of the wearer.

It is a further object of my present invention to provide a compressive girdle or like undergarment of elastic material which will closely embrace the torso of the wearer and which has incorporated therein a substantially non-elastic, non-stretchable tape or tapes sewed or otherwise affixed to the undergarment and extending downwardly along the mid-portion of the rear of the same and under the crotch portion thereof, and which terminates well beyond the front of the crotch portion thereof, the construction being such that when the undergarment is in place on the wearer, a downward and forward pull or tension is exerted on the tape or tapes along the rear, mid-portion of the undergarment and toward the front thereof which tends to force the intermediate or rear central portion of the undergarment into the "valley" intermediate the buttocks, to preserve and accentuate the natural and normal curves and contours of the buttocks of the wearer of the undergarment, and which avoids, in their entirety, the objectionable flattened appearance of the buttocks and the objectionable straight ridge or line at the rear, bottom edge of the undergarment which are disadvantages inherent in the use of the conventional girdles or like undergarments of the prior art.

It is a further object of my present invention to provide an undergarment of the character referred to above which incorporates the important features of my present invention, which features may be applied to girdles made in accordance with present commercial practice, i.e. from a length of tubular elastic fabric, or from a flat strip or sheet of elastic fabric, or from a plurality of individual panels of elastic fabric, or from panels of non-elastic fabric combined with strips or panels of elastic fabric.

It is a still further object of my present invention to provide a girdle of the character above described having a substantially non-elastic, non-stretchable tape or tapes sewed or otherwise affixed to the girdle and extending downwardly along the mid-portion of the rear thereof, then under the crotch portion along opposite sides thereof, and which terminates well beyond the front of said crotch portion, and which tape or tapes may be employed in girdles having plain back or rear portions or girdles

having darts, pleats or gathers along the central rear portion thereof in the region of the buttocks, which darts, pleats or gathers extend transversely of said central rear portion and on opposite sides thereof and are so dimensioned as to form cup-like pockets adapted to snugly receive the buttocks.

Additional objects and advantages of my present invention will become apparent as the present description proceeds, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which I have shown a preferred embodiment of my present invention. It is to be understood, however, that the form of my present invention shown and described herein is to be considered as a preferred embodiment thereof, and that various changes may be made in the shape, size and arrangements of parts without departing from the spirit of my present invention or from the scope of the subjoined claims.

In the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals have been employed to designate like parts throughout the several views:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the front and a portion of the left side of a girdle or like undergarment embodying the features of my present invention, showing tapes extending forwardly from the crotch portion of the girdle and terminating adjacent the points of attachment of the front hose-supporting members of the girdle.

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the rear and a portion of the left side of the girdle or like undergarment shown in Fig. 1,

Fig. 3 is a front view of the girdle or like undergarment shown in Figs. 1 and 2, as such garment would appear on a wearer when the wearer is in a sitting position, and

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the rear and a portion of the left side of a girdle or like undergarment embodying the features of my present invention and showing the same as applied to an undergarment in which a series of darts, pleats or gathers are stitched or otherwise formed at opposite sides of the centrally-located rear portion of the tape, which darts, pleats or gathers extend transversely of said tape on opposite sides thereof and are so dimensioned as to form cup-like pockets adapted to snugly receive the buttocks.

In the accompanying drawings, I have shown an elastic girdle or like undergarment **1** adapted to be worn as a foundation garment and abdominal support to encircle, in closely embracing and compressing relation, the torso of a wearer. This girdle, as is the usual practice, has a relatively strong elastic belt portion **2** which encircles the garment along and around the upper edge thereof and which may be formed during the knitting of the garment or may be made as a separate member and be sewed or otherwise attached thereto. The girdle may be made from a single length of tubular elastic material to provide a girdle of the so-called "step-in" type; or it may be formed from a single strip or sheet of elastic material with suitable fastening means along its vertical marginal edges; or it may be made of a front panel or panels, side panels, and a rear panel or panels, all of elastic material and seamed along their vertical marginal edges to provide a girdle of the so-called "step-in" type, or adjacent one of the vertical marginal edges may be provided with suitable fastening means; or it may comprise a combination of elastic and non-elastic panels suitably assembled in accordance with conventional practice. The girdle, per se, forms no part of my present invention, which invention may be applied to, and has utility in connection with any preferred type of elastic girdle or like undergarment adapted to encircle the torso of a wearer in body compressive, restraining and supporting relation.

Referring now in detail to Figs. 1, 2 and 3 of the accompanying drawings, the girdle **1** is open at the top where it is encircled with a relatively strong elastic belt portion **2**, and is adapted to encircle the torso of a wearer from a region above the waistline to a region below a horizontal plane passing through the crotch of the wearer. As is the usual practice, the girdle includes a crotch portion **3** which extends from the back to the front of the girdle and divides the lower portion thereof into two leg openings **4** and **5** for the right and left leg, respectively, of the wearer. As thus far described, the girdle is of conventional construction.

The girdle is usually constructed of a single length of tubular elastic material having plain, smooth front, side and rear portions, or, if desired, I may cut the seat or rear portion thereof as shown in Fig. 4 of the accompanying drawings, to form a plurality of, say, six or seven, vertically-spaced, horizontally-extending darts, which are subsequently sewed or stitched together to form a series of pleats **6**, each of which extends a short distance to each side of the vertical center line of the rear portion of the girdle. Instead of cutting darts **6** and subsequently sewing or stitching their severed edges together, portions of the material on opposite sides of the vertical center line of the rear portion of the girdle may be gathered and sewed at vertically-spaced intervals to provide the pleats **6**. These pleats **6**, regardless of the manner in which they are formed, may be truly horizontal or may be of V-shaped configuration, their purpose being to assist in the formation of a pair of contiguous, cup-like pockets **7** and **8**, one at each side of the vertical center line of the rear portion of the girdle, which pockets are ultimately shaped or contoured to receive and to closely and compressively embrace, the buttocks of the wearer of the girdle.

I provide a length of non-elastic, non-stretchable tape **9** which extends downwardly from a point **10** at or near the top edge of the girdle with its upper rear end underlying or overlying the belt portion **2** at the center or midpoint of the rear portion of the girdle to a point **11** at the rear of the crotch portion, at which point said tape is bifurcated, as indicated at **12** and **13** to pass along opposite sides of the crotch portion **3** and toward the front of the girdle, the said portions **12** and **13** terminating at points **14** and **15** adjacent the points of attachment of the front hose-supporting members **16** and **17**, respectively, of the girdle. As an alternative construction, the tape **9** may be a single piece which extends all the way from point **10** to point **11** and then along one side only of the crotch to either of points **14** or **15**, and the tape which extends from point **11** along the other side of said crotch, and along the front portion of the girdle, may comprise a second length of tape having its inner end secured to tape **9** at point **11**, passing toward the front of the girdle along the side of the crotch opposite to the side to which the tape **9** is secured, and terminating at the front leg portion adjacent the point of attachment of the front hose-supporting member opposite that to which the forward end of tape **9** is attached. The non-elastic, non-stretchable tape or tapes, as the case may be, is or are preferably sewed or stitched to the outer surface of the girdle throughout the entire length or lengths of the tape or tapes. When sewing or stitching the portion of the tape which overlies the pleats **6** in girdle constructions including the darts, pleats or gathers **6**, the material of the girdle may be slightly shirred in or gathered beneath the tape to further aid in the formation of the cup-like pockets **7** and **8**.

When a girdle of the type just described is applied to a wearer and when the front hose-supporting members **16** and **17** are fastened to the tops of the stockings of the wearer of the girdle, the forward and downward pull or tension exerted in portions **12** and **13** of the tape or tapes by the pull of the hose-supporters is transmitted to the rear, vertical portion of tape **9**, with the result that said rear, vertical portion is pulled or forced downwardly and forwardly into the "valley" between the buttocks of the wearer of the girdle, thus effectively preventing the flat unnatural and objectionable appearance of the buttocks and effectively avoiding the creation of the objectionable straight ridge or line along the lower portion

of the rear of the girdle. Without the downward and forward pull on the portion of tape **9** at the rear of the girdle, the girdle would not satisfactorily function for its intended purpose. It will be understood, of course, that in girdle constructions in which the darts, pleats or gathers **6** are employed, the cup-like pockets **7** and **8** are free to stretch over the buttocks and to conform to the shape and contour thereof, and that a clear and well-defined "valley" is established throughout and between the vertical length of the buttocks.

In the form of girdle shown in Fig. 4, I have provided a series of darts, pleats or gathers **6** on opposite sides of that portion of tape **9** which extends from point **10** to point **11**, these darts, pleats or gathers **6** being located in the region of the buttocks and extending from said tape on opposite sides thereof in a direction transversely of said tape. These darts, pleats or gathers may be formed by any conventional procedure and they are so dimensioned as to form cup-like pockets adapted to snugly receive and embrace the buttocks. My present invention may be employed with girdles having plain rear portions or with girdles such as shown in Fig. 4 wherein the darts, pleats or gathers are formed on the rear central portion of the girdle at opposite side of tape **9**.

In the form of my present invention illustrated and described herein, the overall effective length of the tape or tapes which is or are sewed or stitched to the girdle and which extend or extends from point **10** to points **14** and **15**, is no greater than, and is preferably slightly less than, the actual length of the girdle material between said points when the girdle is in an unstretched, non-applied condition. When the girdle is applied to a wearer and is pulled upwardly along the wearer's torso, to snugly embrace and encircle the same, the flexible, resilient material of the girdle will stretch but the substantially non-elastic, non-stretchable material of the tape or tapes will not, with the result that the tape or tapes will be forced or pulled tightly toward the body of the wearer, and that portion of the tape **9** which extends along the "valley" between the buttocks will be forced or pulled forwardly and into said "valley" to establish and maintain a clear and definite line of demarcation between the buttocks.

It will thus be seen that I have effectively fulfilled the stated objects of my present invention by the provision of a girdle or like undergarment made in accordance with my present invention shown and described herein. In the form of my invention shown herein, the downward and forward pull on the rear portion of the tape is effected by the forward and downward pull on the front portions **12** and **13** of the tape created by the pull of the front hose-supporting members **16** and **17**. The important and essential features of my present invention may be adequately defined as consisting of the provision in an elastic girdle, of a substantially non-elastic or non-stretchable tape or tapes a portion of which extends downwardly of the girdle along and within the "valley" between the buttocks, which portion is pulled downwardly and forwardly by means of force or tension applied to portions of the tape which extends from the back of the crotch portion, through said crotch portion, and to the front portion of the girdle. Without this downward and forward pull or tension on the tape reposing in the "valley" between the buttocks, the purposes and objects of my present invention would not be accomplished, regardless of whether the tape or tapes is or are applied to a girdle having a plain rear portion or to a girdle in which darts, pleats or gathers are provided on the rear portion thereof.

It is to be understood that the form of my present invention shown and described herein is susceptible of various changes or modifications. For example, the tape

9 described above, which in the preferred form of my present invention is non-elastic or non-stretchable, may be constructed of a material having a limited degree of elasticity or stretchability, provided such degree of elasticity or stretchability is less than that of the material of which the girdle is constructed, the cup-like pockets **7** and **8** may be formed or fashioned by means other than the darts, pleats, or gathers above described, etc. These and other changes and modifications of the girdle construction, will present themselves to those skilled in the art to which the present invention relates, but are well within the spirit of my present invention and come within the scope of the subjoined claims.

Having thus described my invention, I claim:

1. In an elastic girdle adapted to encircle and to elastically embrace the torso of the wearer of the girdle, said girdle comprising a front portion, a rear portion, and a crotch portion extending between the lower edge portions of said front and rear portions to define a pair of leg openings separated by said crotch portion, a hose-supporting means attached to the lower front edge of the material defining one of said leg openings, and a substantially non-elastic, non-stretchable and relatively narrow tape of less elasticity and stretchability than that of the material of the girdle sewed throughout its length to the girdle and extending from a mid-point at the top of the rear portion of the girdle downwardly to the rear of the crotch portion thereof, then forwardly beneath said crotch portion to the front thereof and terminating adjacent the said hose-supporting means, whereby the downward pull on said hose-supporting means will exert a constantly tensioned downward and forward pull on that portion of the tape at the rear of the girdle when the girdle is in position on the wearer and a hose is attached to said hose-supporting means, for pulling that portion of the tape at the rear of the girdle downwardly and forwardly to force said portion into, and to maintain it within the "valley" between the buttocks of the wearer of the girdle.

2. In an elastic girdle as defined in claim 1, wherein hose-supporting means are attached to the lower front edge of the material defining each of said leg openings, and wherein said tape includes portions which extend from said crotch portion and terminate adjacent each of said hose-supporting means.

3. In an elastic girdle as defined in claim 1, wherein a pair of contiguous cup-like pockets are provided at the rear of the girdle, separated by the tape which passes from the mid-point at the top of the rear portion of the girdle downwardly to the rear of the crotch portion thereof, said cup-like pockets adapted to compressively embrace the buttocks of the wearer of the girdle.

4. In an elastic girdle as defined in claim 3 wherein said contiguous cup-like pockets are formed by a vertically-spaced series of horizontally-extending pleats underlying that portion of said tape which passes between said pockets, said pleats extending transversely of said portion of said tape and terminating adjacent opposite sides thereof.

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