A decorative Velcro strap enables a dual purpose usage to secure both mittens and socks on infant boys and girls from loss or removal. A dual layer, fabric overlay, Velcro strap loops around and encircles the infant's mitten at the wrist or its sock at the ankle. The wrist or ankle-facing inside layer of the Velcro strap consist of tiny hooks, which adhere to the mitten or sock holding it in place. The ambient-facing outside layer is a decorative fabric of various colors and designs that directly overlies and is sewn onto the ankle-facing Velcro layer. A length of the opposing Velcro strip of hairier loops overlies and is sewn onto one end of the fabric layer. A decorative patch overlies and is sewn onto the other end of the fabric layer. The strap is secured around the mitten or sock by connecting the two opposing Velcro ends together.
BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

1. Field of Invention

The present invention relates to a dual purpose decorative mitten and sock lock Velcro strap designed to keep an infant’s hand covering, such as mittens or gloves, and foot covering, such as socks or booties, securely in place. The strap is made with a wrist or ankle-facing Velcro lining that gently adheres to the sock or mitten, and encircles the wrist or ankle of an infant, thereby preventing the wearer from losing or pulling off the mitten or sock. The outside ambient-facing layer consists of a decorative Velcro strap which adjusts to the proper size of the baby’s wrist or ankle. The infant mitten and sock lock strap disclosed in this invention is a simple and effective way to secure an infant’s mittens and socks in place. While the invention is generally intended for infants and small children, the design can be readily adapted for larger sizes and various applications, including adults with similar needs.

2. Description of Prior Art

Hand coverings are commonly used as preventative measures to assist in stopping unwanted infant behavior such as scratching and thumb sucking. It is important for infants to wear mittens or socks in order to maintain body temperature, as hands and feet are one of the ways through which heat escapes the body. Babies have a knack for pulling off their mittens and kicking the socks off their warm feet. Additionally, infants and small children simply lose their mittens or socks when the coverings slip off during regular daily activities. The mitten and sock lock design of this invention secures any sock to an infant’s feet or any mitten to an infant’s hand to prevent loss.

The prior art contains many innovations for improved mittens and footwear, ornamental and cosmetic gloves, integral mittens and garments, attaching devices for securing mittens and gloves, and shoe and sock anchoring designs. These inventions range in application from infants to adults, and none of them teach a dual use for securing both hand and foot coverings. As described below, the prior art differs from the present invention which is a more functional, simple, effective way of utilizing a single design having a dual purpose to lock or secure both mittens and socks in place, preferably for infants up to 3 years old. The prior art falls into two categories as discussed below.

The following prior art teaches new designs for mittens, socks, booties or modification of existing footwear for use with separate supporters attached to the wearer’s clothing. Unlike the present invention, these patents teach either a hand or foot covering or a means to secure such, but not both.

Kimm, U.S. Pat. No. 163,209, relates to new and improved articles of manufacture of clothing, such as socks, leggings, mittens and similar articles of apparel for both children and adults. The object of the invention is to produce such articles by combining several properties of elasticity, softness, warmth and imperviousness to weather. The apparel, such as a sock, is composed of two thicknesses of knitted plush fabric, both having a plain knitted surface and a plush knitted surface. The plain knitted surfaces are placed face to face.

Decker, U.S. Pat. No. 1,119,930, teaches a stocking having stitched on the outside of the stocking leg a vertically arranged continuous piece of fabric material folded upon itself into a projecting loop or loops which is adapted to receive within it the button of a separate hose supporter. The disadvantage of this invention is that it requires loops of material to be sewn onto the stocking, and the use of a separate hose supporter attached to the wearer’s clothes to retain the stocking.

Derritt, U.S. Pat. No. 1,256,444, teaches a combination sock and garment supporter comprising a triangular shaped material attached to a sock. The said material disposed with two of its corners uppermost is attached to a limb encircling strap at a point in its length, and secured to the projecting extremity of the triangular shaped material. The third apex of the triangular material is attached to the sock. The strap is secured about the limb of the user using a hook and eye arrangement. The disadvantage of this invention is that the supporting strap or garter must be an integral part of the sock, thus requiring specially modified socks.

Christy, U.S. Pat. No. 1,361,156, discloses a device which is attached to both the garment sleeve and to the mitten. The device comprises an adjustable wrist band which may be used to tighten the wrist portion of the mitten around the wrist of the child. A connecting strap is secured to the wrist band by means of a pin and fastened to the inside arm of the garment coat sleeve by means of a second pin. The disadvantage of this invention is the need for use with long sleeve garments, requiring positioning of the connectors for a good fit and the undesirable use of safety pins.

Nestler, U.S. Pat. No. 1,806,492, describes an invention that relates to a process for forming a number of garter attachment tabs at predetermined spaced intervals around a stocking top. These tabs extend above the top of the welt of the stocking, and are formed as an integral part of the stocking by interknitting the tabs with the welt of the stocking to which the garter grips are attached to the stocking. The disadvantage of this invention is that it requires tabs of material to be sewn onto the stocking, and depends upon the use of separate garter supporters attached to the wearer to hold up the stocking.

Traenkle, U.S. Pat. No. 4,055,858, describes a within-the-shoe sock having a removable retaining device that maintains an anklet sock in position on the foot of the
wearer. A specific object of the invention is the sock having a detachable retaining device so that the retaining devices may be easily interchanged or replaced on the sock. This invention comprises a design for a specific ankle type sock constructed with a retaining device used to keep the sock from falling down inside the shoe, as opposed to securing a sock or bootie on the wearer's feet or a mitten on the hand.


[0016] Haas-Laursen, U.S. Pat. No. 6,247,183 B1, relates to infant footwear that attaches to clothing, thus preventing it from falling off a baby's foot and becoming lost. A piece of material is one of several ways to secure the footwear as described in the invention. This disadvantage of this invention is that it requires modification of both the infant's footwear and clothing.

[0017] Bardes, U.S. Pat. No. 6,393,619, teaches a strap that encircles an ankle of a child, a quick disconnect buckle that is affixed to, and maintains the strap around the ankle, and a leash that depends from the strap and engages a foot covering, worn by the child so as to prevent loss of the foot covering. The leash is an endless loop that extends through the foot covering and then extends back through itself, and in so doing, becomes self-fastened to the foot covering. This invention while useful for preventing loss of shoes, it is not practical for retaining an infant's or child's mitten or sock.

[0018] Kimm, U.S. Pat. No. D593,278 S, teaches an ornamental design for baby mittens and not how to secure mittens or socks on an infant's hand or feet.

[0019] Gesser et al., U.S. Pat. No. D634925 S teaches an ornamental design for a sock with attached ear pulls. This invention has the disadvantage of requiring specially designed footwear or modification of existing footwear with ear pulls, and attention to pulling the sock up to keep it from falling off.

[0020] Kang, US Pat. 2011/0107497 A1 relates to protective mitts or hand coverings for infants and young children's hands, more specifically, to padded hand coverings or mitts designed to prevent the child from scratching himself while learning to develop motor skills. It is essentially a glove consisting of an upper and lower panel formed of flexible material joined together to form a sleeve and shaped to slide over the baby's hand leaving the ends of the fingers and thumb exposed. This invention is a cumbersome glove which must be custom made to fit each infant's hand.

[0021] The next group of patents teaches hand coverings which are an integral part of a piece of garment containing connecting sleeves which terminate in a mitten or glove. These inventions have limited application, are not suitable for warm climates and expensive to manufacture. They differ from the mitten and sock lock of the present invention which is not an article of clothing, and is not permanently attached to or an integral part of the wearer's apparel. Unlike the present invention, the following prior art does not teach how to secure foot coverings on an infant's feet.

[0022] Bradley et al., U.S. Pat. No. 1,285,917, relates to improvement in garments, specifically to provide a one piece garment for covering the shoulders, arms and throat. The garment comprises two sleeves joined by a cape part. The cape extends down the back of the wearer, and the sleeves may terminate in mitts or gloves for the purpose of retaining them on the hands of the person.

[0023] Medaugh, U.S. Pat. No. 1,751,872, discloses a harness to retain a pair of gloves having a sleeve extension of shoulder length, straps secured to the shoulder ends of the sleeves at the front and rear thereof, being adapted to extend across a person's chest and back. The object of the invention is to keep the hands and arms of a person handling wet materials dry, by shedding water that may trickle down the arms when extended above the head. Such water is prevented from dripping on the person or their clothing as it is directed outwardly away by a water shedding shield attached to the gloves.

[0024] Kintanar, U.S. Pat. No. 4,016,027, relates to a garment, and more particularly, a pair of gloves designed to be worn for cosmetic purposes. The invention provides a pair of cosmetic gloves for smoothing and firming wrinkled skin on the hands and arms of the wearer, but sheer enough to display the smoothed and firmed skin. The gloves of each hand extend from the shoulder to the hand and are connected to one another by straps across the chest and back.

[0025] Smith, U.S. Pat. No. 4,559,647, relates to a garment convertible either from a scarf to mitts or from cuffs to mitts. The ends of the scarf convert into mittens so that when the scarf is worn across the shoulders, mittens are readily available. In another feature, a pair of sleeves is provided with distal ends that are collared to fold and to structure a mitt to cover the hand of a wearer. The garment is formed by a tubular member with a central arms receiving opening to allow the wearer's arms to extend through the tubular member and through a collar at each distal end, which collar when folded over converts into a cuff.

[0026] Massie, U.S. Pat. No. D449,422 S, teaches an ornamental design for an integral mitten and long sleeved garment to cover both arms for use underneath a child's coat.

[0027] Kover, U.S. Pat. No. 2010/035776 A1, teaches a garment, more specifically a child's mitten which has the unique characteristic of preventing the wearer from pulling off the mittens without assistance from another person. The invention consists of a first-hand cover, and a first sleeve irremovably connected to the first hand cover through which a first-hand passes. Attached to the first hand cover is a second hand cover, and a second sleeve irremovably connected to the second hand cover through which a second-hand passes. The invention is designed to cross the back of the neck and shoulders of the wearer.

**SUMMARY OF INVENTION**

[0028] This primary object of the present invention is to provide a decorative strap, having a dual purpose use, encircling the wrist or ankle of an infant or small child wearing mittens or socks, thereby, preventing them from losing or pulling off their mittens or socks. The invention may serve multiple objectives including the following:

[0029] A second object of the present invention is to secure an infant's mittens to prevent them from scratching their faces with their fingernails or sucking their thumbs.

[0030] A third object of the invention is to keep the infant's hands and feet warm in cold weather by preventing the mittens or socks from falling off or being pulled off unintentionally.

[0031] A fourth object of the invention is that it be simple and inexpensive to manufacture.
A fifth object of the invention is that the strap fit any child’s hands or feet comfortably and does not restrict the child’s movements.

Yet another embodiment of the present invention is that the decorative strap encircles the mitten or sock without permanently being attached to the wearer’s clothing, and without the aid of annoying accessories such as loops, rings, belts, straps or buckles to keep it in place.

The decorative strap consists of a wrist or ankle-facing layer made of Velcro with the rough surface (tiny hooks) facing the mitten or sock so as to adhere to it. An ambient-facing layer directly overlies the ankle-facing layer and is made of a decorative fabric of various colors and designs. An additional piece of ornamental material, such as a flower patch, is added to the strap and stitched onto one end of the ambient-facing layer. A small strip of smooth Velcro (hairier loops) is stitched onto the opposite end of the ambient-facing layer. When the infant’s wrist or ankle is encircled by the strap, the two opposing Velcro surfaces engage one another, and selectively maintain the strap around the child’s mitten or sock.

**DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS**

FIG. 1 is a front perspective diagram of the mitten and sock lock of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a front perspective diagram showing an infant with the present invention in use as both a mitten lock and a sock lock.

FIG. 3 is a front perspective diagram of the mitten and sock of the present invention showing the wrist or ankle-facing layer of the Velcro strap consisting of the rough surface of tiny hooks.

FIG. 4 is a front perspective diagram of the mitten and sock lock of the present invention showing the ambient-facing decorative fabric overlay comprising a small strip of smooth Velcro loops attached at the left free end, and an ornamental patch attached at the right free end.

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of the left free end of the mitten and sock lock design of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view of the right free end of the mitten and sock lock design of FIG. 3.

**DESCRIPTION OF INVENTION**

FIGS. 1-6 illustrate the details of the present invention, in which like numerals indicate like parts. FIG. 1 and FIG. 2 illustrate the sock lock strap 1 of the present invention for encircling the wrist 7 and ankle 8 of the child 6, and engaging a hand covering 9 and a foot covering 10 worn by the child to prevent loss of the hand covering 9 or foot covering 10.

The present invention comprises a strap 1 that has a length and width for encircling the wrist 7 or ankle 8 of a child 6 allowing the strap 1 to fit different sized wrists 7 and ankles 8 comfortably. One example of the dimensions of such strap 1 is being 8-inches in length and ¾-inch in width.

The strap 1 comprises a wrist or ankle facing layer of material 2 made of Velcro.

The strap 1 further comprises an ambient-facing layer of material 3 made of a decorative fabric that directly overlies the wrist or ankle-facing layer of material 2 thereof.

The fabric of the ambient-facing layer of material 3 of the strap 1 is made of various product compositions, styles, designs, patterns and colors.

The mitten and sock lock strap 1 has a left free end 11 and a right free end 12 as shown in FIG. 3 and FIG. 4.

The strap 1 of FIG. 3 illustrates a wrist or ankle-facing layer of material 2 made of Velcro with the rough surface (tiny hooks) facing the mitten or sock and adhering to it.

The strap 1 of FIG. 4 illustrates an ambient-facing layer of material 3 that directly overlies and is sewn onto the ankle-facing layer of material 2 and is made of a decorative fabric.

A smooth Velcro (hairier loops) strip 5 approximately one to three inches in length, preferably two inches, is stitched onto the left free end 11 of the ambient-facing layer as shown in FIG. 4 and FIG. 5.

An ornamental material patch 4, such as a flower, is stitched onto the right free end 12 of the ambient-facing layer 3 shown in FIG. 4 and FIG. 6.

When the infant’s wrist 7 or ankle 8 is encircled by the strap 1, the two opposing Velcro hook 2 and loop 5 surfaces engage one another, and selectively maintain the strap around the child’s mitten 9 or sock 10.

The right free end 12 of the Velcro strap 1 is affixed to, and overlies, the left free end 11 of the strap 1. The right free end 12 of the strap 1 extends past the left free end 11 of the strap length and engages the left free end 11 of the strap so as to adjust the length of the strap to the wearer.

With the two faces are pressed together, the hooks 2 catch in the loops 5 and the two pieces fasten or bind temporarily. The faces can be separated, by pulling or peeling the two surfaces apart, causing the Velcro strips to make a distinctive “rippling” sound.

The present invention has been illustrated and described as embodied in a decorative Velcro mitten and sock lock design for encircling a wrist 7 or an ankle 8 of a child 6, and engaging a hand or foot covering worn by the child so as to prevent loss or removal of such. However, it is not limited to the details shown, since it will be understood that various omissions, modifications, substitutions and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit of the present invention.

1. A decorative strap for encircling a wrist or an ankle of an infant or child and engaging a hand covering, such as a mitten or glove, or foot covering, such as a sock or bootie, worn by the child so as to prevent loss or removal of such mitten or sock, said strap comprising:
   a) A strap having dual purpose usage to secure both mittens and socks worn by a child so as to prevent loss or removal of such;
   b) A strap that is simple and easy to attach and remove, is comfortable, light weight and does not restrict the child’s movements or blood circulation;
   c) A strap that requires no additional retaining accessories, such as buttons, snaps, ties or buckles and is not permanently fastened to the wearer’s clothing;

2. The strap of claim 1, wherein said strap is of sufficient length and width to allow it to fit different sized wrists and ankles comfortably.

3. The strap of claim 1, wherein said strap comprises a wrist or ankle-facing layer of material.

4. The strap of claim 3, wherein the wrist or ankle-facing layer of material of said strap is made of Velcro; and wherein the rough tiny hook surface of said Velcro faces and gently adheres to the mitten or sock and holds it in place.
5. The strap of claim 1, wherein said strap comprises an ambient-facing layer of material that directly overlies said wrist or ankle-facing layer.

6. The strap of claim 5, wherein said ambient-facing layer of material is a decorative fabric of various compositions, styles, designs, patterns and colors.

7. The strap of claim 5, wherein said strap has a right free end, supplying ornamental material, such as a flower patch, stitched onto said ambient-facing layer.

8. The strap of claim 5, wherein said strap has a left free end, supplying a smooth section of hairier Velcro loops having a defined length, stitched onto said ambient-facing layer.

9. A method of securing a child or an infant’s hand covering or foot covering, such as a mitten or sock to prevent loss or removal of said mitten or sock comprising:
   a) A strap looped around and encircling a wrist or an ankle of an infant or child and engaging a hand covering or foot covering, worn by the child;
   b) A means for securing the strap around the hand or foot covering by firmly connecting the two ends of the strap together;
   c) A quick disconnect Velcro hook and loop fastener that has two lineal fabric strips at opposing ends of the strap to be mated together;

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the wrist or ankle-facing right free end of said strap featuring tiny Velcro hooks engages the opposite ambient-facing left free end of said strap featuring hairier Velcro loops.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the two Velcro faces are pressed together encircling the wrist or ankle.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein said hooks catch in said loops and the two opposing ends bind and selectively maintain the strap around the child’s mitten or sock to prevent loss.

13. The method of claim 10 wherein the right free end of the strap is affixed to and overlies the left free end of the strap.

14. The method of claim 10 wherein the right free end of the strap extends past the left free end of the strap and engages the left portion of the strap to adjust the length of the strap.

15. The method of claim 10 wherein when separated by pulling or peeling the two opposing surfaces apart, the Velcro strips quickly disconnect and make a distinctive ripping sound.

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