

Feb. 21, 1956

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GIRDLE

Filed April 9, 1953

Fig. 1.

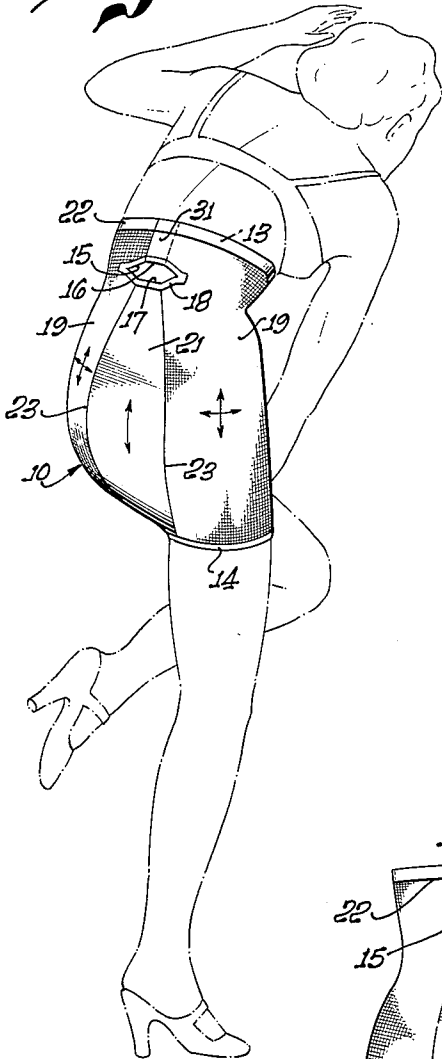


Fig. 2.

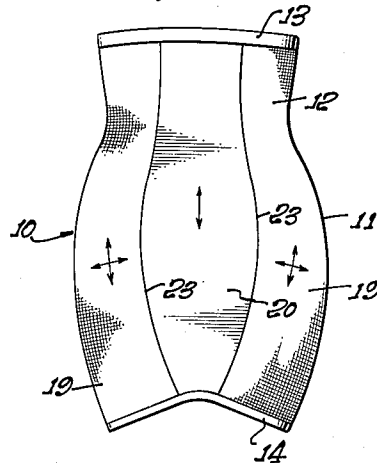


Fig. 3.

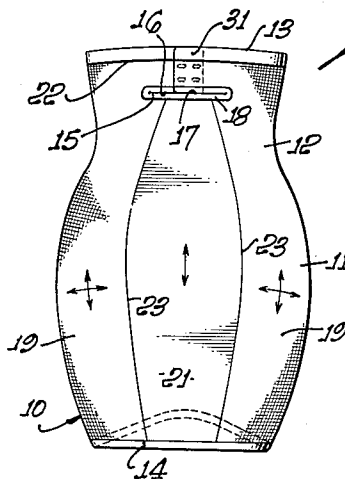
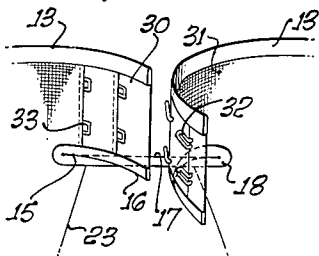


Fig. 4.



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GIRDLE

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Application April 9, 1953, Serial No. 347,704

1 Claim. (Cl. 2—37)

This invention relates to improved foundation garments for ladies, and particularly to elastic girdles of the plain or pantie type.

In order that a girdle may give most effective support to a wearer, it is desirable that the girdle extend upwardly a substantial distance above the waistline of the wearer, to give to the waistline an optimum contour. However, prior girdles having such upwardly extending portions have had the effect of greatly limiting the freedom of movement of a wearer, and of rendering the garment very uncomfortable. This has been due to the tendency of such girdles to continually move upwardly on a wearer. As will be understood, when a wearer bends forwardly in such a girdle, the portion of the girdle above the waistline acts to pull the rest of the garment upwardly, and since there is no counteracting force tending to return the garment downwardly when the wearer resumes an erect position, the overall effect is an upward shifting of the girdle as a result of body movement.

The general object of the present invention is to provide a girdle which is constructed to effectively support a wearer's body to a point well above the waistline, while at the same time allowing relatively free movement of the wearer without discomfort or upward shifting of the garment. For this purpose, I so form the girdle as to have an upper rear portion which is movable relative to the main portion of the girdle in accordance with movement of the upper portion of a wearer's body. More specifically, as a wearer bends forwardly, this upper rear portion of the girdle moves upwardly relative to the rest of the garment, and then subsequently returns downwardly to its original position, all without any upward shifting of the garment as a whole. To permit the desired relative movement of the upper rear portion of the girdle, I form in the elastic body of the girdle a horizontally extending slit, positioned at approximately the waistline at the rear side of the girdle. The portion of the girdle above the slit is then movable upwardly and downwardly relative to the lower portion of the girdle to allow for free body movement.

Particularly contemplated by the invention is a girdle having such a relatively movable upper portion, and yet in which the upper and lower portions of the garment are effectively integrated in a manner assuring positive support and shaping of the waistline in all positions of the wearer's body. For this purpose, the movable portion of the girdle positioned above the slit may be part of a unitary elastic panel, which extends entirely across the top of the slit, and then downwardly at the opposite sides of and inwardly beneath the slit. The slit is thus essentially surrounded by the material of this single elastic panel, with the result that the upper and lower portions of the girdle, though relatively movable, tend to function as an integrated unit. To further assure that the slit will not interfere with proper support of the wearer's body at the waistline, the horizontal extent of the slit is preferably not greater than about two-thirds of the width

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of the girdle at the level of the slit, and for best results should be as small as about half that width.

At the opposite sides of the garment, the panel referred to may form two vertically extending side portions of the girdle, between which may be received a back panel which terminates upwardly at the slit. For attaining a most effective overall girdle structure, the first mentioned panel of such an arrangement may be of an elastic material having both vertical and horizontal stretchability, while the rear central panel is of a material having considerably greater vertical than horizontal stretchability.

The above and other features and objects of the present invention will be better understood from the following detailed description of the typical embodiment illustrated in the accompanying drawing, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a girdle embodying the invention, showing the manner in which the waistline slit opens when the wearer bends forwardly;

Fig. 2 is a front view of the girdle;

Fig. 3 is a rear view of the girdle; and

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary enlargement of the adjustment incorporated in the garment above the slit.

The drawing represents at 10 a girdle body formed of elastic sheet material, and designed to completely encircle the body of a wearer. The girdle has the usual increased width portion 11 for extending about the hips of the wearer, and tapers progressively upwardly to a reduced width or transverse dimension at the waistline 12. In order to assure proper support of the wearer's body at and near the waistline, the flexible material of the girdle extends upwardly a substantial distance above the minimum width waist location 12, and desirably progressively increases in dimension at a gradual rate above the point 12. For best waistline support, the girdle should extend upwardly above the minimum width waist location 12 for at least about 3 inches. The upper and lower edges of the garment are bound in some suitable manner, as for instance by inturned seams 13 and 14.

At substantially the level of waistline 12, the back side of the girdle contains a central horizontally extending slit 15, which acts to facilitate free movement of a wearer's body. The elasticity of the material surrounding this slit 15 acts to normally return the material to a condition closing the slit, in which condition the upper and lower edges 16 and 17 of the slit extend parallel and are substantially in engagement. In order that the provision of the slit 15 may not interfere with proper support of the wearer's body at and near the sides of the girdle, this slit has a horizontal extent which is not greater than about two-thirds of the width of the girdle at the waistline 12, and is preferably as small as about one-half the girdle width at that point. The elastic material of the girdle is suitably bound about slit 15, typically by stitching 18 of the type used in binding button holes.

The body of the girdle may be formed sectionally of a number of interconnected sheets or panels of flexible elastic material, such as is conventionally used in foundation garments. More specifically, the girdle body may include a first sheet of material forming two vertically extending side panels 19, between which are received two front and rear panels 20 and 21. The material forming side panels 19 comprises a continuing (except only for the later described adjustment at A) elastic material which extends above as well as at the sides of slit 15, and thus forms the upper portion of the back side of the girdle.

The back panel 21 extends upwardly between side panels 19 from the lower end of the girdle, and terminates upwardly at the central portion of the lower edge 17 of slit 15. The forward panel 20 extends continuously from the lower edge of the girdle upwardly to its upper edge.

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Both the front and back panels 20 and 21 may taper to reduced widths at both their upper and lower ends as shown. These front and rear panels are of course securely stitched to the side panels along the entire vertical extents of the front and rear panels at seams 23.

The material forming side panels 19 is desirably of a type adapted to elastically stretch to a considerable extent both vertically and horizontally. For this purpose, the material of these side panels may comprise a woven fabric having rubber or other elastic threads extending both horizontally and vertically. The material forming front and rear panels 20 and 21, on the other hand, is adapted for substantial stretching in only a vertical direction, and is relatively inelastic and unstretchable horizontally. To attain this result, the material of the front and rear panels may have rubber or other elastic threads extending vertically, while having substantially inelastic horizontal threads.

In use, the illustrated girdle acts to support the body of a wearer very effectively at the hip location and also upwardly through and beyond the waistline 12. At the same time, the provision of slit 15 at the back of the girdle allows relatively free movement of the wearer's body, without discomfort or a tendency for the garment to move upwardly. In particular, when the wearer bends forwardly as seen in Fig. 1, the upper rear portion 22 of the girdle above slit 15 is free to move upwardly relative to the rest of the garment, so that this upper rear portion of the girdle may move with the contacted portion of the wearer's body, without at the same time pulling the rest of the garment upwardly, as occurs in conventional girdles. When the wearer subsequently returns to an erect position, the upper rear portion of the girdle moves downwardly to its original position, in which slit 15 is closed. During both types of movements, of course, the elasticity of the girdle material causes it to effectively support the wearer's body along the entire vertical extent of the girdle.

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As will be understood, there is generally little or no need for support of a wearer's body along the back of the waistline, where the slit 15 is located. However, support is required at and near the sides of the garment, and it is for this reason that the horizontal extent of slit 15 is preferably not greater than about two-thirds of the garment width at the waist location, and should be about as small as one-half of the garment width at that location.

I claim:

A foundation garment comprising an elastic girdle body having a portion adapted to extend upwardly above the waist of a wearer, the material of said body containing a horizontally extending slit at the back of the body and at approximately the waistline of the wearer, said girdle body including elastic material having both horizontal and vertical stretchability and extending horizontally above said slit and then downwardly at the opposite sides of the slit and inwardly therebeneath, said elastic material forming opposite side portions of the garment extending substantially the entire vertical dimension thereof, and said body including an elastic panel having vertical elasticity but relatively less horizontal elasticity and extending vertically between said side portions and terminating upwardly at said slit, the horizontal extent of said slit being not greater than about two-thirds of the width of said girdle body at the level of said slit.

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