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(54) **JAW HAIR CLIP FOR FIRMLY HOLDING HAIR**

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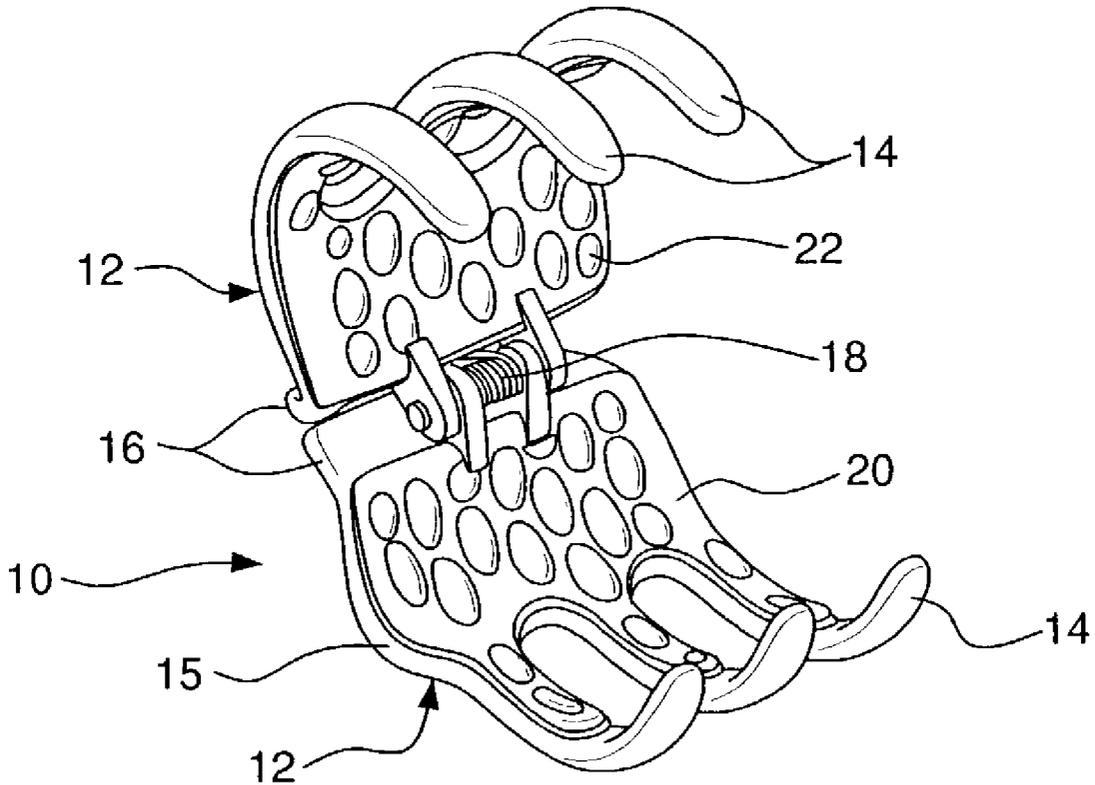
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a hair jaw clip having two jaws attached by a spring hinge. The jaws have teeth and opening handles. Rubber or soft plastic beading is formed on at least a portion of the jaws to soften the pressure applied to the hair, while minimizing slippage.

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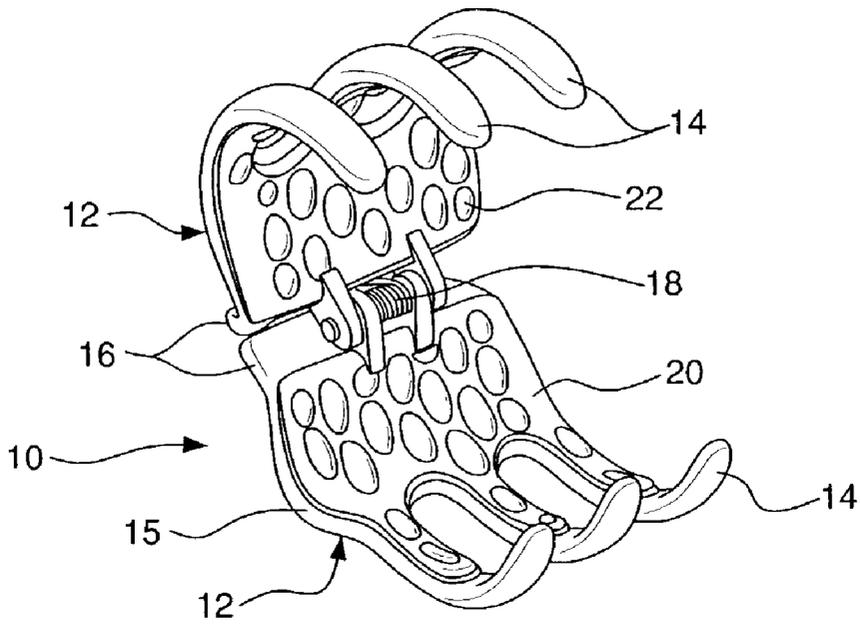


FIG. 1

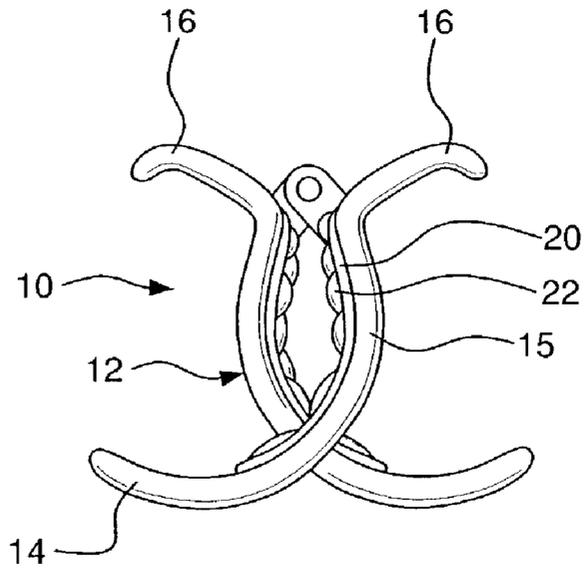


FIG. 2

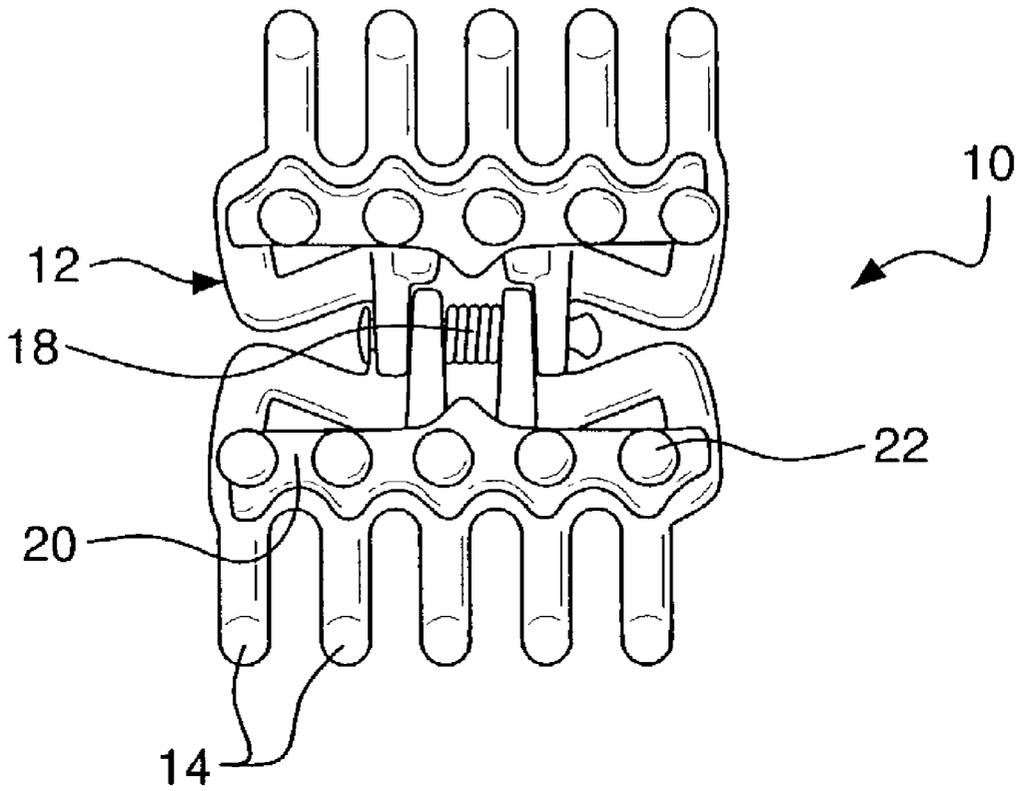


FIG. 3

JAW HAIR CLIP FOR FIRMLY HOLDING HAIR

FIELD OF INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates to improvements in hair clips and, more particularly, to an improved hair clip for firmly holding and securing hair while preventing damage to the hair being held.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

[0002] Hair clips are generally used for holding hair in particular positions. Examples of different hair clips can be found in U.S. Pat. Nos. 3,250,282 and Des. 325,047 and GB Pat. No. 161,262. The '282 patent's hair clip is a generally V shaped clip that opens by pressing the open ends of the V together. A fulcrum close to the open portion of the V opens the clip for receiving its wearer's hair. The patent shows parallel rigid serrations that contact the hair. The '047 patent shows a hair clip for holding a larger portion of its wearer's hair due to its larger mouth. The '262 patent shows a traditional barrette with a strip of beaded rubber on its hair contact face to prevent hair slippage through the barrette. The '262 patent does not show the rubber bead on the aluminum crosspiece which also contacts the hair.

[0003] The hair clips described above do not include any means for preventing damage to hair held between the jaws of what is traditionally known as a "jaw clip". A jaw clip type hair accessory include two hingedly attached jaws with interleaving teeth or fingers. Jaw clips are useful for easily securing large quantities of hair. In such devices, hair can be damaged when it becomes pinned or trapped between the two jaws of the teeth, which are typically made of hard plastic or metal. Such damage may, for example, be in the form of hair deformation.

[0004] Furthermore, conventional jaw clips typically include hair contact surfaces which are smooth, thus having low coefficients of friction. As a result, these types of clips are prone to hair slipping out from between the clip's jaws during attachment or while in use.

[0005] A need, therefore, exists for a hair clip capable of firmly holding hair between scissoring jaws while preventing damage thereto.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a hair jaw clip having teeth, a spring, and opening jaws with handles. The jaws are hingedly attached to one another. The hair clip is designed to firmly holds hair while preventing damage to the hair. The jaw clip teeth are separated for receiving the hair by pressing the handles in a scissoring manner. Once the hair is within the open teeth, the handles are released and the spring presses the opposing teeth toward each other. This holds the hair in place. Rubber or soft plastic beading within the jaws softens the pressure applied by the generally hard plastic clip, while gripping the hair on its high friction surface.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there is shown in the drawings a form which is presently preferred; it being understood, however, that this invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and methodologies shown.

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a hair clip in an open position in accordance with the present invention.

[0009] FIG. 2 is a side view of a hair clip in a closed position in accordance with the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 3 is a front view of a hair clip in an open position in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] Referring now to the Figures, wherein like numerals correspond to like elements throughout the several views, a hair clip **10** according to the present invention is shown. The clip **10** includes two jaws **12** with teeth **14**, bodies **15**, and handles **16**. The jaws are hingedly attached to one another at a point, H, between the teeth **14** and the handles **16**. A spring **18** is located between the jaws **12**. The spring **18** biases the teeth towards each other. In the illustrated embodiment, the spring **18** is a torsion spring. However, other springs or devices that force together the teeth would be feasible in the present invention as would be understood by those skilled in the art.

[0012] The hair clip **10** is easy to open and close to secure hair. In order to open the jaws, sufficient pressure is applied to the handles **16** to overcome the spring force and separate the teeth **14**. FIG. 2 shows the clip in its closed position. FIGS. 1 and 3 show the clip in its open position. When open, the clip **10** is positioned with the jaws disposed along side the hair to be clipped. The handles **16** are then released, allowing the spring to force the teeth toward each other, thereby securing the hair between the jaws **12**.

[0013] In order to minimize damage to the hair and to decrease slippage, a rubber or synthetic material **20** is disposed on the bodies **15** and/or on the teeth **14**. This material has a higher coefficient of friction than the teeth themselves. This allows the material to grip the hair, and hold it more effectively than the plastic or metal teeth themselves.

[0014] Alternate embodiments may include a coating located on either the teeth, the bodies or both. While rubber is the preferred material for use with this invention, other materials can be used that are softer than the underlying teeth and jaw.

[0015] The jaws and teeth are preferably made from metal or hard plastic strong enough to hold hair in place. A coating, sheet, or sleeve made from rubber, natural or synthetic, or similar soft flexible material is preferably coated on the interior of the jaw and/or teeth. The rubber layer, in addition to increasing the amount of friction also provides a barrier between hair and the clip's members. Such an arrangement is easier on the hair in that at least a portion of the compressive force and deformation caused thereby is exerted on the coating and not the hair.

[0016] As shown in the figures, the frictions covering **20** preferably includes a plurality of raised pads **22**. The raised pads **22** provide smooth "hills" and "valleys" in which the hair interweaves, thereby further increasing the ability of the hair clip to inhibit slippage. In one embodiment of the invention the raised pads **22** located on the jaws are off-set from one another such that raised pads **22** on one jaw lie adjacent to the raised pads **22** on the other jaw when the jaw clips are closed.

[0017] Although embodiments of the invention have been described in detail, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited thereto, and that various changes can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention, which is defined by the attached claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A hair clip comprising:
two jaws, each jaw having a handle, a body, and teeth, the jaws being hingedly attached to one another;
a spring connected to each of the jaws, the spring biasing the teeth of each jaw together; and
means on at least one of the jaws for firmly holding hair between the jaws.
2. A hair clip as in claim 1 wherein the means for firmly holding hair between the jaws is a resilient material disposed along at least a portion of an inner surface of one of the jaws.
3. A hair clip as in claim 2 wherein the resilient material is synthetic rubber.
4. A hair clip as in claim 2 wherein the resilient material is natural rubber.
5. A hair clip as in claim 1 wherein the means for firmly holding hair between the jaws is a rubber sleeve disposed over at least a portion of one of the jaws.

6. The hair clip of claim 1 wherein the spring is a torsion spring.

7. A hair clip as in claim 1 wherein the means for firmly holding hair between the jaws is a rubber coating on the teeth portions of the jaws.

8. A hair clip as in claim 1 wherein the means for firmly holding hair between the jaws is a rubber coating on the body portions of the jaws.

9. A hair clip as in claim 1 wherein the means for firmly holding hair between the jaws is a rubber coating on the jaws which includes a plurality of raised pads.

10. A hair clip as in claim 9 wherein the raised pads on one jaw are positioned to be located adjacent to raised pads on the other jaw when the jaws are closed.

11. A hair clip comprising:

two jaws, each jaw having a handle, a body, and teeth, the jaws being hingedly attached to one another;

a spring connected to each of the jaws, the spring biasing the teeth of each jaw together; and a rubber coating formed on at least a portion of the jaws, the rubber coating including a plurality of raised pads.

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