

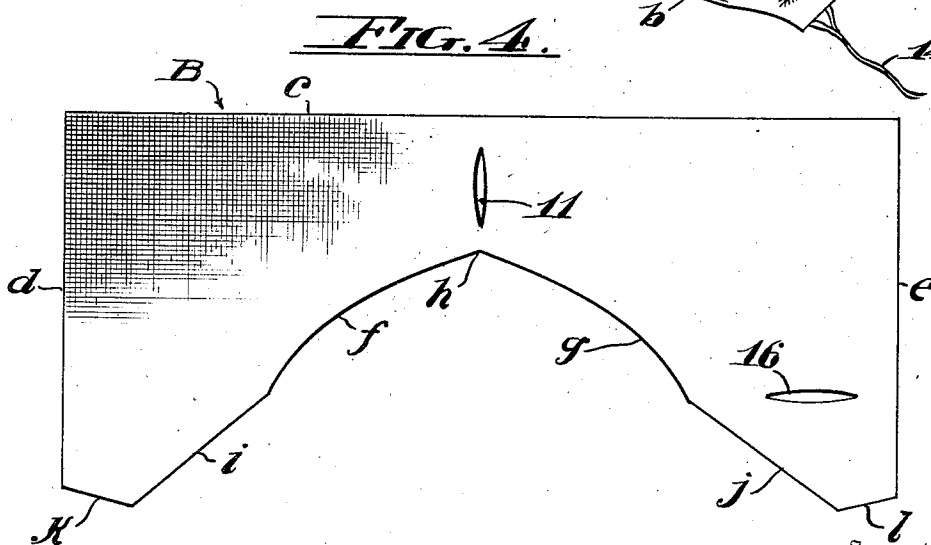
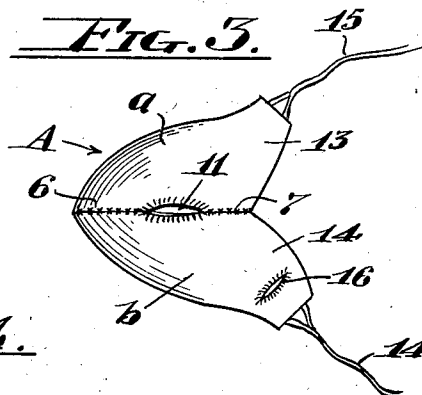
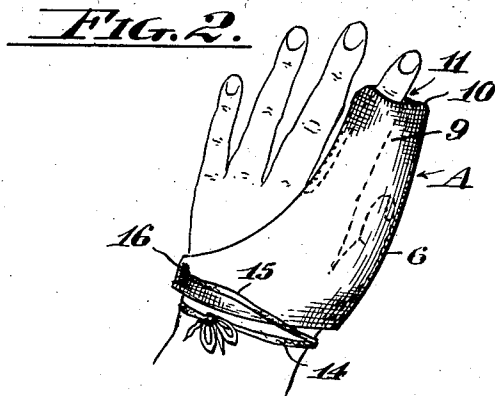
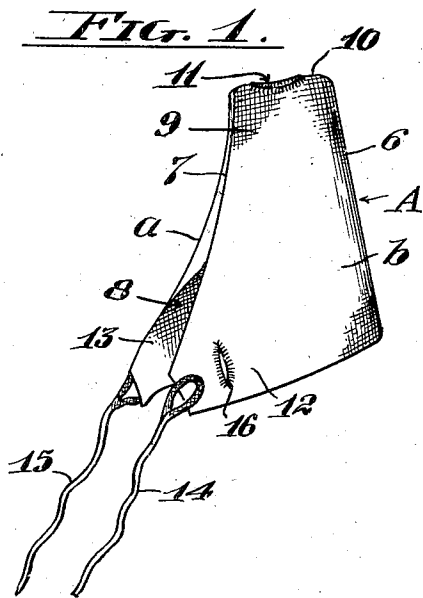
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THUMB GUARD

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## UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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## THUMB GUARD

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2 Claims. (Cl. 128—133)

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This invention relates to a thumb guard and has as its primary object the provision of a thumb guard which is applicable for use on the hands of infants to prevent thumb sucking.

A particular object of the invention is to provide a construction whereby the thumb may be completely shielded without being tightly held by a protective covering as commonly employed in finger stalls and in a fashion to permit freedom of movement of the thumb relative to the rest of the hand.

Another object is to provide a construction in the thumb guard whereby it may be readily applied and removed and when applied be securely held in place.

A further object is to provide a thumb guard structure which may be readily and economically fabricated and which is especially adapted to be formed of sheet fabric of a character such as to discourage a child from placing the thumb guard in its mouth.

With the foregoing objects in view, together with such other objects and advantages as may subsequently appear, the invention resides in the parts and in the combination, construction and arrangement of parts hereinafter described and claimed, and illustrated by way of example in the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the thumb guard showing it unapplied;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view showing the manner of applying the thumb guard;

Fig. 3 is an end view of the thumb guard showing it in an open position;

Fig. 4 is a plan view of a blank of sheet material as formed preliminary to its being fabricated into the thumb guard formation.

Referring to the drawing more specifically A indicates generally the guard proper which comprises side wall portions *a* and *b* joined throughout their lengths along a contiguous edge thereof as indicated at 6 and joined along the other contiguous edge as indicated at 7 from the outer end thereof to a point about mid-way of the length thereof, thus forming a longitudinal slit 8 opening to the inner end of the stall and providing a tubular element 9 constituting the outer end portion of the guard. The outer end of the tubular element 9 is partially closed as indicated at 10 and is provided with an opening 11 through which the tip portion of the forefinger is adapted to extend when the guard is applied. The inner end portions of the side walls *a* and *b* are extended laterally to provide flaps 12 and 13 separated by the slit 8 which flaps are adapted to

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encompass the base portion of the hand opposite the thumb and are fitted with suitable means of attachment whereby the inner end portion of the guard may be secured around the wearer's wrist. This fastening means is here shown as comprising tie strings 14 and 15 which are attached respectively to the outer portions of the flaps 12 and 13. The flap 12 is provided with an opening 16 through which the tie string 15 may be passed in applying the guard. The recited formation of the guard affords an envelope in which the inner portion of the index finger and the entire thumb may be collectively encompassed with the thumb occupying a space within the guard in which it may have freedom of movement independent of the guard and yet be shielded thereby.

In constructing the guard a blank B of sheet material is employed formed substantially as shown in Fig. 4; the blank being preferably formed of canvas or similar fabric material which is distasteful.

The blank B as here shown is formed with a straight side edge *c* and straight end edges *d* and *e* with a cut-away portion on the edge thereof opposite the edge *c* contoured to provide outwardly curved edge portions *f* and *g* leading from a point *h* at the mid-length of the blank, which curved portions terminate in diverging straight edge portions *i* and *j* which terminate in edge portions *k* and *l* leading to the end edges *d* and *e*. The blank thus formed is foldable mid-way of its end edges *d* and *e* opposite the point *h*. The overlying portions of the edge *c* are joined together as are the then overlying curved edges *f* and *g*. The opening 11 is formed to extend along the fold line and the opening 16 is formed in the portion bounded by the edges *e*, *j* and *l*.

In the application of the invention the guard is positioned to encompass the thumb and the forefinger of the hand with the tip portion of the forefinger projecting through the opening 11 whereupon the flaps 12 and 13 are fastened together around the wrist by the tie strings 14 and 15 as shown in Fig. 2 or in any other suitable fashion. When the guard is thus applied the thumb is completely covered by the guard yet is not tightly held thereby and is free for movement within the guard relative to the rest of the hand. The tip of the index finger in protruding through the end of the guard is unencumbered and accordingly is subject to use; the guard being sufficiently flexible to permit the tip of the forefinger being employed in conjunction with the thumb in picking up and holding small articles.

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This provision for free movement of the thumb is due to the fact that the thumb enclosing envelope is flexible, held at its outer end on the forefinger and at its inner end on the wrist, increases in width toward its inner end and is of such width as to avoid binding and holding of the thumb while completely enclosing the thumb. Manifestly the use of the guard will effectively prevent sucking of the thumb encased therein.

While I have shown and described a specific embodiment of my invention, I do not limit myself to the exact details of construction set forth, and the invention embraces such changes, modifications and equivalents of the parts and their formation and arrangement as come within the purview of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A thumb guard comprising a flexible fabric forefinger and thumb embracing envelope having a slit defining opposed flaps at its inner end for overlying the opposite sides of the hand, said envelope increasing in width toward its inner end, and means for connecting said flaps to fasten the guard on the hand with the envelope held

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on the forefinger and the thumb completely enclosed by and subject to movement relative to the envelope.

2. A thumb guard comprising a flexible fabric forefinger and thumb embracing envelope having a slit defining opposed flaps at its inner end for overlying the opposite sides of the hand, and means for connecting said flaps to fasten the envelope on the hand; the outer end of said envelope being formed with a finger tip receiving opening so that the envelope is supported at one end on the forefinger and at the other end where fastened to the hand, said envelope increasing in width toward its inner end and being of such size as to permit movement of the thumb relative thereto while enclosed therein.

ESTELLA PALUTZKE.

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