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(54) **DECORATIVE CHARM**

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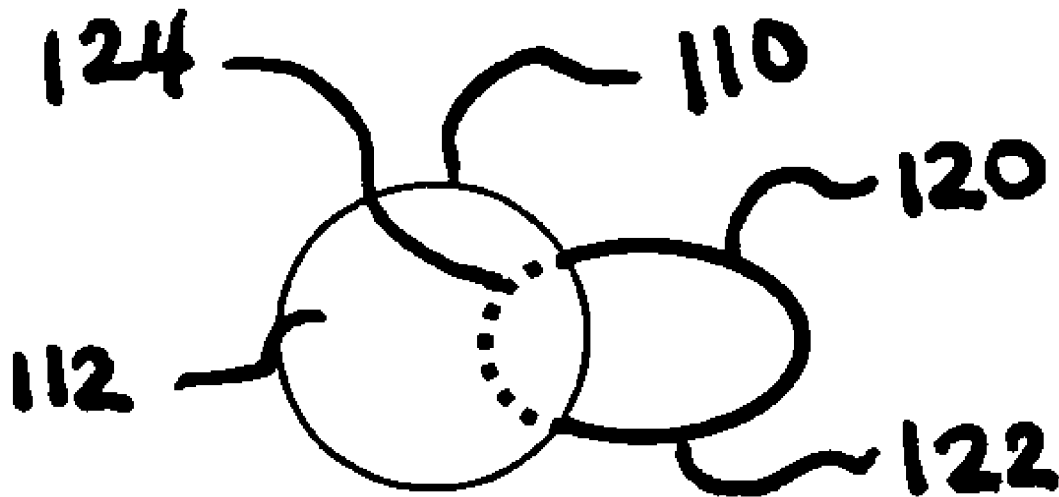
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A decorative charm attaches to a shoe, garment, or clothes accessory. A charm includes a base element having a bottom and a top; a hook mechanism having first and second hook elements attached to the bottom; and an attachment element formed of an elastic material. The attachment element can engage the first hook element, stretchably extend around a continuous portion of a shoe, garment, or clothes accessory, and thereafter engage the second hook element, all of which cooperatively secures the charm to the shoe, garment, or clothes accessory by firmly holding the continuous portion between the attachment element and the base element.



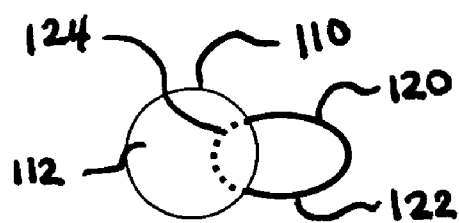


Figure 1

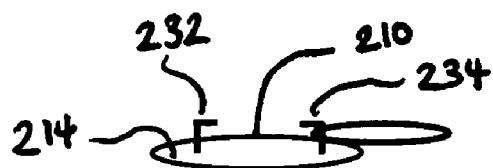


Figure 2

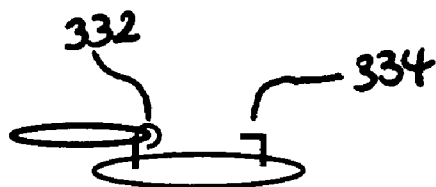


Figure 3

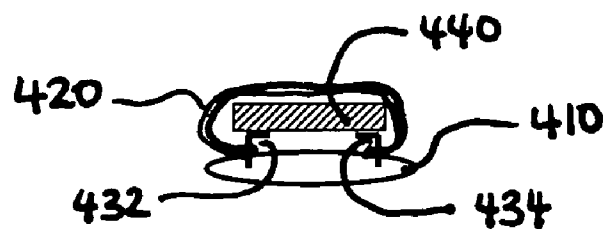


Figure 4

DECORATIVE CHARM

RELATED DOCUMENT

[0001] This disclosure is related to, incorporates by reference in its entirety, and claims the priority benefit of Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/465,554 entitled "Shoe Charm," filed on Mar. 21, 2011 by Kathleen Kyser Van Dyne.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to wearable accessories, and more particularly, to decorative charms for shoes, garments, and clothes accessories.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Wearable accessories can be decorative items worn on a person's body or clothes, and provide decorative utility. Clothes and shoes charms can be attached to a person's clothes or shoes in myriad ways. One way includes passing a shoe string through a continuous portion of a charm, thereby securing the shoe charm to a shoe. Another way includes passing a rigid portion of a charm through an aperture of a shoe, also resulting in the securing of the shoe charm to a shoe. Yet another way includes a pin and a catch, in which the pin is used to puncture a shoe or material with the catch being used to secure the material between the charm and the catch.

[0004] Deficiencies in these prior solutions include the following: parts of attachment mechanisms can break or be lost giving rise to expensive repair or replacement thereof; attachment elements can create discomfort; attachment elements can damage materials; and such elements can causing injury.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide a decorative charm.

[0006] It is another object of the invention to provide a decorative charm that can be worn on a person's shoe, garment, or clothes accessory.

[0007] In one exemplary embodiment, the present invention can be embodied in a decorative charm that can be attached to a shoe, garment, or clothes accessory, and can include the following: a base element having a bottom and a top; a hook mechanism, attached to the bottom of the base element, and having a first hook element and a second hook element; and an attachment element formed of an elastic material.

[0008] The attachment element can be adapted to engage the first hook element and then to stretchably extend around a continuous portion of a shoe, garment, or clothes accessory, and to thereafter engage the second hook element. This arrangement can result in the attachment element securing the charm to the shoe, garment, or clothes accessory by firmly holding the continuous portion between the attachment element and the base element.

[0009] These and other exemplary aspects of the present invention are described herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] The present invention is illustrated by way of example, and not in limitation, in the figures of the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0011] FIG. 1 illustrates a top-view perspective of an exemplary charm showing the top of a base element and an engagement element.

[0012] FIG. 2 illustrates an exemplary charm in which a bottom side is shown having first and second hook elements with an engagement element attached to one of the hook elements.

[0013] FIG. 3 illustrates an exemplary charm in which a bottom side is shown having, inter alia, a hook element with a rounded terminal portion.

[0014] FIG. 4 illustrates an exemplary charm with an engagement element secured to a continuous portion of a target via an engagement element engaged with first and second hook elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0015] The invention will now be described in more detail by way of example with reference to the embodiments shown in the accompanying figures. It should be kept in mind that the following described embodiments are only presented by way of example and should not be construed as limiting the inventive concept to any particular physical configuration, material, or order not expressly stated as "necessary."

[0016] In an exemplary embodiment, the present invention can be embodied in a decorative charm that can be attached to one of a shoe, a garment, and a clothes accessory, and can include the following: a base element, a hook mechanism, and an attachment element formed of an elastic material.

[0017] FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the present invention from a top-view perspective. As visible from this top-view, an exemplary charm can include a base element 110 and an attachment element 120. More specifically, the top 112 of base element 110 and a portion 122 of attachment element 120 can be seen from this perspective, while another portion 124 of attachment element 120 can be behind the base element.

[0018] FIG. 2 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the present invention from a raised, side perspective. As illustrated here, an exemplary base portion 210 can include a bottom 214 having attached thereto a hook mechanism including a first hook element 232 and a second hook element 234. Accordingly, an attachment element 220 can engage first 232 and second 234 hook element to secure the charm to a shoe, garment, or clothing accessory, which is more specifically illustrated in FIG. 4 (infra). As also illustrated, first 232 and second 234 hook elements can optionally be angled inwardly (i.e., towards each other) to reduce the risk of an engaged attachment element inadvertently detaching therefrom.

[0019] FIG. 3 illustrates a further exemplary aspect of the present invention also from a raised, side perspective, in which at least one of first 332 and second 334 hook elements can be rounded.

[0020] FIG. 4 provides another raised, side perspective of an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, in which an exemplary charm can be secured to a shoe, garment, or clothing accessory having a continuous portion 440. In operation, attachment element 420 can first be engaged with one of the first 432 and second 434 hook elements. Next, attachment element 420 can be stretched and extended around continuous portion 440. Lastly, attachment element 420 can be engaged with the other of the first 432 and second 434 hook elements. As illustrated, this can result in attachment element 420 securing the charm to a shoe, a garment, or a clothes

accessory by firmly holding continuous portion **440** between the attachment element and base element **410**.

[0021] According to an exemplary aspect of the present invention, a continuous portion **440** can include any portion that is continuous, and around which attachment element **420** would extend and contact, such as, for example and not in limitation, a strap, an eyelet defining portion, or a main body portion.

[0022] Referring back to FIG. 1, top **112** of base element **110** can be provided to be inherently decorative. As illustrated in FIG. 1, base element **110** can be provided with a rounded (or disk) shape. However, in an exemplary aspect of the present invention, base element **110** can be provided in any size and/or shape desired, such as rounded, square, rectangular, oblong, or any other symmetrical or asymmetrical shape. For example, base element **110** can be circular with a one-half or three-quarter inch diameter, or a square with one-half or three-quarter inch sides. Further, base element **110** can be provided with a flat, or substantially flat, top and/or bottom, or slightly concave or convex shape.

[0023] In another exemplary aspect, base element **110** (and hook elements **232**, **234**) can be formed from any desired material, such as any type of plastic, metal, wood, or glass. In still yet another exemplary aspect, a base element **110** can be provided with one or more decorative elements, such as gems, crystals, icons, emblems, etc. on its top **112** to provide decorative utility.

[0024] Referring back to FIG. 2, it should be noted that, as illustrated, first and second hook elements **232**, **234** can be affixed to the bottom **214** of base element **210**. However, one or both elements **232**, **234** can also be formed, and therefore be integral, with base element **210**. Further, like base element **210**, hook elements **232**, **234** can be formed of any type of material desired, such as any type of plastic, metal, wood, or glass. Further, hook elements **232**, **234** can be provided in any size, shape and/or configuration desired insofar as such provisioning functionally allows the secure engagement of attachment element **220** in a manner that fixes the charm as intended. Thus, in addition to an actual hook, any other form of structure capable of securely engaging attachment element **220** can be utilized, such as a clamp, VELCRO, a snap, a button, etc., for example and not in limitation.

[0025] In still yet a further exemplary aspect of the present invention, attachment element **220** can be elastic or inelastic. In one exemplary embodiment, attachment element **220** can be an elastic band, such as for example and not in limitation, rubber bands utilized in conjunction with braces for teeth.

[0026] In another exemplary aspect of the present invention, a charm as described herein may be utilized in conjunction with various types of garments, such as shirts, pants, dresses, etc. Further, a charm may be utilized with clothes accessories in a supplemental manner, such as with a purse,

bag, belt, watch, bracelet, necklace, ear ring, etc. To make clear, the present invention may provide decorative utility when utilized with other items in addition to a shoe or shoes. In another exemplary aspect, the present may also be attached to a person's body, such as to a user's wrist, ankle, hair, ear, etc.

[0027] It will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that the manner of making and using the claimed invention has been adequately disclosed in the above-written description of the exemplary embodiments and aspects. It should be understood, however, that the invention is not necessarily limited to the specific embodiments, aspects, arrangement, and components shown and described above, but may be susceptible to numerous variations within the scope of the invention. Moreover, particular exemplary features described herein in conjunction with specific embodiments and/or aspects of the present invention are to be construed as applicable to any embodiment described within, enabled hereby, or apparent herefrom. Thus, the specification and drawings are to be regarded in a broad, illustrative, and enabling, rather than a restrictive, sense.

[0028] Further, it will be understood that the above description of the embodiments of the present invention are susceptible to various modifications, changes, and adaptations, and the same are intended to be comprehended within the meaning and range of equivalents of the appended claims.

Therefore, I claim:

1. A decorative charm for attachment to one of a shoe, a garment, and a clothes accessory, comprising:
 - a base element having a top and a bottom;
 - a hook mechanism, attached to the bottom of said base element, and having a first hook element and a second hook element; and
 - an attachment element formed of an elastic material;
 - wherein said attachment element is adapted to engage the first hook element, to stretchably extend around a continuous portion of the one of a shoe, a garment, and a clothes accessory, and to thereafter engage the second hook element, such that said attachment element secures the charm to the one of a shoe, a garment, and a clothes accessory by firmly holding the portion between said attachment element and said base element.
2. The charm of claim 1, wherein said base element includes at least one decorative element attached to the top so as to be visually exposed.
3. The charm of claim 1, where at least one of the first hook element and the second hook element is angled inwardly.
4. The charm of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first hook element and the second hook element is rounded.
5. The charm of claim 1, wherein said base element has a concave shape.

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