Overshoe for High-Heeled Footwear

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Abstract

The present invention provides for various embodiments of overshoes. Specifically, in one embodiment, an overshoe for high-heeled footwear is provided. The overshoe includes an upper compartment, a forefoot region, a heel region, a flexible and durable outsole, and a zipper. The upper compartment can be configured for receiving high-heeled footwear and can be made from a stretchable water-resistant material. The forefoot region can be configured for receiving the forefoot of the high-heeled footwear and the heel region is configured for receiving the high-heel of the high-heeled footwear. The heel region can include an integrated support structure therein. The flexible and durable outsole can include a first outsole connected to the forefoot region and a second outsole connected to the heel region and the zipper can be disposed within the upper compartment.
OVERSHOE FOR HIGH-HEELED FOOTWEAR

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to footwear and in particular to high-heeled overshoes.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Overshoes are a necessity for many people desiring to protect their footwear from the elements. Unfortunately, conventional overshoes can be difficult to use effectively with high-heeled footwear. Not only do conventional overshoes rob the user of the style of their heeled high-heeled footwear, when high-heeled shoes are used with conventional overshoes the wearer can encounter difficulty walking or with traction. Accordingly, there continues to be a need for a stylish overshoe configured for safe and effective use with high-heeled footwear.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention provides for various embodiments of overshoes. Specifically, in one embodiment, an overshoe for high-heeled footwear is provided. The overshoe includes an upper compartment, a forefoot region, a heel region, a flexible and durable outsole, and a zipper. The upper compartment can be configured for receiving high-heeled footwear and can be made from a stretchable water-resistant material. The forefoot region can be configured for receiving the forefoot of the high-heeled footwear and the heel region is configured for receiving the high-heeled footwear. The heel region includes an integrated support structure therein. The flexible and durable outsole includes a first outsole connected to the forefoot region and a second outsole connected to the heel region and the zipper can be disposed with the upper compartment.

[0004] In yet another embodiment, an overshoe for high-heeled footwear is provided that includes an upper compartment, a first outsole, a second outsole, and a zipper. The upper compartment can include a leg shaft opening configured to receive a leg of a subject; a forefoot region having a toe, a bottom, a top and an arch; and a heel region disposed opposite the leg shaft opening. The heel region can have a bottom and a cylindrical shaft with a semi-rigid support structure in the heeled region. The first outsole can be connected to the bottom of the forefoot region and the second outsole can be connected to the bottom of the heel region. The zipper can be located in the upper compartment and can run from the heel region to the top of the leg-shaft opening.

[0005] There has thus been outlined, rather broadly, the more important features of the invention so that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and so that the present contribution to the art may be better appreciated. Other features of the present invention will become clearer from the following detailed description of the invention, taken with the accompanying drawings and claims, or may be learned by the practice of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] Additional features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the detailed description which follows, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, which together illustrate, by way of example, features of the invention; and, whereby:

[0007] FIG. 1 is a side view of an overshoe in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;
[0008] FIG. 2 is a bottom view of a the overshoe of shown in FIG. 1;
[0009] FIG. 3 is a cut-away view of a heel-region of an overshoe of the present invention;
[0010] FIG. 4 is a perspective image of a pointed-toe overshoe of the present invention;
[0011] FIG. 5 is a side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0012] FIG. 6 is the opposite side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0013] FIG. 7 is a back view image of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0014] FIG. 8 is a front view image of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0015] FIG. 9 is a top view image of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0016] FIG. 10 is a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 4;
[0017] FIG. 11 is a side view of an overshoe in accordance with the another embodiment of the present invention;
[0018] FIG. 12 is a bottom view of the overshoe shown in FIG. 11;
[0019] FIG. 13 is a perspective image of another embodiment of a pointed-toe overshoe of the present invention;
[0020] FIG. 14 is a side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0021] FIG. 15 is the opposite side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0022] FIG. 16 is a back view image of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0023] FIG. 17 is a front view image of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0024] FIG. 18 is a top view image of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0025] FIG. 19 is a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 13;
[0026] FIG. 20 is a side view of an overshoe in accordance with the still another embodiment of the present invention;
[0027] FIG. 21 is a bottom view of the overshoe shown in FIG. 20;
[0028] FIG. 22 is a perspective image of another embodiment of a pointed-toe overshoe of the present invention;
[0029] FIG. 23 is a side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0030] FIG. 24 is the opposite side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0031] FIG. 25 is a back view image of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0032] FIG. 26 is a front view image of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0033] FIG. 27 is a top view image of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0034] FIG. 28 is a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 22;
[0035] FIG. 29 is a side view of an overshoe in accordance with the still another embodiment of the present invention;
[0036] FIG. 30 is a bottom view of the overshoe shown in FIG. 29;
[0037] FIG. 31 is a side view image of an another embodiment of a flat-heeled overshoe of the present invention;
[0038] FIG. 32 is the opposite side view image of the overshoe of FIG. 31;
[0039] FIG. 33 is a back view image of the overshoe of FIG. 31;
[0040] FIG. 34 is a front view image of the overshoe of FIG. 31;
FIG. 35 is a top view image of the overshoe of FIG. 31;
FIG. 36 is a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 31;
FIG. 37 shows a side view-cutaway of an embodiment of the present invention similar to the embodiment of FIG. 20;
FIG. 38 shows an exploded cut-away view of the heel region of the embodiment shown in FIG. 37.

The use of phantom or broken lines is for illustrative purposes and elements represented thereby are not intended as required elements of the claimed inventions. Reference will now be made to the exemplary embodiments illustrated, and specific language will be used herein to describe the same. It will nevertheless be understood that no limitation of the scope of the invention is thereby intended.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXAMPLE EMBODIMENT(S)

While these exemplary embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, it should be understood that other embodiments may be realized and that various changes to the invention may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. Thus, the following more detailed description of the embodiments of the present invention is not intended to limit the scope of the invention, as claimed, but is presented for purposes of illustration only and not limitation to describe the features and characteristics of the present invention, to set forth the best mode of operation of the invention, and to sufficiently enable one skilled in the art to practice the invention. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention is to be defined solely by the appended claims.

DEFINITIONS

The singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include plural refers unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Thus, for example, reference to “a carrier” includes reference to one or more of such compounds.

As used herein the term “high-heeled” refers to a piece of footwear that raises the heel of the wearer’s heel at least one (1) inch higher than their toes. High-heeled footwear can include stiletto heels, cone heels, kitten heels, prism heels, spool heels, wedge heels, and puppy heels.

As used herein, the term “water-resistant” when used to describe a component or element of the invention refers to the ability to minimize or eliminate the permeation of water into or through the element. The term “waterproof” is included within the scope of the term “water-resistant” and refers to an item that eliminates the permeation of water into or through the element. Thus, a component or element that is waterproof can also be described as being water-resistant, but not necessary vice versa.

As used herein, a plurality of items, structural elements, compositional elements, and/or materials may be presented in a common list for convenience. However, these lists should be construed as though each member of the list is individually identified as a separate and unique member. Thus, no individual member of such list should be construed as a de facto equivalent of any other member of the same list solely based on their presentation in a common group without indications to the contrary.

Numerical data may be presented herein in a range format. It is to be understood that such range format is used merely for convenience and brevity and should be interpreted flexibly to include not only the numerical values explicitly recited as the limits of the range, but also to include all the individual numerical values or sub-ranges encompassed within that range as if each numerical value and sub-range is explicitly recited. For example, a numerical range of about 1 to about 4.5 should be interpreted to include not only the explicitly recited limits of 1 and about 4.5, but also to include individual numerals such as 2, 3, 4, and sub-ranges such as 1 to 3, 2 to 4, etc. The same principle applies to ranges reciting only one numerical value, such as “less than about 4.5,” which should be interpreted to include all of the above-recited values and ranges. Further, such an interpretation should apply regardless of the breadth of the range or the characteristic being described.

With the above definitions in mind, the present invention is drawn to an overshoe for high-heeled footwear. The overshoe includes an upper compartment, a forefoot region, a heel region, a flexible and durable outsole, and a zipper. In one embodiment, the zipper can be a water-resistant or waterproof zipper. The upper compartment can be configured for receiving high-heeled footwear and can be made from a stretchable water-resistant material. The forefoot region is configured for receiving the forefoot of the high-heeled footwear and the heel region is configured for receiving the high-heeled shoe. The heel region includes an integrated support structure therein. The flexible and durable outsole includes a first outsole connected to the forefoot region and a second outsole connected to the heel region and the zipper can be disposed within the upper compartment.

In yet another embodiment, an overshoe for high-heeled footwear is provided that includes an upper compartment, a first outsole, a second outsole, and a zipper. The upper compartment can include a leg shaft opening configured to receive a leg of a subject and enclose the subject’s leg; a forefoot region having a front or toe, a bottom, a top and an arch; and a heel region disposed opposite the leg shaft opening. The heel region can have a bottom and a cylindrical shaft with a semi-rigid support structure in the heel region. The first outsole can be connected to the bottom of the forefoot region and the second outsole can be connected to the bottom of the heel region. The zipper can be located in the upper compartment and can run from the heel region to the top of the leg-shaft opening.

The upper compartment of the overshoes of the present invention can be made from a variety of natural and/or manmade materials. In some embodiments, it can be desirable to make the upper compartment from materials that are water-resistant or waterproof in order to provide the best protection for the user of the overshoe. Non-limiting examples of materials from which the upper compartment can be made include woven fabrics, non-woven fabrics, thermoplastic resins, laminated fabrics, leather, or combinations thereof.

The forefoot region of the upper compartment can be configured into a variety of designs or styles depending on the type of footwear intended to be used with the overshoe. For example, in one aspect, the forefoot region can be configured as a rounded forefoot region for receiving round-toed footwear. Examples of round-toe overshoes are shown in FIGS. 20-28. In another aspect, the forefoot region can be config-
ured as a pointed forefoot region for receiving pointed-toed footwear. Embodiments of pointed-toe overshoes are shown in FIGS. 1-19. Other toe configurations can also be included such as a square-toed region for receiving square-toed footwear.

0057 The arch of the upper compartment of the overshoes of the present invention is generally disposed between the outsole of the forefoot region and the heel region and generally follows the arch of the type of footwear with which it is configured to be used. Thus, for example, an overshoe that is designed for use with a one to three inch heel-heeled shoe (inner shoe) can have an arch that rises from the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment and connects at with the top of the heel region of the overshoe. In addition to the stylish look of the elevated arch of the overshoe, the rising of the arch along the lines of the inner shoe can also function to reduce the amount of water or other moisture that contacts and penetrates the arch region of the overshoe. The rising arch can also provide a more snug or tailored fit of the overshoe to footwear. This tailored fit can enhance the stability of the overshoe for the wearer and help prevent slipping or other accidents. In some embodiments, the outsole connected to the forefoot region of the upper compartment can continue up along at least a portion of the arch. The inclusion of the outsole along at least a portion of the arch can help to provide additional support for the overshoe as well as enhanced protection from the elements.

0058 The overshoes of the present invention can include at least one outsole on the bottom of the overshoe. One outsole can be disposed on the forefoot region of the upper compartment. A second outsole can be disposed on the bottom of the heel region of the overshoe. In one embodiment, the first outsole and the second outsole can be independent of (not connected) to each other. Each of the outsoles of the overshoe can be independently made from any material that can provide good wear durability as well as good flexibility. In one embodiment, the outsole can have good wear properties and can be substantially pliable when bent or flexed. The flexibility and pliability of the outsole material can allow the outsole to be folded for ease of storage of the overshoe in small volume spaces. Non-limiting examples of materials that can be used for the outsole include rubber, polyurethane, thermoplastic resin, and combinations thereof. Other materials that are known to be used for the outsole of footwear may also be used.

0059 The heel region of the overshoe of the present invention can be made to accommodate footwear having various heel heights and styles. In one embodiment, the heel region can include a shaft, such as a substantially cylindrical shaft, that is oriented substantially vertically and on an axis that is substantially perpendicular to the outsole. The shaft may be rectangular, cylindrical, pyramidal, trapezoidal, or other geometrical configuration that can accommodate various types of high-heeled footwear. In one embodiment, the shaft of the heel region can have a length of less than about 1 inch. In another embodiment, the shaft of the heel region can have a length of at least about 1 inch. In yet another embodiment, the shaft of the heel region can have a length of at least about 1½ inches.

0060 The heel-region of the overshoe of the present invention can include an integrated support structure. The role of the integrated support structure facilitates placement of the high-heel portion of the footwear into the overshoe and on to the outsole attached to the heel-region. The integrated support structure helps inhibit the high-heel of the footwear from treading on the side wall heel-region of the overshoe. The integrated support structure can be a semi-rigid support structure having adequate structural integrity to maintain the general shape of the heel-region shaft and which is adequately pliable to be folded, bent, or compressed when the overshoe is stored. In some embodiments the outsole on the bottom of the heel-region can have a greater diameter than the diameter of the integrated support structure. This can help assure that the high heel of the high-heeled footwear treads on the outsole and not on the wall of the shaft of the heel region.

0061 The integrated support structure can have a variety of heights depending on the height of the heel of the overshoe and the type of the high-heeled footwear for which the overshoe is intended. In one embodiment, the integrated support structure can have a length of at least about ½ inch. In another embodiment, the integrated support structure can have a length of at least about 1 inch. In yet further embodiments, the ratio of the length of the semi-rigid support structure to the length of the cylindrical shaft can be about 0.4:1 to about 1:1. FIG. 3 includes a cutaway view of one embodiment of a shaft 8 of the heel region of an overshoe of the present invention. The outsole 12 connected to the bottom of the heel region is shown and an example of the integrated support structure 16 is shown. The integrated support structure can be completely integrated into or enclosed by the materials of the heel region of the overshoe or the support structure can be integrated by simple insertion of the support structure into the heel region. In some embodiments the integrated support structure can be adhered or mechanically maintained in place in the heel region of the overshoe. For example, in one embodiment, the interior of the heel region can include a soft non-abrasive material which lines the interior of the heel region and which can function to retain the integrated support structure in its place and prevent scratching of the high-heel of the footwear inserted into the overshoe. In another embodiment, the integrated support structure can be removed from the heel region of the overshoe.

0062 FIG. 1 shows an example of one embodiment of the present invention. The overshoe includes an upper compartment 4 with a toe 2, an arch 14, and an outsole 10 on the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment and extending up a portion of the arch. The overshoe includes a zipper 6 disposed along the back of the overshoe which can extend from the leg shaft opening 18 down toward the heel region of the overshoe. FIG. 2 shows a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 1.

0063 FIG. 11 shows an example of one embodiment of the present invention. The overshoe includes an upper compartment 74 with a toe 72, an arch 84, and an outsole 70 on the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment and extending up a portion of the arch. The overshoe includes a zipper 76 disposed along the back of the overshoe which can extend from the leg shaft opening 76 down toward the heel region of the overshoe. The overshoe includes a cylindrical shaft 8 and an outsole 12 adhered to the bottom of the heel region 12. FIG. 12 shows a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 11.

0064 FIG. 20 shows an example of one embodiment of the present invention. The overshoe includes an upper compartment 22 with a toe 20, an arch 32, and an outsole 34 on the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment. The
overshoe includes a zipper 26 disposed along the back of the overshoe which can extend from the leg shaft opening 24 down toward the heel region of the overshoe. The heel region 28 includes a cylindrical shaft and an outsole 30 adhered to the bottom of the heel region. FIG. 21 shows a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 20.

Fig. 29 shows an example of one embodiment of the present invention. The overshoe includes an upper compartment 52 with a toe 50, an arch 59, and an outsole 60 on the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment and extending up a portion of the arch. The overshoe includes a zipper 56 disposed along the back of the overshoe which can extend from the leg shaft opening 54 down toward the heel region of the overshoe. The heel region has an outsole 58 adhered thereto. Fig. 30 shows a bottom view of the overshoe of FIG. 29.

Fig. 37 shows a cutaway view of an embodiment similar to the embodiment shown in FIG. 20. The embodiment includes an upper compartment 93, an arch 97, and an outsole 96 on the bottom of the forefoot region of the upper compartment. The embodiment further includes a leg shaft opening 92 through which the shoe 94 and leg (not shown) of a user can be inserted. A zipper 90 runs from the top of the upper compartment along the back of the overshoe from the leg shaft opening to the heel-region 99. The heel region 99 is enclosed by the same material 82 as the upper compartment and includes an outsole 98 adhered to its bottom area. Fig. 38 shows an exploded cutaway view of the heel-region 99 of the embodiment shown in FIG. 37. The heel of the shoe 80 is shown substantially centered on the outsole 98 of the heel-region. The integrated support 86 of the heel-region is shown and functions to facilitate placement of the heel of the show on the outsole area of the overshoe. An optional additional soft protective inner layer 84 can be disposed on the interior of the heel-region to protect the highheel of the shoe from becoming scuffed.

While the foregoing examples are illustrative of the principles of the present invention in one or more particular applications, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that numerous modifications in form, usage and details of implementation can be made without the exercise of inventive faculty, and without departing from the principles and concepts of the invention. Accordingly, it is not intended that the invention be limited, except as by the claims set forth below.

1. An overshoe for a high-heeled shoe, comprising:
   - an upper compartment for receiving the high-heeled shoe, said upper compartment being made from a stretchable material;
   - a forefoot region for receiving the forefoot of the high-heeled shoe;
   - a heel region for receiving the heel of the high-heeled shoe, said heel region having an integrated support structure therein;
   - a flexible and durable outsole including a first outsole connected to the forefoot region and a second outsole connected to the heel region; and
   - a zipper disposed within the upper compartment.
2. The overshoe of claim 1, wherein the integrated support structure is semi-rigid and extends along an axis perpendicular to the outsole.
3. The overshoe of claim 1, wherein the integrated support structure is a semi-rigid cylindrical shaft.
4. The overshoe of claim 1, wherein the second outsole has a diameter that is greater than that of the integrated support structure.
5. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the integrated support structure has a length of at least about ½ inch.
6. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the integrated support structure has a length of at least about 1 inch.
7. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the upper compartment is made from a material selected from the group consisting of a woven fabric, a non-woven fabric, a thermoplastic resin, laminated fabric, or combinations thereof.
8. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the zipper is a water resistant zipper.
9. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the first outsole and the second outsole are independently made from materials selected from the group consisting of rubber, polyurethane, thermoplastic resin, and combinations thereof.
10. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the first outsole and the second outsole are not connected to each other.
11. The women's overshoe of claim 1, wherein the overshoe can be folded for easy storage.
12. An overshoe for a high-heeled shoe, comprising:
   - an upper compartment having a leg shaft opening configured to receive a leg of a subject and enclose the subject's leg at or above the ankle;
   - a forefoot region, said forefoot region including a front or toe, a bottom, a top and, an arch; and
   - a heel region disposed opposite the leg shaft opening, said heel region having a bottom and a cylindrical shaft with a semi-rigid support structure disposed therein;
   - a first outsole, said first outsole being connected to a bottom of the forefoot region;
   - a second outsole, said second outsole being connected to a bottom of the heel region; and
   - a zipper, said zipper being disposed in the upper compartment and running from the heel region to the leg shaft opening.
13. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the cylindrical shaft of the heel region has a length of less than 1 inch.
14. The women's overshoe of claim 13, wherein the semi-rigid support structure has a length of at least about ½ inch.
15. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the cylindrical shaft of the heel region has a length of at least 1½ inches.
16. The women's overshoe of claim 15, wherein the semi-rigid support structure has a length of at least about 1 inch.
17. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the ratio of the length of the semi-rigid support structure to the length of the cylindrical shaft is about 0.4:1 to about 1:1.
18. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the upper compartment is made from a material selected from the group consisting of a stretchable woven fabric, leather, a non-woven non-stretchable fabric, a thermoplastic resin, laminated fabric, or combinations thereof.
19. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the upper compartment is water-resistant.
20. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the upper compartment is water-proof.
21. The women's overshoe of claim 12, wherein the first outsole is connected to and covers the bottom of the forefoot region and at least a portion of the arch.
22. The women’s overshoe of claim 12, wherein the zipper is a water-resistant zipper.

23. The women’s overshoe of claim 12, wherein the first outsole and the second outsole are independently made from materials selected from the group consisting of rubber, polyurethane, or thermoplastic resin, or combinations thereof.

24. The women’s overshoe of claim 12, wherein the first outsole and second outsole have good wear properties when and are substantially pliable when bent or flexed.

25. The women’s overshoe of claim 12, wherein the first outsole and the second outsole are not connected to each other.

26. The women’s overshoe of claim 12, wherein the overshoe can be folded for easy storage.

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