SHOE PAD FOR ATTACHMENT TO THE OUTER SOLE OF A SHOE

Applicant: Theresa Rosenberger, Parma, OH (US)
Inventor: Theresa Rosenberger, Parma, OH (US)

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ABSTRACT
Described is a shoe pad for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe. The shoe pad includes a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole of the shoe. The first and second sides are offset by a thickness of the body. A decorative wrap is attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness.
SHOE PAD FOR ATTACHMENT TO THE OUTER SOLE OF A SHOE

[0001] This non-provisional patent application claims the benefit of, and priority to, U.S. provisional patent application no. 61/898,474, filed Oct. 31, 2013 with the U.S. Patent Office.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention
[0003] Disclosed in this application is a shoe pad. More specifically, disclosed is a shoe pad attachable to the outer sole of a shoe for providing metatarsal support having a decorative border.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art
[0005] Pads for attachment to the bottom of a shoe to provide support, such as metatarsal support, are known in the art. These pads may be positioned inside or outside the shoe, depending on their thickness, to improve support, provide cushioning, or increase the height of the shoe.

[0006] For shoe pads positioned on the outside of the shoe, the shoe pad may be unsightly or may not match the color or design of the shoe. Therefore there is a need for a decorative shoe pad that provides an improved appearance and proper foot support.

[0007] A single shoe pad may also be adapted to fit several different styles, colors, or types of shoes. The preferred color, shape, and design of the decorative element of the shoe pad may vary depending on the color, shape, and design of the shoe the pad is attached to. Therefore, there is a need for a customizable decorative shoe pad.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] Described in this application is a shoe pad for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe. The pad includes a body having a first side for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole. The first and second sides are offset by a body. Also included is a decorative wrap attached to the body at least partially around an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness. In particular, embodiments, the decorative wrap is removable, and may be replaced with a different decorative wrap.

[0009] The decorative wrap may be a continuous band, such as an elastic band, or may be a strip having a pair of opposing terminal ends. The strip may be secured to the body by one or more fasteners. Either of the decorative wrap arrangements may be secured to the body using either a permanent or temporary adhesive, or may be attached by means of a hook-and-loop fastener, such as Velcro. The body of the shoe pad may include a groove extending completely around the outer perimeter of the body for the decorative wrap.

[0010] The second side of the shoe pad may include an adhesive for attachment to the outer sole.

[0011] The shoe pad may include a central portion surrounded by an outer portion, the inner portion comprising a compressible or elastomeric member and the outer portion including the outer perimeter. The outer portion may be formed from a rigid material. The first side may be formed of a durable material configured to resist wear and may include voids to create a trend pattern.

[0012] Also disclosed is a method for attaching a decorative shoe pad to a shoe outer sole. The method includes the steps of providing a shoe pad, arranging a decorative wrap, securing the decorative wrap, and attaching the shoe pad to the outer sole. The shoe pad comprises a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole, the first and second sides being offset by a thickness of the body. The decorative wrap is arranged at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness. The decorative wrap is secured to the body of the shoe pad.

[0013] The decorative wrap may be a continuous band, such as an elastic band, or may be a strip having a pair of opposing terminal ends. The strip may be secured to the body by one or more fasteners. Either of the decorative wrap arrangements may be secured to the body using either a permanent or temporary adhesive, or may be attached by means of a hook-and-loop fastener, such as Velcro. The body of the shoe pad may include a groove extending completely around the outer perimeter of the body for the decorative wrap.

[0014] The body of the shoe pad may include a groove extending at least partially around the outer perimeter of the body, such that the decorative wrap is arranged within the groove. The groove may alternatively extend completely around the outer perimeter of the body. The decorative wrap may be removable and interchangeable, the method may include the step of removing the decorative wrap and arranging an alternative decorative wrap.

[0015] Finally disclosed is a padded shoe including a shoe having an outer sole and a shoe pad attached to the outer sole. The shoe pad includes a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole. The first and second sides are offset by a thickness of the body. The shoe pad further includes a decorative wrap attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0016] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a shoe pad and decorative wrap according to one embodiment.

[0017] FIG. 2 is a side view of a shoe having the shoe pad and decorative wrap of FIG. 1.

[0018] FIG. 3 is a bottom plan view of the shoe of FIG. 2.

[0019] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the shoe pad shown having a decorative wrap arranged within a groove of the shoe pad, in accordance with a particular embodiment of the invention.

[0020] FIG. 5 is a side plan view of the shoe pad of FIG. 4.

[0021] FIG. 6 perspective view of the shoe pad of FIG. 4 having a groove configured to receive a decorative wrap.

[0022] FIG. 7 is a side cutaway view of the shoe pad of FIG. 5, where the decorative wrap is attached to the shoe pad using Velcro or a similar type mechanism.

[0023] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the shoe pad according to yet another embodiment where the shoe pad is formed of different materials in a direction transverse to the pad thickness, in accordance with a particular embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0024] Described in this application is a shoe pad for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe. The pad includes a body having a first side for engaging a stepping surface and a
second side configured for attachment to the outer sole. The first and second sides are offset by a thickness of the body. A decorative wrap is attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness. The wrap being attached “at least partially” about the outer perimeter also includes the wrap extending completely around the perimeter.

[0025] With reference to FIGS. 1-3, a first exemplary embodiment is shown. In this figure, the shoe pad 10 is designed to attach to the toe portion of a shoe. Shoe, as used herein, more generally represents any desired footwear, such as a shoe, boot, pump, heeled shoe, flat, slide, or wedge, for example. The toe portion as generally used herein more generally refers to a forward foot portion, which provides support to a wearer for any or all of the toe, ball of the foot, and/or metatarsal portions of the foot. In the alternative, the shoe pad 10 may be designed for attachment to a heel of a shoe.

[0026] The shoe pad 10 includes a first side 12 for engaging a stepping surface which may be a walking or running surface such as a floor, sidewalk, street surface, or ground. The first side 12 may be formed from a durable material configured to resist wear. The first side 12 may also include additional material defining voids forming a tread on the first side 12. These treads increase friction between the shoe pad 10 and walking or running surface, improving traction and preventing slipping. The tread may also include voids to absorb water, mud, dirt, snow, or any other fluid or particulate to facilitate or improve traction for the wearer. These voids may form a pattern similar to a shoe pattern. The tread may be formed into the first side or may be provided by way of a peel layer, which may be formed from any known tread material, such as natural or synthetic rubber or wood, for example.

[0027] The shoe pad 10 further includes a second side 14 for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe 20 (FIG. 2) having a toe 22, heel 24, and outer sole 26 between the toe 22 and heel 24. As shown in FIG. 2, the second side 14 is attached to the outer sole 26 at the toe 22 of a shoe 20 to provide foot support. The second side 14 may be attached by any desired attachment means 15 or combination thereof. In particular embodiments, for example, such as in the embodiment shown, the attachment means 15 is an adhesive, such as a permanent or temporary adhesive. In other embodiments, the attachment means is a connecting structure, such as a bracket or the like, one or more fasteners, such as screws, buttons, nails, a hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro®, or any other type of attachment means.

[0028] In particular embodiments, the decorative wrap may comprise or include one or more ornamentation features, such as, for example: individual jewels or other objects; strands of jewels or ornamentation; one or more letters, words, or phrases; texture; printed, marked, or painted designs or patterns; or any other desired ornamentation, which may be permanently or temporarily attached to the wrap, formed with the wrap, or directly formed into the pad body itself. It is appreciated that the jewels may be real or imitation. An exemplary design or pattern could include a leopard print, zebra print, a snake skin print or texture, or leather print or texture, for example. In the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the decorative wrap 18 includes ornamentation 18A comprising strands of jewels or other objects. In the embodiment of FIGS. 4 and 5, the wrap 37 includes ornamentation 37A comprising a printed design. In the embodiment of FIG. 8, the wrap 46 shown also includes ornamentation 46A comprising a printed design.

[0029] It is appreciated that ornamentation features may be attached by an attachment means, which may comprise, for example: thread, wire, or cable; one or more fasteners, such as screws, nails, hooks, pins, rivets, buttons, clips, buckle, or the like, of example; permanent or temporary adhesive; hook and loop fasteners, such as Velcro® or any similar material; magnets; or any other type of permanent or temporary attachment means.

[0030] FIG. 3 is a bottom view of the shoe 20 shown in FIG. 2 further illustrating the toe 22 and heel 24 portions of the shoe 20 and outer sole 26 extending between the toe 22 and heel 24. The second side 14 of the shoe pad 10 may be attached at the toe (which may support any of the toes or mid-foot, such as the ball of the foot), for example, as described above, heel 24, an intermediate point between the toe 22 and heel 24, or extend the length of the outer sole 26. Different types of shoes may have different sizes and shapes of toes 22 and heels 24 and therefore the shoe pad 10 may be sized and shaped to accommodate a variety of shoe styles, shapes, and sizes.

[0031] With further reference to FIGS. 1-3, the first 12 and second 14 sides of the shoe pad 10 are offset by a thickness of the body 16. In is understood that the body 16 includes a compressible material, which includes an elastomeric material, such as synthetic or natural rubber, for example, that provides cushion when walking or running on a ground surface. Compressible material may also comprise a closed-cell or open-cell structure, including a foam or sponge, a gel, or an inflation chamber.

[0032] Any compressible material may form the entire body, or only portions of the body such that the compressible material forms less than all of the body. For example, in particular embodiments, the body is entirely formed of the compressible material. In other embodiments, the body thickness is formed of multiple layers each of a particular thickness, where one or more of the layers is formed of compressible material. For example, in an exemplary embodiment shown in FIGS. 4-7, a shoe pad 30 has a body 31 comprising a first layer 32, second layer 34, and an intermediate layer 36 arranged between the first 32 and second 34 layers to maintain their shape and position when weight is applied to the shoe pad 30 while the intermediate layer 36 provides a cushion for the wearer. It is understood that, in other embodiments where the body is formed of a plurality of layers, the body thickness may be formed of two (2) or more layers of material, and any such layer may comprise compressible or substantially non-compressible material in other variations. In the arrangement shown, the first 32 and second 34 layers maintain their shape and position when weight is applied to the shoe pad 30 while the intermediate layer 36 provides a cushion for the wearer. At least one of the other layers is formed of compressible material.

[0033] In further embodiments, one or more portions of the body arranged in a direction transverse to the body thickness are formed of different materials, one of which being compressible material. For example, with reference to an exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 8, a central portion 42 of the shoe pad body 41 is formed of a first material, while a second, surrounding portion 44 of the body is formed of a second
material. While each first and second portion extends the full thickness of the shoe pad body 41 between first and second sides 45A, 45B, it is appreciated that any such portion of the body, such as any first and second portion 42, 44, may extend through the full or partial thickness of the shoe pad body 41, such that when extending partially through the shoe body thickness, any such portion may be exposed to any of the first and second sides 45A, 45B or may be fully enclosed within the body, such that each is submersed below the first and second sides.

With further reference to FIG. 1, a decorative wrap 18 is attached to the body 16 at least partially about an outer perimeter or circumference of the body 16 in a direction transverse to the body thickness as shown in FIGS. 1-2. The decorative wrap 18 is visible between the shoe 20 and floor when the shoe is being worn, providing a decorative element to the shoe pad 10. The decorative wrap 18 may be a continuous band, a strip having a pair of opposing terminal ends, or other arrangement, such as two or more adjacent strips, each having opposing terminal ends.

In particular embodiments, the decorative wrap 18 is a continuous band. In more particular embodiments, the continuous band is an elastic band or strap, which may be expanded to pass over one of the first 12 or second 14 sides and contract, and which, in more particular embodiments, engages a groove in the base 16.

In another arrangement, the decorative wrap 18 is a strip having a pair of opposable terminal ends. The terminal ends are secured to the body by use of any attachment means 19 discussed or contemplated herein, which includes, for example, thread, one or more fasteners, such as a rivet, screw, hook, pin, button, clasp, buckle, or other type of fastener, a hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro® for example or other like material, or any temporary or permanent adhesive. In the exemplary embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the attachment means 19 is a clasp.

In particular embodiments, the body includes a groove extending at least partially (which includes completely) around a perimeter of the body and along a thickness of the shoe pad body, the groove being configured to at least partially receive the decorative wrap. For example, with reference to the exemplary embodiment of FIGS. 4-7, a decorative wrap 38 is arranged within a groove 37 (also referred to as a “recess”) extending around an outer perimeter of the shoe pad or shoe pad body. In the embodiment shown, the groove 37 is arranged along the thickness of the intermediate layer 36 and between the first 32 and second 34 layers the shoe pad body. In the embodiment shown, the first 32 and second 34 layers provide a border or lip for retaining the decorative wrap 38 within the groove. FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the shoe pad with the decorative wrap 38 removed. It is appreciated that a groove may be formed in any other body design, including a body formed of a single material (which forms a monolithic body) or a body formed of different material portions arranged in a direction transverse to the body thickness, such as is exemplary shown in FIG. 8.

FIG. 7 is a side cutaway view of the shoe pad 30 showing the arrangement of the decorative wrap 38 positioned within the groove 37 and extending between the first 32 and second 34 layers. In this arrangement, the decorative wrap 38 has a width less than the thickness of the shoe pad 30 so that the first 32 and second 34 layers are visible. FIG. 7 also illustrates attachment means 39 between the decorative wrap 38 and groove 37. In the illustrated embodiment, the attachment means 39 comprises a hook and loop fastener, such as Velcro®, where the hooks are provided on a back surface of the decorative wrap 38 and the loops are provided within the groove 37 of the pad, although the hooks and loops may be oppositely be arranged on the wrap and the pad.

In another embodiment, illustrated in FIG. 8, the alternative shoe pad 40 includes different portions arranged in a direction transverse to the body thickness. In particular, the embodiment of FIG. 8 provides a core or central portion 42, a surrounding outer portion 44, and decorative wrap 46. In this arrangement, the core 42 is a compressible material and the outer portion 44 is a material that is less compressible than the core 42, such as low compression or substantially non-compressible material. In particular embodiments, the outer portion 44 is made of a material that does not substantially change in shape when a weight is applied to the shoe pad 40, so that the decorative wrap 46 maintains its shape and appearance when a weight is applied. The illustrated embodiment may include a treaded bottom surface 50 for engaging a stepping surface. In the illustrated embodiment, the core 42 extends between the first and second sides and is exposed. In other embodiments, the core 42 may not be exposed but may be hidden by top and/or bottom layers of the shoe pad 40.

With further reference to FIG. 8, the decorative wrap 46 extends between the opposite sides of the shoe pad so that the shoe pad is not visible around the edges of the decorative wrap 46. The decorative wrap, according to this illustration, may be attached to the shoe pad 40 by an adhesive. Alternatively, a tread (not shown) may extend from the bottom side of the shoe pad 40 to prevent the seam between the decorative wrap 48 and outer section 44 from wearing due to contact with the ground.

The decorative wrap described in any of the above embodiments may be less than or equal to the thickness of the shoe pad. The decorative wrap may comprise multiple, smaller portions of decorative wrap positioned adjacent one another, or may comprise a single portion extending across all or a portion of the thickness of the shoe pad.

Also described in this application is a method for attaching a decorative shoe pad to a shoe outer sole. The method includes providing a shoe pad, arranging a warp about the pad, securing the strap to the pad, and attaching the second side of the pad to the outer sole. These steps will be described in the above described order, but it should be apparent that the steps may not necessarily be performed in that order.

In a first step of the method, a shoe pad is provided. The shoe pad includes a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface; such as a walking or running surface including the ground, floor, sidewalk, street, or the like; and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe. The second side may include adhesives, connecting structure, or may be attached to the outer sole of a shoe by means of one or more fasteners, such as shoe tacks. The first and second sides are offset by and define a thickness of the body. The body may include a groove extending at least partially (or completely) around the outer perimeter of the body for receiving a decorative wrap.

A decorative wrap is next provided and arranged at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness. The decorative wrap, as shown in FIG. 1, is positioned between the first and second sides. As shown in FIG. 2, when the shoe pad is attached to the
outer sole of a shoe, the wrap is visible between the shoe and floor. The decorative wrap may be continuous, such as an elastic band, or may comprise a strip having opposable terminal ends.

[0045] The decorative wrap is secured to the body of the pad. The decorative wrap may be affixed by means of an adhesive (permanent or temporary), frictional engagement (such as an elastic wrap), or may be secured by one or more fasteners, for example a rivet, screw, hook, pin, button, or the like. Alternatively, the wrap may be secured to the body by use of a hook-and-loop type fastener, such as Velcro. The decorative wrap may be interchangeable and attached by a removable means so that the decorative wrap can be removed and an alternative decorative wrap can be attached to the body.

[0046] In a final step of the method, the second side of the shoe pad is attached to the outer sole. The shoe pad may be attached by means of an adhesive, complementary connecting structure, or fasteners between the shoe pad and outer sole.

[0047] In another embodiment, a kit for attaching a shoe pad to an outer sole of a shoe is provided. The kit includes a shoe pad having a first side for engaging a stepping surface and a second side for attachment to the outer sole. A thickness of the body between the first and second sides defines a body of the shoe pad. The shoe pad may be adjustable in size, shape, or style, such as by cutting as desired to achieve a desired size for a particular shoe or such as cutting or peeling along any pre-defined demarcation or partition. Also included is one or more lengths of decorative wrap that may be attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body. The decorative wraps may be cut to size by the user to fit the selected size and shape of shoe pad so that the decorative wrap extends partially or completely around the shoe pad. The kit includes at least one or a combination of several means for attaching the decorative wraps to the shoe pad. Any such means for attaching may comprise any means for attaching described or contemplated herein, which includes permanent or temporary adhesives, hook-and-loop fasteners, fasteners, thread, or any other desired attachment means. The decorative wraps may comprise one or more of a variety of designs, materials, thicknesses, widths, and lengths.

[0048] Finally disclosed is a padded shoe comprising a shoe and a shoe pad. The shoe pad includes a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to the outer sole. The first and second sides are offset by a thickness of the body. The shoe pad also includes a decorative wrap attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness.

[0049] While this invention has been described with reference to particular embodiments thereof, it shall be understood that such description is by way of illustration only and should not be construed as limiting the scope of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the scope and content of the invention are to be defined only by the terms of the following claims. Furthermore, it is understood that the features of any specific embodiment discussed herein may be combined with one or more features of any one or more embodiments otherwise discussed or contemplated herein unless otherwise stated.

What is claimed is:

1. A shoe pad for attachment to the outer sole of a shoe, the pad comprising:
   a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to said outer sole, the first and second sides being offset by a thickness of the body;
   a decorative wrap attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness.

2. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the decorative wrap is removably attached to the body.

3. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the decorative wrap is a continuous band.

4. The shoe pad of claim 3 wherein the decorative wrap is elastic.

5. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the decorative wrap comprises a strip having a pair of opposing terminal ends.

6. The shoe pad of claim 5 wherein the terminal ends are secured to the body by use of one or more fasteners.

7. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the decorative wrap is secured to the body using an adhesive.

8. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the decorative wrap is secured to the body using a hook and loop fastener.

9. The shoe pad of claim 1, where the body of the shoe pad has a groove extending at least partially around the outer perimeter of the body, and where the decorative wrap is arranged within the groove.

10. The shoe pad of claim 1, where the groove extends completely around the outer perimeter of the body.

11. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the second side includes an adhesive for attachment to said outer sole.

12. The shoe pad of claim 1 wherein the body comprises a central portion surrounded by an outer portion, the inner portion comprising a compressible member and the outer portion including the outer perimeter.

13. The shoe pad of claim 12 wherein the outer portion is formed from a rigid material.

14. The shoe pad of claim 1, where the first side is formed of a durable material configured to resist wear.

15. A method for attaching a decorative shoe pad to a shoe outer sole, the method comprising the steps of:
   providing a shoe pad comprising a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface a thickness of the body, the first and second sides being offset by a thickness of the body;
   arranging a decorative wrap at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness
   securing said decorative wrap to the body of the pad; and,
   attaching said second side of said shoe pad to said outer sole.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the decorative wrap is removably attached to the body, the method further comprising a step of removing the decorative wrap and attaching a different wrap to the body.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein the decorative wrap is elastic.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein the decorative wrap comprises a strip having a pair of opposing terminal ends, where the terminal ends are secured to the body by use of one or more fasteners.

19. The method of claim 15, wherein the decorative wrap is secured to the body using hook and loop fasteners.

20. The method of claim 15, where the body of the shoe pad has a groove extending at least partially around the outer
perimeter of the body, such that in the step of arranging the decorative wrap is arranged within the groove.

21. The method of claim 15, where the decorative wrap is removable and interchangeable, the method further comprising removing the decorative wrap and attaching an alternative decorative wrap.

22. A padded shoe comprising:
a shoe having an outer sole; and
a shoe pad attached to the outer sole, the shoe pad comprising:
a body having a first side configured for engaging a stepping surface and a second side configured for attachment to said outer sole, the first and second sides being offset by a thickness of the body; and
a decorative wrap attached to the body at least partially about an outer perimeter of the body in a direction transverse to the body thickness.

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