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R. W. GREEN

3,081,480

DISPOSABLE APPLICATOR

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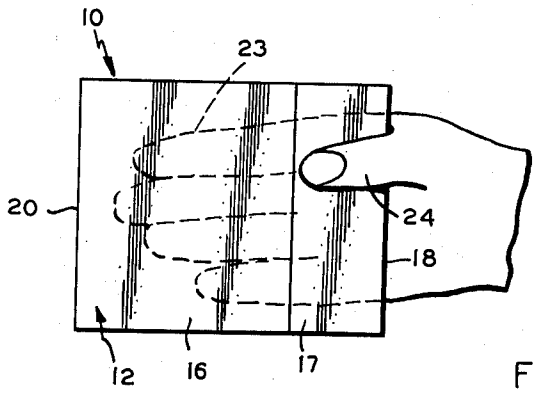


FIG.1

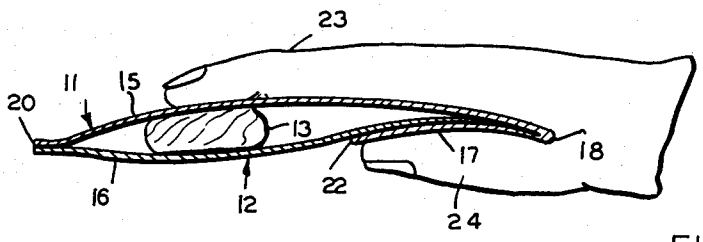


FIG.2

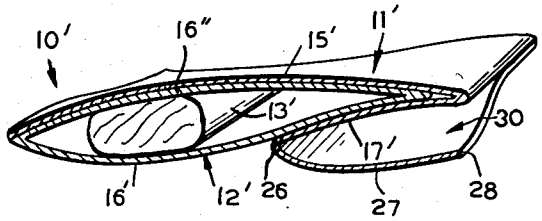


FIG.3

INVENTOR.
RICHARD W. GREEN
BY
Walter D. Ames
ATTORNEY

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DISPOSABLE APPLICATOR

Richard W. Green, 517 E. 77th St., New York, N.Y.

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This invention relates to an article of manufacture used to apply a composition to a surface. More particularly, the invention concerns a disposable applicator which contains its own supply of polish and is used to apply that polish to a shoe or the like.

While several devices are presently known which are utilized in the application of shoe polish to a shoe, such devices are often in the form of a glove or mitt in which either the four fingers, or the four fingers and thumb of one hand of the user are inserted. Such a glove or mitt structure is necessary in order that the applicator be utilizable without bringing any part of the hand into contact with the polish or other composition being applied, those fingers within the glove being protected from such contact. The additional structural elements which must be incorporated into the applicator in order to form such a mitt necessarily add to the cost of manufacture of the applicator. While such a slight increase in cost might not prove an important factor in other kinds of articles, even a slight differential in cost where the article is to be disposed of after one use may serve to remove it from a price range in which it can be used daily to a range in which it is only suitable for use as a specialty item in hotels and the like.

It is a primary object of the present invention to provide a disposable applicator for shoe polish and the like which contains its own supply of polish and is of such simple construction and low manufacturing cost as to render it uniquely adaptable to daily, throw-away usage.

It is another object of the present invention to provide such a disposable applicator which is adapted to be grasped between the thumb and fingers of one hand in a natural and convenient manner.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide such a disposable applicator which, when so grasped, completely protects the hand of the user from any contact with the polish contained within the applicator or applied to a shoe.

A disposable applicator according to this invention is composed of a flexible envelope which encloses a quantity of polishing composition or like material therewithin. The envelope is comprised of two opposed sheet members joined along their edges, one of the members being substantially impervious to the passage of polish and the other member being pervious to the passage of polish through a portion thereof. Another portion toward one side of the other member is impervious to the passage of polish.

In use, the applicator is grasped between the thumb and fingers of one hand of the user, the fingers being placed against the impervious member and the thumb being located at the impervious portion of the other member. This leaves the pervious portion of the other member free from contact with the hand of the user, so that polish within the envelope can pass freely from the applicator under pressure through the pervious portion of the other sheet member onto the outer surface of a shoe without soiling the user's hand.

It will be seen that such a structure requires no mitt to keep the applicator in contact with the hand during use; the gripping action between the opposed thumb and fingers of the user easily permits retention of the applicator by one hand. Moreover, the thumb can further function to properly position the polish at the pervious portion of the member should the polish be displaced to a position against the impervious portion of that member.

Another advantage of an applicator having a structure according to the present invention is that there is no part of the applicator which at any time is in contact with the pervious portion and which will be soiled by accidental discharge of polish through the pervious portion. While such accidental discharge is not desirable in any case, in the present invention it will not be disadvantageous to the extent that it ruins the applicator, as is the case where a buffing pad overlies the pervious portion. Thus ordinary shoe polish can be used in the present applicator, and there is no absolute need for specially constructed pellets of polish which are resistant to initial fracture.

These and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become more apparent when taken in connection with the following detailed description of two embodiments of the invention and the illustrations thereof in the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a bottom plan view of an applicator embodying the invention;

FIG. 2 is a vertical sectional view of the embodiment of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view, in vertical section, of a further embodiment of the invention.

Referring now to the drawings, and in particular to FIGS. 1 and 2 thereof, an applicator indicated generally by reference numeral **10** is illustrated. The applicator is in the form of a flexible envelope that has two opposed sheet members **11** and **12** joined together to form the continuous envelope. Enclosed within the applicator is a quantity of polish or other composition **13** (FIG. 2), which is to be forced therefrom.

In the embodiment best seen in FIG. 2, upper sheet member **11** is composed of a continuous, flexible ply **15**. Lower sheet member **12** is composed in part of a continuous, flexible ply **16** and in part of a continuing portion **17** of the flexible ply **15** that forms upper sheet member **11**. Ply **15** is folded at **18** and bent back on itself to overlie a portion of the ply **16**. Plies **15** and **16** are joined at their forward end **20** and also at contiguous surfaces of ply **16** and portion **17** toward the rear end **18** of the applicator **10**. Such joining may be accomplished by heat sealing, stitching or other conventional means according to the material of which the plies are composed.

The flexible ply **15** is formed from material which is substantially impervious to the passage of polish **13** therethrough. This ply may be made of heat-sealable material, such as cellophane, polyethylene, polyvinyl resin and the like, or may be a closely woven textile fabric. Ply **16** is pervious to the passage of polish **13** therethrough. It may be formed from heat-sealable material such as nonwoven textile fabric, or from loosely woven textile fibers which permit the passage of viscous material through their interstices under moderate pressure, or from other suitable material.

It will be apparent that, because upper member **11** is formed solely from the ply **15**, that upper member will be substantially impervious to passage of the viscous composition **13**. Also, because lower member **12** is formed from the ply **16** and the continuing portion **17**, lower member **12** will be substantially impervious to the passage of composition **13** therethrough over that part of lower member **12** where continuing portion **17** overlies ply **16**. Over that longitudinal part of lower member **12** where lower member **12** is composed only of the ply **16**, i.e., from end **22** of continuing portion **17** to front end **20** of the applicator **10**, lower member **12** is pervious to the composition **13**. In the illustrated, preferred embodiment, the pervious part of lower member **12** is a major part of that member.

As seen in FIGS. 1 and 2, applicator **10** is grasped so

that fingers 23 of the hand of the user rest against impervious upper member 11 and the thumb 24 rests against that portion of lower member 12 between locations 22 and 18, where lower member 12 is also polish-impervious. All parts of the user's hand are, therefore, protected from contact with the polish.

Another embodiment of the invention is illustrated in FIG. 3, in which primed reference numerals are used to identify parts corresponding to those indicated by unprimed reference numerals in FIGS. 1 and 2. In applicator 10', composition 13' is enclosed between an upper member 11' and a lower member 12'. Impervious ply 15' has a continuing portion 17', which overlies a portion of pervious ply 16' in the same manner as in the embodiment of FIGS. 1 and 2.

In the embodiment of FIG. 3, however, the pervious sheet material from which ply 16' is formed completely encloses the composition 13', an upper pervious sheet 16'' overlying the pressed bar of composition 13' and forming a bag with the pervious sheet or ply 16'. Plies 16'' and 15' are fixed to each other at convenient locations, preferably along their contiguous surfaces. Applicator 10' is grasped in the same manner as applicator 10.

Also illustrated in the embodiment of the invention of FIG. 3 is a pocket 30, which accommodates the thumb 24 of the user. Pocket 30 consists of continuing portion 17', which forms an inner pocket wall, and sheet portion 27, which forms an outer pocket wall. As seen in this figure, outer pocket wall 27 may be integral with continuing portion 17' and be folded back upon continuing portion 17' as at 26. Since outer pocket wall 27 at its sides is fixed to continuing portion 17', the user's thumb is inserted into the pocket 30 between the trailing edge 28 of outer pocket wall 27 and that rearward edge of the applicator 10' corresponding to edge 18 of applicator 10.

Polish is forced from either applicator by the same method. After the applicator has been grasped as illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, that longitudinal part of lower sheet member 12 or 12' which is formed from a single, pervious ply is placed against the surface to be polished. Pressure is exerted by the fingers of the user and polish is forced through the pervious ply onto the surface of a shoe or the like. Any polish within the bag formed by

upper member 11 or 11' and lower member 12 or 12', respectively, which spreads toward the rear of the applicator will not come into contact with the thumb of the user, due to the continuing portion 17, or continuing portion 17' and sheet portion 27, which are all formed from impervious material.

While a preferred embodiment of the invention has been described in two forms hereinbefore and illustrated in the accompanying drawings, it will be apparent that the novel features of the invention may be embodied in still further forms. It is desired, therefore, that the invention be limited only by the scope of the following appended claim.

I claim:

A disposable applicator for applying a composition to a surface, comprising a mass of polish, an envelope enclosing said mass and in the form of two opposed plies of polish-pervious material integral at their common edges, and a continuous sheet of polish-impervious material overlying one of said two opposed plies and extending over said one ply to one of said common edges, said sheet then extending around said one common edge and into contiguous adhering relation with a minor portion of the other of said opposed plies, said impervious member then being doubled back on itself to form an outer pocket wall which together with that part of said impervious sheet in said contiguous adhering relation encloses a thumb-receiving pocket, said outer pocket wall being joined along at least one of its edges to said impervious sheet part to maintain said pocket.

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