An implement for grooming nails in the form of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces having nail grooming material affixed thereto, a packaged nail implement in a easer and a method for grooming nails.
NAIL CARE IMPLEMENT AND CASE

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority from provisional patent application Ser. No. 60/754,432, filed Dec. 28, 2005.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The invention is in the field of nail care implements for filing, shaping, and otherwise treating the nail and cuticle surfaces.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] A wide variety of nail care implements are commercially available. Standard files, buffers, and the like can be purchased in just about any store for a nominal price. While these nail care tools are quite inexpensive, they do suffer from certain drawbacks. For example, files used for abrading nail tips and surfaces are often in a hot dog shape. However, these types of files are not ergonomically designed, nor do they reach the more difficult to reach spots such as the corner of the nail.

[0004] There is a need for nail care implements that are capable of filing, buffing, and otherwise treating nails. Such an implement should be easy to grip and have the ability to reach difficult areas in the nail and cuticular surfaces to be treated. Further, there is a need for treating and maintaining nails that have already been manicured. For example, it may be desirable to buff manicured nails to restore shine. Or perhaps it is desirable to file small nicks or imperfections in a manicured nail surface or edge.

[0005] One object of the invention is provide a nail care implement for grooming nails that have been manicured.

[0006] Another object of the invention is to provide a packaged nail care implement comprised of an implement in a case, to be used for grooming nails.

[0007] Another object of the invention is to provide an ergonomically designed nail care implement that is easy to use and hold for the consumer.

[0008] Another object of the invention is to provide a method for grooming nails, and more particularly, a method for grooming nails that have already been manicured with a nail implement in accordance with the invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention comprises a nail care implement comprised of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces wherein at least one of such surfaces is coated with a material that is suitable for treating or grooming nails.

[0010] The invention further comprises a packaged implement for grooming nails comprising an implement in the form of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces having nail grooming material affixed thereto, stored in a case in the form of a housing having one open end.

[0011] The invention further comprises a method for grooming nails comprising treating the nails with an implement in the form of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces containing material for grooming the nails.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1: depicts the nail care implement of the invention in the case.

[0013] FIG. 2: is an exploded view of the nail care implement and case depicted in FIG. 1.

[0014] FIG. 3: is a side plan view of the nail care implement.

[0015] FIG. 4: is a front plan view of the nail care implement.

[0016] FIG. 5: is a front plan view of the nail care implement in the case.

[0017] FIG. 6: illustrates use of the nail care implement in grooming the nails.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

I. The Nail Care Implement

[0018] A. Open Loop

[0019] The nail care implement 1 of the invention comprises a U shaped open loop 2 as best depicted in FIGS. 2 and 3. Preferably open loop is oblong 6 in shape so as to facilitate placing the fingers within the central portion 6A of the oblong 6 U shaped open loop 2 to perform the desired functions. Alternatively, if the user’s hand is very small four fingers may be inserted into U shaped open loop 2 to hold the implement 1 for use in performing the desired functions.

[0020] The U shaped open loop 2 has two arms 2A and 2B. If desired, both arms 2A and 2B may be the same length. Alternatively, one arm 2A may be shorter than arm 2B.

[0021] B. Thermoplastic Material

[0022] The U shaped open loop 2 has an inner surface 3. If desired, the inner surface 3 may be covered with a thermoplastic material 4 that facilitates gripping, although that is not essential. If desired, the brand or other indicia may be imprinted on the inner surface 3 of thermoplastic material 4.

[0023] If desired, thermoplastic material 4 may be ergonomically shaped to facilitate finger gripping. This is most advantageously achieved by molding thermoplastic material 4 in the form of waves 4A, 4B that mimic the depressions between fingers when they are held together. Waves 4A and 4B may be found on both inner surfaces 4C and 4D of open loop 2. This will enable the user to hold open loop 2 one way such that first surface 4E is used to groom nails. Then, if it is desired to use second surface 4F to groom nails, open loop 2 can be held such that second surface 4F is used to groom fingernails. In other words, the open loop 2 can be held upwardly or downwardly depending on the surface that is desired to be used in grooming nails.

[0024] Preferred is where U-shaped open loop 2 has inner surfaces 4 that are completely coated a thermoplastic material 4A around the entire surface of open loop 2, that coats entire inner surface and particularly facilitates gripping on the top and bottom. If desired thermoplastic material 4A may contain markings 4G in the form of slits, protrusions, or similar to further facilitate the user’s grip.

[0025] C. Top Surfaces

[0026] Open loop 2 has arms have a first and second top surfaces 7 and 9. First top surface is coated with a material 8 that is capable of providing nail treating properties. For
example, the material \(8\) may be an abrasive material of fine grain that is useful for filing nails or lightly abrading a nail surface, treating hang nails or rough nail edges.

[0027] U shaped open loop 2 has a second top surface 9. Second top surface 9 may also be treated or have affixed thereto a material 9A that is capable of being used to treat nail surfaces. For example, second top surface 9 may have affixed thereto a material 9A that is a thermostable polymeric material into which a treatment oil is impregnated (not shown), or it may be a chamois-like material that will improve shine when used to buff the nail surface, particularly a manicured nail surface. It is preferred that at least one of first or second top surfaces has affixed thereto a material that is useful for buffing nails to provide shine.

[0028] In the preferred nail implement 1 of the invention, the implement is used for grooming nails that have been polished. One top surface is used to smooth ragged nail edges, hang nails, and the like. The second top surface is used to buff the polished nail surface to renew shine.

[0029] Nail care implement 1 may be gripped in a variety of different ways as depicted in FIG. 6. Preferred is where the nail care implement 1 is used to groom and otherwise fix imperfections in manicured nails.

II. The Case

[0030] When not in use the nail care implement 1 is preferably stored in a case 10. Case is preferably in the form of a housing 11 that has one open end 12 such that implement 1 can easily be withdrawn from case 10 by gripping the lower U portion of open loop 2 with the fingers and pulling implement 1 to remove it from the case 10. However, it is possible that implement 1 may be stored in case 10 by sliding it in such that the ends 13 of open arms slightly protrude from open end 12. Case 10 is preferably of size and shape to encircle most of U shaped open loop 2 such that it fits snugly within case 10 when stored therein, but is easily extracted from case 10 when the user desires to remove it and use it for nail grooming purposes.

[0031] Preferably case 10 has beaded edge 14 around open end 12. Beaded edge 14 will facilitate easier insertion and removal of implement from case 10 and ensure that user doesn’t hurt fingertips on sharp edges.

[0032] Also, if desired, sides of case 10 have markings 15 that make it easier for the user to grip case 10 to hold it so that implement 1 can be more easily removed from case 10.

[0033] Both case 10 and implement are preferably made of a thermostable material that has sufficient flexibility such that it will not readily crack, but at the same time be strong enough to withstand the forces that are used in nail grooming.

III. The Method.

[0034] The invention also comprises a method for grooming nails. In a preferred embodiment the invention comprises a method for grooming nails that have been manicured, and is a way to extend the life of the manicure. The nail implement 1 of the invention is able to file away and groom rough edges of nails, hang nails, and other imperfections often seen in manicured nails. Additionally, one of top surfaces may be used for buffing manicured nails to revive shine. Shine is associated with a fresh manicure. The shine often disappears on polished nails within a few days after the manicure. The implement of the invention enables the user to groom manicured nails and revive shine on polished nails.

[0035] While the invention has been described in connection with the preferred embodiment, it is not intended to limit the scope of the invention to the particular form set forth but, on the contrary, it is intended to cover such alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A nail care implement comprised of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces wherein at least one of such surfaces is coated with a material that is suitable for treating or grooming nails.

2. The implement of claim 1 having two arms where one arm is longer than the other arm.

3. The implement of claim 1 wherein U shaped open loop has an inner surface.

4. The implement of claim 3 wherein inner surface of U shaped open loop is covered with a thermostable material.

5. The implement of claim 4 wherein thermostable material is ergonomically shaped to facilitate finger gripping.

6. The implement of claim 4 wherein thermostable material is ergonomically shaped in the form of waves.

7. The implement of claim 4 wherein thermostable material contains markings.

8. The implement of claim 1 wherein first top surface has an abrasive affixed thereto.

9. The implement of claim 1 wherein second top surface has a material for buffing nails affixed thereto.

10. The implement of claim 1 wherein U shaped open loop is in an oblong shape.

11. A packaged implement for grooming nails comprising an implement in the form of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces having nail grooming material affixed thereto, stored in a case in the form of a housing having one open end.

12. The packaged implement of claim 11 wherein the case is in the form of an oblong housing.

13. The packaged implement of claim 12 wherein the case has a beaded edge around open end.

14. The packaged implement of claim 11 wherein the first top surface of U shaped open loop contains a nail grooming material that is an abrasive for filing the nails.

15. The packaged implement of claim 11 wherein the second top surface of U shaped open loop contains a nail grooming material that is a buffing material for buffing the nails.

16. The packaged implement of claim 11 wherein the U shaped open loop and case are oblong.

17. A method for grooming nails comprising treating the nails with an implement in the form of a U shaped open loop having first and second top surfaces containing material for grooming the nails.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein first top surface has an abrasive material affixed thereto.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein second top surface has a buffing material affixed thereto.

20. The method of claim 17 wherein the implement is used to groom manicured nails.