Title: A PACKAGE OF DIFFERENT INSOLE PAIRS FOR DIFFERENT FOOTWEAR

Abstract: A package (1) of insoles. The package includes at least two different pairs of insoles, including a first pair of insoles (P1) for use with first footwear and a second pair of insoles (P2) for use with second footwear different from the first footwear. The first pair of insoles (P1) has a first insole design and the second pair of insoles (P2) has a second insole design different from the first insole design. The package also includes a container (3) containing the at least two different pairs of insoles.
A PACKAGE OF DIFFERENT INSOLE PAIRS FOR DIFFERENT FOOTWEAR

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates generally to insoles, and more particularly to packaging for insoles.

[0002] There are numerous types of footwear for different types of activities. For example, some footwear (e.g., running shoes) is designed for sports-related activities, while other types (e.g., casual shoes, walking shoes, sandals) are constructed for leisure activities. Still other footwear is designed for work (e.g., boots, steel-toed shoes) or formal activity (e.g., high-heels, dress shows). Various types of insoles are also marketed for different types of footwear and/or activities. However, these insoles have not been marketed in a single package, making the purchase of such insoles inconvenient and frustrating for an active person participating in many different types of activities.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] In general, this invention is directed to a package of insoles. The package includes at least two different pairs of insoles, including a first pair of insoles adapted to be used with first footwear and a second pair of insoles adapted to be used with second footwear different from the first footwear. The first pair of insoles has a first insole design and the second pair of insoles has a second insole design different from the first insole design. The package also includes a container containing the at least two different pairs of insoles.

[0004] Other objects and features will be in part apparent and in part pointed out hereinafter.
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] Fig. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of an insole package of this invention comprising a container in the form of a semi-rigid carton having closure flaps;

[0006] Fig. 2 is a view similar to Fig. 1 but with the closure flaps open to show a transparent, 3-pocket envelope for holding plurality of pairs of insoles in the carton;

[0007] Fig. 3 is a plan view of envelope removed from the carton;

[0008] Fig. 4 is a perspective view of one insole of a first pair of insoles in the envelope of Fig. 3;

[0009] Fig. 5 is an exploded view of the insole of Fig. 4 showing the construction of the insole.

[0010] Corresponding parts are designated by corresponding reference numbers throughout the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0011] Referring to the drawings, Figs. 1 and 2 illustrate one embodiment of an insole package of this invention, the package being indicated in its entirety by the reference number 1. In general, the package comprises a container, generally designated 3, and two or more pairs of insoles, three pairs P1, P2 and P3 being shown in Fig. 2 by way of example. As will be discussed in more detail, the different pairs are designed for different types of footwear and/or activity, such as (but not limited to) a sports activity, a leisure or casual activity, a work activity, or a formal (dress) activity. As a result, a customer who owns different types of footwear or participates in various activities can satisfy his/her needs by one purchase. It will be understood that the number of insole pairs in the package 1 may vary (2, 3, 4, etc.), and that the types of footwear or activities for which the insole pairs are designed may also vary,
depending on the need (actual or perceived) in the market. In the illustrated embodiment, the package does not contain footwear.

[0012] In one embodiment (Figs. 1 and 2), the 5 container 3 is a semi-rigid carton (also designated 3) having a front, a back and four sides which cooperatively define an interior volume sufficient for holding an appropriate number of insole pairs, three such pairs P1, P2, P3 being shown in Fig. 2. The front of the carton 3 includes overlapping top and bottom closure flaps 11, 13. In the illustrated embodiment, the bottom flap 13 is pivotally attached to a lower edge 15 of the carton and has an area approximately equal to the size of the front of the carton. The top flap 11, which may be sized to overlie 15 about half of the bottom flap 13, is pivotally attached to an upper edge 17 of the carton. The closure flaps 11, 13 are releasably held in a closed position by suitable means such as mating velcro patches 21, 23. Other fasteners may be used, such as snaps, buttons, or adhesives. The carton may also include a pair of side flaps 27 hinged to opposite side edges 31 of the carton. As illustrated, the side flaps 27 underlie the closure flaps 11, 13 when the carton is closed.

[0013] Other types of containers are contemplated, 25 such as bags, rigid boxes, sleeves of paperboard or other suitable material, molded plastic shells (e.g., blister packs) affixed to a substrate such as cardboard, or other conventional or non-conventional packaging techniques. The container may be disposable after it is opened or it may be reusable for storage of the insoles when not in use. The container may also have one or more suitable openings therein (not shown) for enabling the container to be hung on a support (e.g., a cantilever arm) of a display at a point of purchase. Other types of containers may be used 35 without departing from the scope of this invention.
[0014] The inner and/or outer surfaces of the carton 3 may contain printed material (e.g., text and/or graphics) related to construction, use, performance or other characteristics of the insoles in the carton, such as the number of insoles contained therein, the size of the insoles, the source of the insoles, the types of footwear or activities for which the insoles are designed, instructions for use, or other product information. Moreover, the cartons may be color coded to indicate the types for insoles contained in the carton. For example, a carton containing insoles for women's footwear may be one color whereas a carton containing insoles for men's footwear may be another color.

[0015] In the illustrated embodiment, the package 1 further comprises an envelope 41 of transparent plastic or other suitable material sized and shaped for being received in the carton 3 (Figs. 2 and 3). The envelope 41 has multiple compartments or pockets 43, each configured for holding only one pair of insoles (or less than all of the insoles) of the package. It is understood that the container 3 may not have an envelope 41 or that the envelope may have only one compartment for holding all of the insole pairs. The illustrated envelope has three pockets 43 formed by longitudinal lines 45 of heat seal or the like for holding 3 pairs of insoles, each pocket being closed at one end and open at its other end providing access to the pocket. Affixed to each of the pockets is a translucent image of the footwear (not shown) for which the insole has been designed along with a text description of that footwear (e.g., "everyday", "sports", and "boot"). Moreover, instructions for use of the insoles contained in a pocket 43 may also be printed on the back of the envelope 41. It is recognized that the envelope 41 can be free of indicia or contain indicia different from that described herein.
Figs. 4 and 5 illustrate one insole P1-A of the first pair P1 of insoles in the container. This particular insole is designed for sports-related footwear, such as a running shoe. The insole has a heel section 51, 5 a mid section 53 and a forefoot section designated 51, 53 and 55, respectively. The insole P1-A is constructed to comprise a plurality of different layers, three such layers L1, L2 and L3 being shown in this particular embodiment. The first layer L1, illustrated as the bottom layer, defines the overall outline of the insole and provides support for the foot. This layer is of a suitable material, such as polyurethane, having a first durometer (e.g., a Shore OO durometer in the range of 55-65). The second layer L2, illustrated as the middle layer, is shaped to overlie certain areas of the first layer to provide cushioning for corresponding parts of the foot, as more fully described for example in my U.S. Patent Nos. 5,787,610 and 5,964,046, both of which are fully incorporated by reference herein. The second layer L2 is typically (but not necessarily) harder than the first layer L1 and is of a material (e.g., polyurethane) having a second durometer. Preferably, the Shore OO durometer of the second layer is in the range 30-85. The specific durometer of the second layer will depend on the type of activity or footwear for which the insole is designed. For a high-impact activity, such as running or other sport, the Shore OO durometer of the second layer L2 is preferably in the range of 55-65 (e.g., 60). For a high-heel shoe, where substantial cushioning is desirable, the second layer L2 may have a Shore OO durometer of 50-60 (e.g., 55). The third layer L3, illustrated as the top layer, may function as a sock liner and be of fabric or other suitable material.

The three layers of the insole P1-A may be formed in any suitable manner. For example, the first two layers may be pour molded, the first layer L1 being poured
first into a mold and allowed to harden, followed by pouring of the second layer over the first using conventional techniques understood by those skilled in the art. The third layer may be adhered to the second layer after the two pour molded layers L1, L2 have been removed from the mold. The second insole P1-B (Fig. 3) of the first pair of insoles P1 is of the same construction as the first insole P1-A of the pair, although for the other foot.

The second pair P2 of insoles in the package may be constructed in a manner substantially identical to the first pair P1, the only difference being that the middle layer L2 of the second pair has a different durometer suited for a different activity or type of footwear. By way of example, the second pair P2 may be suited for a low-impact activity, such as walking, where less cushioning is required. In this case, the second layer L2, has a durometer somewhat greater than that of the first pair P1 of insoles since less cushioning is needed. In one embodiment, for example, the second layer L2 of pair P2 may have a Shore OO durometer in the range of 65-75 (e.g., 70).

The third pair P3 of insoles may be constructed in a manner substantially identical to the first and second pairs P1, P2, the only difference being that the middle layer L2 of each insole of the third pair has a different durometer suited for a different activity or footwear, such as work or a formal activity where boots or dress shoes may be appropriate. In this case, the second layer L2 has a durometer different from that of the first and second pairs P1, P2 of insoles. In this embodiment, the second layer L2 of pair P3 may have a Shore A durometer in the range of 30-40 (e.g., 35), which is suitable for work boots, for example, where firm support is needed for the feet.
The different constructions of the insoles described above are exemplary only, and it will be understood that the insoles may be constructed to differ from one another in different ways suitable for different footwear or activities. Also, while the different insoles will typically be used in different types of footwear depending on the activity (e.g., sport shoes, leisure shoes, work shoes, dress shoes, etc.) it is contemplated that the different types of insoles may be used alternately in the same footwear depending on the type of activity to be pursued at any given time. Thus, it will be apparent that virtually any combination of different insoles can be packaged in the same container, thereby providing not only customer convenience and value but also a marketing flexibility which has heretofore been unknown.

One or more of the insoles of this invention may, optionally, incorporate other functional features. One such feature is a neuroma pad 61 (see Fig. 3) of the type described in pending U.S. application Ser. No. 10/867,110, incorporated herein by reference. As described in that application, the neuroma pad 61 is configured and located to underlie third and fourth metatarsal heads of the foot. When the bottom of a foot is placed on the insole, the neuroma pad applies an upward force to the bottom of the foot sufficient to spread the third and fourth metatarsal heads away from one another and thereby relieve pressure on the common digital nerve between the third and fourth metatarsal heads. As a result, the pad functions to reduce and/or prevent foot pain caused by neuritis or a neuroma. Further, in certain embodiments, one or more of the insoles may incorporate a metatarsal pad (or pad section) of the type described in the aforementioned pending application. This pad protects the ball of the foot to reduce pain and help prevent the development of hammertoes and neuromas. Further, the forefoot section 55 of the insole of some embodiments may
be designed to shape to the foot automatically, creating an efficient, impact-absorbing platform. The mid section 53 of the insole of certain embodiments may be designed to cradle the arch to reduce pronation, strain and fatigue, plantar fasciitis of the heel, and shin splints. The heel section 51 of the insole of certain embodiments may be designed to cushion and suspend the heel from impact to the bursa of the heel, while reducing impact shock waves to the knee, hip and lower back. An insole of exemplary embodiments of this invention may include virtually any combination of these features.

[0022] It is also contemplated that the different insole pairs in a package may differ in design by shape, color or one or more other ornamental (as opposed to functional) features. It is contemplated in this regard, that different ornamental insole designs may be suitable for different occasions, making the sale of such insoles in a single package particularly appealing to customers. Alternatively, the different insole pairs in a package may differ by any combination of ornamental and/or functional features.

[0023] A package of this invention is adapted to include insoles of different designs adapted for different footwear including (but not limited to) sport shoes, leisure shoes, dress shoes, and work shoes. Sports shoes may include running shoes, basketball shoes, baseball shoes, football shoes, tennis shoes, hiking boots, rock climbing shoes, hunting boots, fishing waders, bicycling shoes, mountaineering boots, ice skates, in-line skates and roller skates. Leisure shoes may include sandals, thongs, sneakers, moccasins, slippers, flats, loafers, mules, slides, and clogs. Dress shoes may include oxfords, pumps, and high-heel shoes. Work shoes may include steel toed shoes or boots, boots, rain boots, snow boots, and cowboy boots. The footwear may be for men, women or children.
[0024] When introducing elements of the present invention or the preferred embodiment(s) thereof, the articles "a", "an", "the" and "said" are intended to mean that there are one or more of the elements. The terms "comprising", "including" and "having" are intended to be inclusive and mean that there may be additional elements other than the listed elements.

[0025] In view of the above, it will be seen that the several objects of the invention are achieved and other advantageous results attained.

[0026] As various changes could be made in the above constructions without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description and shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.
What is claimed is:

1. A package of insoles, comprising

at least two different pairs of insoles, including a first pair of insoles adapted to be used with first footwear and a second pair of insoles adapted to be used with second footwear different from said first footwear,

said first pair of insoles having a first insole design and said second pair of insoles having a second insole design different from said first insole design, and

a container containing said at least two different pairs of insoles.

2. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein said package does not include said first or second footwear.

3. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first pair of insoles is configured to fit said first footwear, said second pair of insoles is configured to fit said second footwear, and said first footwear and second footwear are selected from a group of footwear consisting of sport shoes, leisure shoes, dress shoes and work shoes.

4. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first pairs of insoles is constructed for a first type of physical activity and second pair of insoles is constructed for a second type of physical activity.

5. A package as set forth in claim 4 wherein said first activity is a high-impact activity, including running, and said second activity is a low-impact activity, including walking.
6. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein each insole of said first and second pairs of insoles comprises a support layer for supporting certain parts of the foot and a cushioning layer for cushioning other parts of the foot, wherein said cushioning layer of each insole of said first pair comprises a material having a first durometer, and wherein said cushioning layer of each insole of said second pair comprises a material having a second durometer different than said first durometer.

7. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein said container comprises a carton having at least one closure flap.

8. A package as set forth in claim 1 further comprising a third pair of insoles in said container adapted to be used with third footwear different from said first and second footwear, said third insole having an insole design different from said first and second insole designs.

9. A package as set forth in claim 8 wherein said first, second and third pairs of insoles are constructed for different types of activities.

10. A package as set forth in claim 9 wherein said first footwear, second footwear and third footwear are selected from a group of footwear consisting of sport shoes, dress shoes, leisure shoes and work shoes.

11. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein each insole of at least one of said first and second pairs of insoles comprises a neuroma pad adapted to underlie third and fourth metatarsal heads of the foot whereby when a bottom of the foot is placed on the insole, the neuroma pad applies an upward force to the bottom of the foot.
sufficient to spread the third and fourth metatarsal heads away from one another and thereby relieve pressure on said common digital nerve between said third and fourth metatarsal heads.

12. A package as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first footwear comprises a sole and at least one thong extending up from the sole for reception in an interspace between two adjacent toes of a foot on the sole, each insole of said first pair of insoles comprising a heel section, a mid section, a forefoot section, and slot-defining means on the insole defining at least one slot extending generally rearwardly from a front edge of the forefoot section at a location corresponding to said at least one thong.

13. A package as set forth in claim 1 further comprising instructions regarding the use of the first pair of insoles in said first footwear and the use of the second pair of insoles in said second footwear.

14. A package as set forth in claim 13 wherein said instructions are located on said container.
### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

- **IPC(7)**: A43B 13/38
- **US CL.**: 36/44, 43, 1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

- **U.S.**: 36/44, 43, 1, 100, 140, 155, 180; 206/278

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

- **NONE**

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

- **NONE**

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 6,536,137 A (CELIA) 25 March 2003, see whole reference.</td>
<td>1-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 1,330,864 A (HAMILTON) 17 February 1920, see whole reference,</td>
<td>1-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 964,556 A (ROGERS) 19 July 1910, see whole reference</td>
<td>1-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 4,841,648 A (SHAFFER et al) 27 June 1989, see whole reference.</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>US 4,300,294 A (RIECKEN) 17 November 1981, see element 36.</td>
<td>12</td>
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</table>

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

- **"T"** later document published after the international filing date or priority date
  - and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- **"X"** document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- **"Y"** document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
- **"&"** document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

- **12 October 2005**

Date of mailing of the international search report

- **8 November 2005**

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

- **Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450**

Authorized officer

- **Marie Patterson**

Telephone No. 703-308-1148

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