

Oct. 21, 1969

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3,473,169

METHOD FOR CONVERTING SKIRT TO CULOTTES

Filed April 18, 1968

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

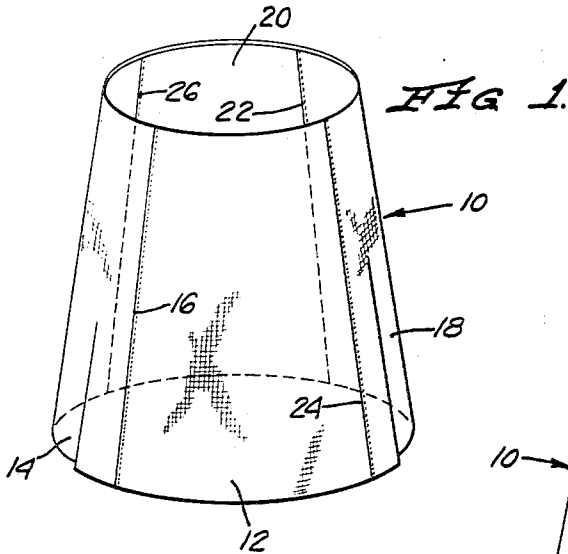


FIG. 1.

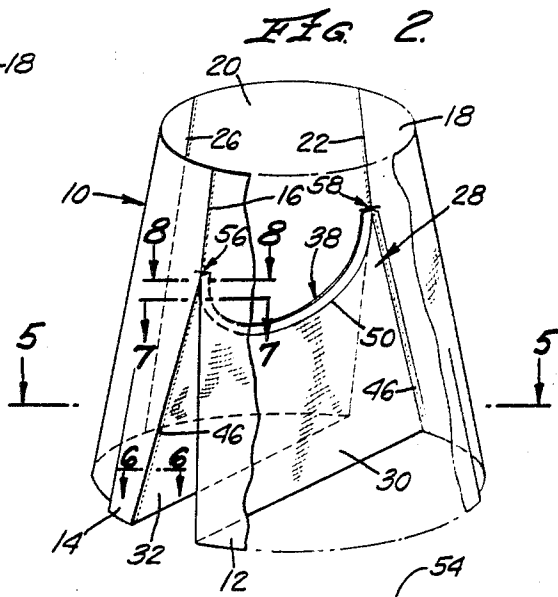


FIG. 2.

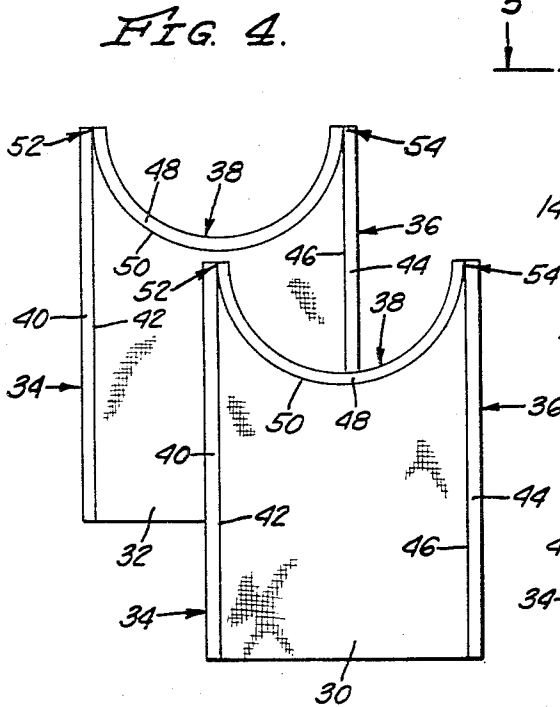


FIG. 4.

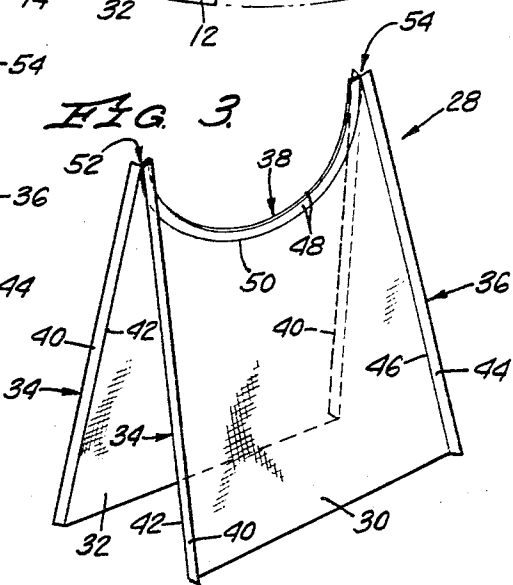


FIG. 3.

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

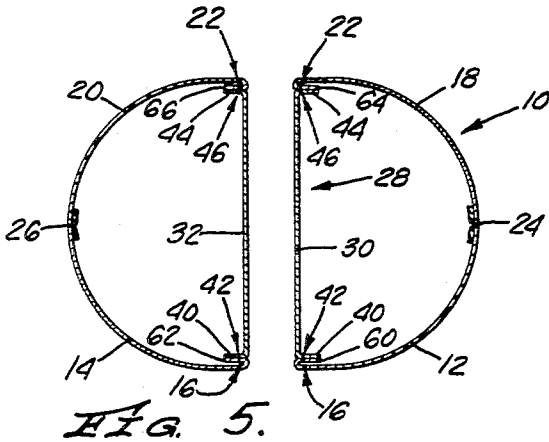


FIG. 5.

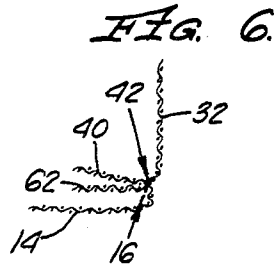


FIG. 6.

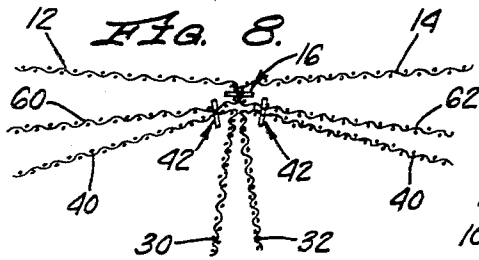


FIG. 8.

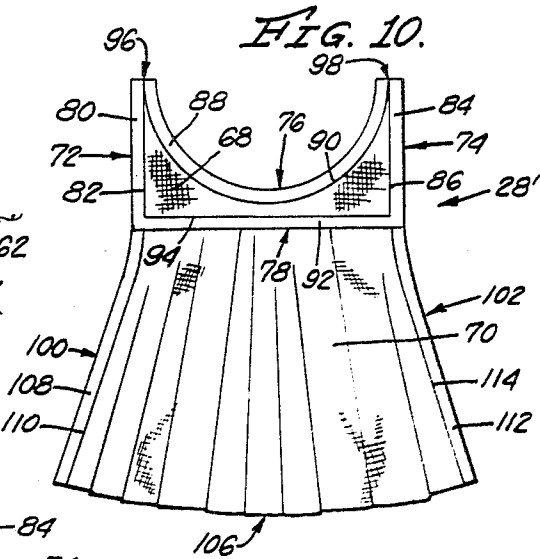


FIG. 10.

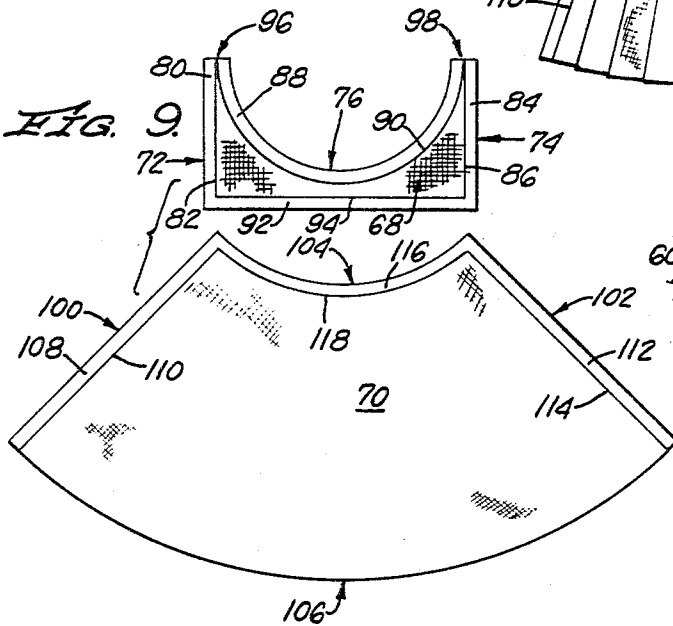


FIG. 9.

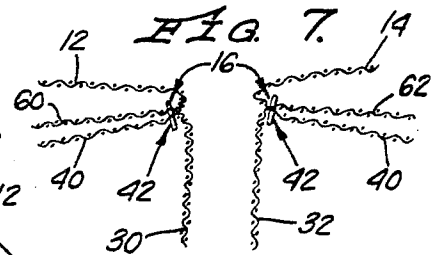


FIG. 7.

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3,473,169  
**METHOD FOR CONVERTING SKIRT  
 TO CULOTTES**

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 Int. Cl. A41d 1/14, 27/00

U.S. Cl. 2—213

3 Claims

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

A skirt divider insert comprising two identical facing panels which are joined together at the top along a downwardly curved, generally semicircular crotch seam, the ends of which are tangent to front and back edge seam lines where the latter merge at the top. The seam lines extend from top to bottom along the front and back edges of the insert panels, and are sewn to the dress along seam lines at opposite edges of slits formed in the front and back, respectively, of the dress, which extend from the bottom edge of the dress to the hip line.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

There has long been a great deal of fashion interest in culottes for active women who want the freedom and practicality of slacks, but who prefer the feminine appearance of skirts. The term "culottes" as used herein, means any bifurcated garment for women having the appearance of a skirt or dress. Interest in culottes is particularly keen when, as at the present time, skirts are short and it is difficult to be physically active without undue exposure.

While there are many different culotte designs on the market, there is nothing available for converting an already-existing skirt or dress to culottes. Conventional skirts and dresses outnumber culottes in the stores by a large majority, and are therefore available in a much larger selection of designs and materials. Thus, a woman who is attracted by a particular skirt or dress design, is usually unable to buy the same garment in the form of culottes. Moreover, many women who do their own sewing find an ample supply of conventional dress or skirt patterns to choose from, but culotte patterns are in relatively short supply. As a result the home dressmaker had either to improvise (with something less than completely satisfactory results), or else she has had to settle for an alternative culotte pattern of a design that is considerably less appealing to her than the dress or skirt pattern of her first choice.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

The present invention overcomes the above-mentioned difficulties by providing an insert, and method of applying the same, which makes it possible to convert any conventional skirt or dress into culottes. The invention is particularly adapted for use in converting skirts or dresses into culottes where the garment has center seams in the front and back, which can be ripped out from the bottom edge up to the hipline of the wearer, thereby providing an opening and seam allowances to which the insert panels can be sewn. However, the invention is not limited to use with dresses or skirts having center seams, as openings can be made in the front and back of the garment by cutting and finishing with bias strips of binding, in the same manner in which bound buttonholes are made, after which the insert panels can be sewn to opposite edges of the opening, using the edge binding as seam allowance. Moreover, the invention enables the home dressmaker to convert virtually any dress or skirt pattern into a pattern for culottes by merely adding the insert, either as a sepa-

rate component of the finished garment or by merging the insert pattern with the dress pattern.

Thus, a woman who is desirous of having culottes, but can find only conventional skirts or dresses in designs or materials that appeal to her, is able to buy the skirt or dress of her choice and then convert it to culottes. By the same token, the dressmaker who finds a pattern for a dress or skirt that particularly appeals to her can convert the same to culottes with a minimum of problems and with absolute certainty that the finished garment will look as if it had originally been designed as culottes.

The primary object of the present invention, therefore, is to provide a new and unique method of converting a conventional skirt or dress into culottes.

Another object of the invention is to provide an insert which can be used to convert virtually any skirt or dress into culottes, and which, with only a minimum of modification, may be adapted to any style of skirt, whether straight, full, gathered or pleated. One important advantage of the invention is that the finished garment has every appearance of having been designed and originally executed as culottes; the seams remaining as smooth as before, and the lines of the garment being unchanged.

Still a further object of the invention is to provide a skirt divider insert which is inexpensive, simple and easy to use, and which produces professional-looking results, even when done by a relatively inexperienced seamstress.

Among other advantages, the insert of the present invention has the following desirable characteristics: (1) there is no inside center-of-the-leg seam from the crotch to the hem's edge, which makes a bulky area that is difficult to press flat; and (2) the skirt divider insert dries or presses flat with the skirt.

These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art upon reading the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments thereof.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view of a conventional skirt having front and rear center seams, which is to be converted into culottes;

FIGURE 2 is a partially cut-away view of the same after being converted, showing the insert of my invention at it appears after being sewn into the skirt;

FIGURE 3 is a perspective view of the assembled insert, prior to being sewn into the skirt;

FIGURE 4 is an elevational view showing the two panels of the insert prior to being sewn together along the semi-circular crotchline at the top;

FIGURE 5 is a sectional view taken at 5—5 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 6 is a greatly enlarged fragmentary sectional view, taken at 6—6 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 7 is another greatly enlarged fragmentary sectional view, taken at 7—7 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 8 is another enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken at 8—8 in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 9 is an elevational view of the two pieces that fit together to make one of the halves of a slightly modified form of the insert; and

FIGURE 10 is an elevational view showing the two pieces of FIGURE 9 as they appear when sewn together.

**DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT**

In the drawing, FIGURE 1 shows a conventional skirt 10, which is to be converted into culottes, using the method and skirt divider insert of the present invention. Skirt 10 may be of any design, and is here shown comprising front left and right panels 12 and 14, joined together by a front center seam 16, and back left and

right panels 18 and 20, joined together by back center seam 22. Front left panel 12 is joined to back left panel 18 by left seam 24, and front right panel 14 is joined to back right panel 20 by right seam 26.

The insert of the invention is designated in its entirety by the reference numeral 28, and comprises a left panel 30 and a right panel 32. Each of the said panels 30, 32 has a front edge 34, rear edge 36, and top edge 38. The front and rear edges 34, 36 are straight, and may be parallel, as shown in FIGURES 2, 3 and 4, or they may diverge downwardly from the crotchline at any desired angle to provide more fullness at the bottom.

Each of the insert panels 30, 32 has a seam allowance 40 and seam line 42 along the front edge thereof. There is also a seam allowance 44 and a seam line 46 along the rear edge, and a seam allowance 48 and seam line 50 along the top edge of the insert panel.

The top edge 38, with its associated seam allowance 48 and seam line 50, is in the form of a generally semi-circular, concave curve which constitutes the crotchline of the insert. The curve of the crotchline need not be exactly semi-circular, but could just as well be elliptical, or in the form of a flattened curve. The important consideration is that the ends of the curved seam line 50 come to points of tangency at 52 with the generally vertical front edge seam line 42, and at 54 with the generally vertical rear edge seam line 46. The two panels 30 and 32 are sewn together along the curved crotchline seam 50, forming the complete insert 28, which is now ready for insertion in skirt 10.

The method of the present invention, whereby the skirt 10 of FIG. 1 may be converted into the culottes of FIG. 2, using insert 28, is as follows:

First, the points are located on the dress where the crotch seam line 50 is to join the front seam 16 and back seam 22. This is preferably taken at the hipline, which is the widest part of the wearer's body, and is usually from 7 to 9 inches down from the waistline, depending upon the height of the wearer. Marks 56 and 58 are placed on the front seam 16 and back seam 22, respectively, at the hipline. These marks 56, 58 may be made with tailor-tacks, or by using tailor's chalk.

Next, the stitches of the front seam 16 are ripped out up to the mark 56, and those of the back seam 22 are ripped out up to the mark 58. The two seams are then secured so that they will not open further.

For the third step, the skirt 10 and insert 28 are turned inside out, and left-hand panel 30 of the insert is placed (with right sides of the material together), on the front left panel 12 of the skirt, with the front edge seam line 42 directly over the ripped-out seam line 16 of the skirt panel. The insert panel 30 is also placed with respect to the skirt panel so that the point of tangency 52 lies directly over the mark 56 on front seam line 16.

Next, the front edge of the insert panel 30 is sewn to the skirt panel 12 along the superimposed seam lines 42 and 16, with the stitching following exactly in the line of the ripped-out stitches of seam 16, up to mark 56.

The rear edge seam line 46 of panel 30 is then placed directly over the ripped-out seam line 22 of the back left skirt panel 18, and the two panels are stitched together, with the stitching following exactly in the line of the ripped-out stitches of seam 22, up to mark 58.

The skirt and insert are then turned over, and the right-hand panel 32 of the insert is placed on the front right panel 14 of the skirt, with its front edge seam line 42 directly over the ripped-out seam line 16 of the skirt.

Next the front edge of the insert panel 32 is sewn to the skirt panel along the superimposed seam lines 42 and 16, with the stitching following exactly in the line of the ripped-out stitches, up to mark 56.

Finally, the rear edge seam line 46 of insert panel 32 is placed directly over the ripped-out seam line 22 of the back right skirt panel 22, and the two panels sewn together, with the stitching following exactly in the line of the ripped-out stitches of seam 22 up to mark 58.

When the garment is turned right-side-out, it will be found that the three seam lines of the insert which come together on the front side at point 52, all merge smoothly with front seam 16 of the skirt at point 56, while the three seam lines of the insert which come together on the back side at point 54 all merge smoothly with the back seam 22 of the skirt at point 58.

As shown in FIG. 5, front left panel 12 of skirt 10 has a seam allowance 60; front right panel 14 has a seam allowance 62; back left panel 18 has a seam allowance 64; and back right panel 20 has a seam allowance 66. In each case, the seam allowances of the skirt overlie the corresponding seam allowances in the insert panels.

One advantage of the invention is that if the dressmaker should find that insert 28 has been placed too high or too low in the skirt, the insert may be quickly and easily raised or lowered without making any noticeable difference in the appearance of the finished garment. This is done by ripping out the appropriate seams; repositioning the insert with respect to the skirt; and sewing the insert and skirt panels back together again.

FIGURES 9 and 10 show a slightly modified form of the insert of my invention, which is particularly designed for use with flared, circular, or pleated skirts. This embodiment of the invention is designated in its entirety by the reference numeral 28', and like insert 28 described above, comprises two identical panels, only one of which can be seen in the drawings. Each of the two panels comprises an upper piece 68 and lower piece 70, which are joined together as shown.

Upper piece 68 has a front edge 72, rear edge 74 top edge 76 and bottom edge 78. The front edge 72 has a seam allowance 80 and seam line 82; rear edge 74 has a seam allowance 84 and seam line 86; top edge 76 has a seam allowance 88 and seam line 90; and bottom edge 78 has a seam allowance 92 and seam line 94. As in the preceding embodiment, the top edge 76 is a generally semi-circular, concave curve, defining the crotchline of the insert; and the curved crotch seam line 90 is tangent at 96 to the front seam line 82, and tangent at 98 to rear seam line 86.

The lower piece 70 has a front, generally vertical edge 100, a rear, generally vertical edge 102, top edge 104 and bottom edge 106. The front edge 100 has a seam allowance 108 and seam line 110; the rear edge 102 has a seam allowance 112 and seam line 114; and the top edge 104 has a seam allowance 116 and seam line 118. As shown in FIG. 9, the bottom edge 106 is fuller than top edge 104, and the said top and bottom edges may be concentric arcs taken about a center located somewhere above and midway between the ends of the top edge 104. The length of the top edge 104 of the lower piece 70 is substantially the same as the length of the bottom edge 78 of upper piece 68, and the upper and lower pieces are sewn together along their overlying seam lines 94 and 118, making them into a single panel, as shown in FIG. 10, with the front edge 72 of the upper piece fairing smoothly into the front edge 100 of the lower piece, and the rear edges likewise fairing smoothly into one another.

The two upper pieces 68 are sewn together along their curved crotch seams 90, and the insert is now ready for use. The method of installing insert 28' in a skirt is the same as in insert 28. The chief difference between the inserts 28 and 28' is that the latter has the fullness to permit its use with a full skirt, whereas the former is suitable for use with relatively straight skirts.

Another alternative form of the insert, in which each of the two panels are made of two pieces, would be made with a pleated lower piece 70 to go with a pleated skirt. The fitting of a pleated lower piece 70 to an upper piece 68 is a conventional dressmaking operation which need not be described in more detail here.

One factor that is important to the invention is that the panels 30 and 32 of insert 28, and at least the upper pieces 68 of insert 28', be cut from material on the straight

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grain. The lower piece 70 of insert 28' can be cut on the bias, if desired, but it is essential that the upper piece 68 be cut on the straight of the material.

The insert of the invention can also be inserted into a dress or skirt without center seams by making vertical cuts in the center of the skirt at the front and back thereof, from the bottom edge of the skirt to the aforementioned hipline. The two cuts are then bound and finished in the same manner that bound buttonholes are finished, after which the insert is sewn to the opposite edges of the opening, using the edge binding as seam allowance.

The insert can also be merged with a skirt or dress which is being made up from a pattern, by pinning patterns of the insert panels to the dress pattern prior to cutting-out of the material. In this case, there would be no seam lines where the front and back edge of the insert panels join the skirt panels, since the insert panels and skirt panels would all be made in one piece. The two skirt or dress panels would then be sewn together along the curved crotchline seam, and up from the hipline to the waistline at the front and back.

While I have shown and described in considerable detail what I believe to be the preferred form of my invention, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made. In the claims, the term "skirt" is intended to include the skirt portion of a dress.

I claim:

1. The method of converting a conventional skirt into culottes, using a skirt divider insert, said skirt having side panels joined together by front and back center seams, and said insert comprising a pair of identical facing panels, and each having front and rear edges and a generally semicircular, concave top edge, the ends of which are tangent to said front and rear edges, respectively, said panels of said insert being joined together along said curved top edge to form the crotchline seam, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) locating the point on said front and back seams where the insert panel edges, said crotchline, and said skirt panels are to come together at a common junction, and marking said points;
- (b) ripping out the stitches of said front and back center seams from the bottom edge of said skirt to said marks, and securing said stitches so that the seams will not open further;
- (c) placing said insert within said skirt so that the front end extremity of said crotchline seam lies directly over said mark on said front skirt seam, and the rear end extremity of said crotchline seam lies directly over said mark on said rear skirt seam;
- (d) sewing the front edge of one of said insert panels to one of said skirt panels along the ripped-out stitches of said front seam line;

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(e) sewing the rear edge of said one insert panel to said one skirt panel along the ripped-out stitches of said back seam line;

(f) sewing the front edge of the other of said insert panels to the other of said skirt panels along the ripped-out stitches of said front seam line; and

(g) sewing the rear edge of said other insert panel to said other skirt panel along the ripped-out stitches of said back seam line.

2. The method of claim 1, in which said skirt insert comprises two panels, each consisting of an upper piece and a lower piece;

said upper piece being cut out of material on the straight grain and having front and rear vertical edges, a generally horizontal bottom edge, and a substantially semicircular concave top edge forming the crotchline of the insert;

said lower piece being cut out of material on the bias and having front and rear edges and a concave top edge of substantially the same length as the bottom edge of said upper piece;

said upper piece having seam allowances and seam lines around all four edges thereof, and said lower piece having seam allowances and seam lines around the front, rear, and top edges thereof;

said upper pieces being sewn together along the seam line of said semicircular crotchline;

each of said lower pieces being sewn along the seam line of its top edge to the seam line of the bottom edge of its corresponding upper piece; and

the front edge of each of said lower pieces being faired smoothly into the front edges of its corresponding upper piece, and the rear edge of each of said lower pieces being faired smoothly into the rear edge of its corresponding upper piece.

3. The method of claim 5 in which the top and bottom edges of said lower pieces of said insert are concentric arcs taken about a center located above and midway between the ends of said top edge.

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U.S. Cl. X.R.

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