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(54) **INTERCHANGEABLE SHOE SYSTEM**

(71) Applicant: **Benjamin James Kaiser**, Modesto, CA (US)

(72) Inventor: **Benjamin James Kaiser**, Modesto, CA (US)

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A43C 11/12	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***A43B 3/242*** (2013.01); ***A43C 11/12*** (2013.01); ***A43B 3/12*** (2013.01); ***A43B 23/24*** (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An interchangeable shoe system is provided that is comprised of a removable upper unit and a completed shoe unit that can be interconnected utilizing respective upper and lower connecting means. In accordance with a preferred embodiment, the completed shoe unit is equipped with Velcro on the top of the front half portion. The front half portion (also termed as the "front half" herein) is defined as the area from the ankle opening, and to the sides of the ankle opening, to the front end (the toe section). Additionally, the completed shoe unit is also equipped with a zipper on the top of the front half portion. The zipper surrounds the completed shoe unit, generally beginning from the middle of one side of the completed shoe unit, extending around the front end of the completed shoe unit (the toe section), and ending at the middle of the opposite side. The removable upper unit is equipped with the other half of the zipper and Velcro. The Velcro and zipper on the upper unit will connect with the Velcro and zipper on the completed shoe unit via their respective connecting means. Thus, the upper unit and completed shoe unit are able to attach and detach from one another. Additionally, the zipper and Velcro will secure the upper unit to the completed shoe unit against movement. The presented interchangeable shoe system allows the user the option to change the upper unit or completed shoe unit according to a variety of shapes, colors fabrics, functionalities, and designs.

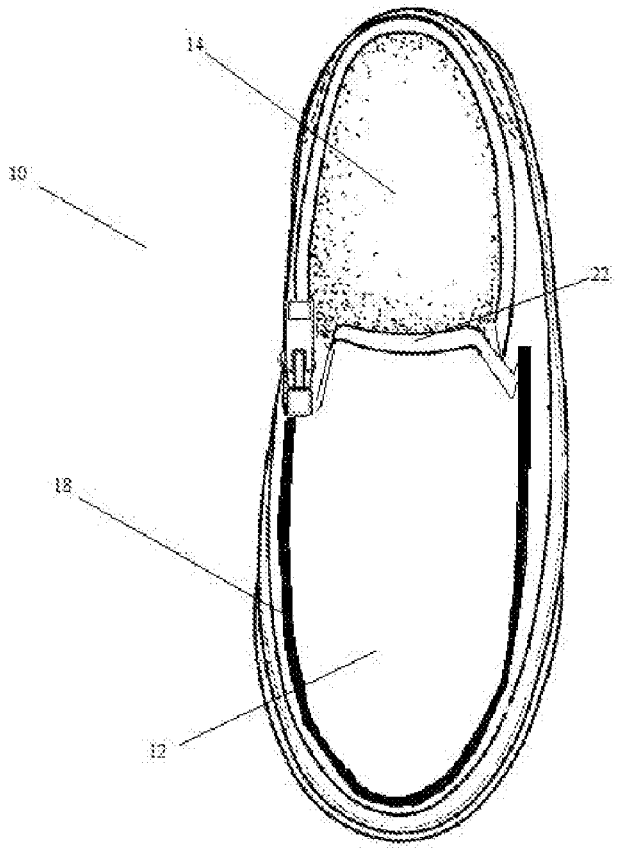


FIG. 1

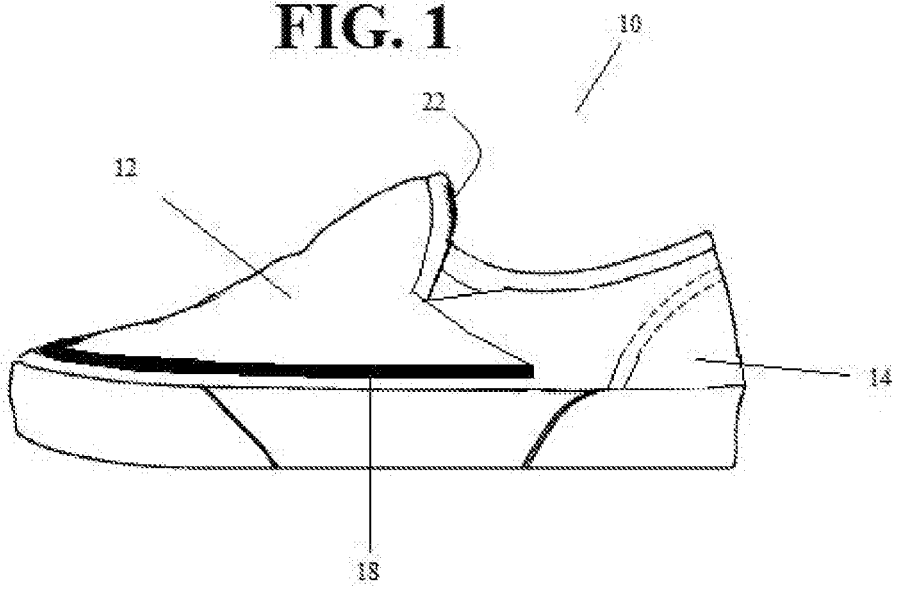


FIG. 2

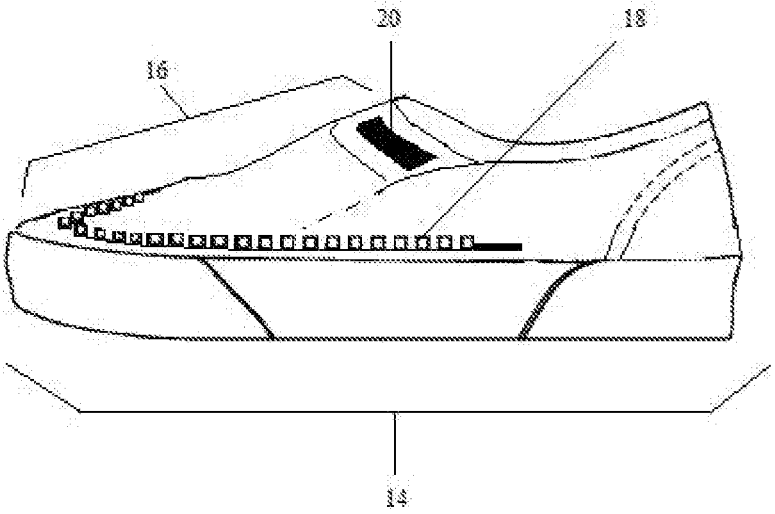


FIG. 3

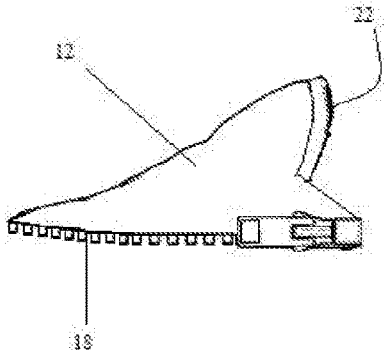


FIG. 4

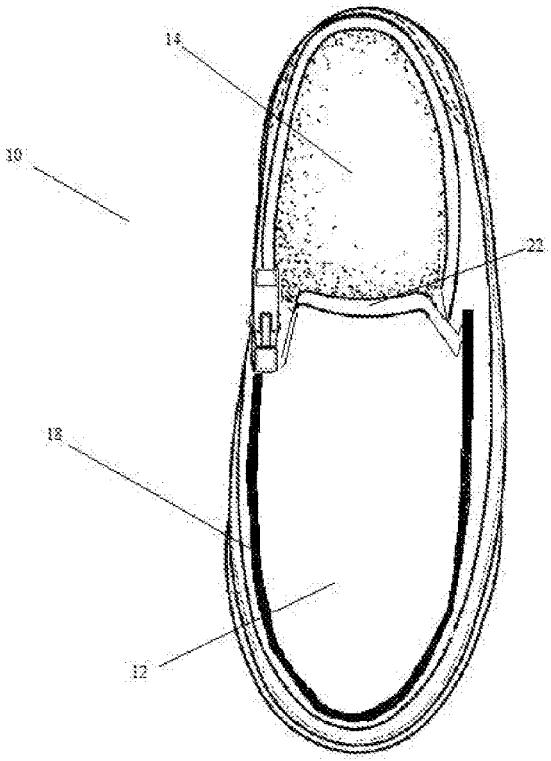


FIG. 5

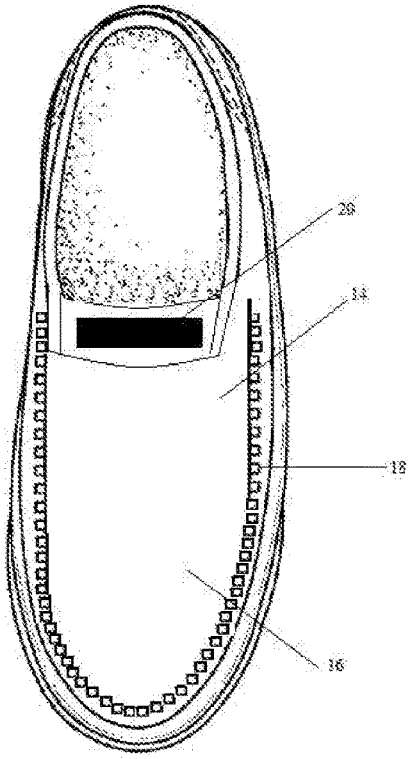


FIG. 6A

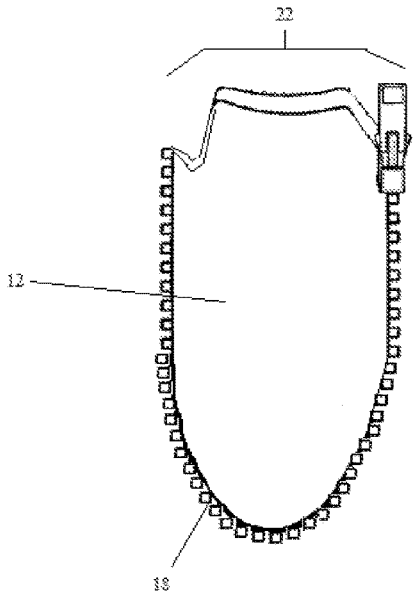


FIG. 6B

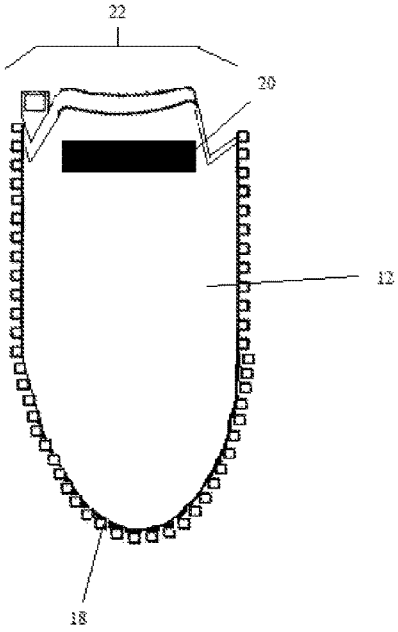
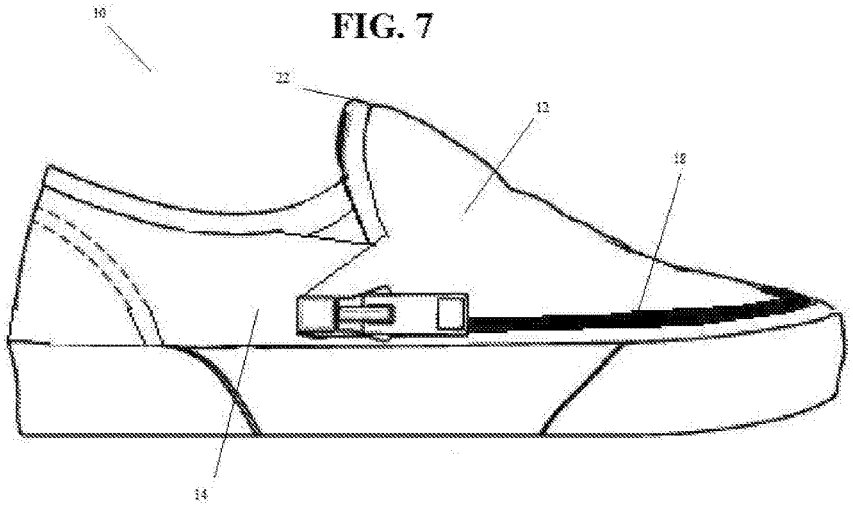


FIG. 7



INTERCHANGEABLE SHOE SYSTEM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The applicant d inventor, Benjamin James Kaiser, claims benefit to his previously filed provisional patent application. The provisional patent application, detailed in the Application Data Sheet, was filed on Dec. 15, 2016 and has an application number of 62/434,592.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] The invention's research and development was not federally sponsored.

SEQUENCE LISTING

[0003] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Inventions

[0004] The present inventions relate generally to footwear and more particularly, to a unique interchangeable shoe system having a removable upper unit and a completed shoe unit that are interconnected through various means.

2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Interchangeable shoe structures that use separate uppers and soles have repeatedly appeared in the art of shoe making. Generally, these shoe structures include a zipper that allows the upper units to be securely connected to the soles. Additionally, many of these shoe structures allow a user the ability to change the upper unit or sole unit.

[0006] Interchangeable shoe structures are beneficial as they allow the user to customize his shoes according to a variety of designs, fabrics, and colors. The user can showcase his originality through his footwear as well as distinguish his pair of shoes from another pair. Additionally, users can utilize different tops or soles for various purposes. For instance, a user can opt to wear a certain colored top or sole in order to match a certain outfit.

[0007] Interchangeable shoe structures are also beneficial as they allow the user to replace a used part of the shoe with a newer edition. Generally, the sole of the shoe becomes more tattered than the top due to constant impact from movement. A normal shoe in today's market must be discarded in its entirety once the sole becomes worn out, even if the top is in adequate condition. However, this is not the case with interchangeable shoes as they allow the user to save the top and simply replace the sole, or vice versa depending on the unique situation.

[0008] Previous attempts have been made to create a shoe system that allows the user to interconnect and interchange an upper unit and a sole. However, a successful interchangeable shoe system has yet to be seen in today's market that provides the user with the appropriate durability and strength needed upon movement. Additionally, there has not been an interchangeable shoe system in today's market that removes the discomfort on a user's foot from the zipper that is utilized to interconnect the upper unit to the sole. Lastly, there has not been an interchangeable shoe system in today's market that allows the user the ability to change the appearance, material makeup, or functionality of either the front half, back half, or both individual halves of the shoe.

[0009] Therefore, there is need in the art for an interchangeable shoe system that provides the strength, durability, and endurance needed for casual or athletic movement. Further, there is need in the art for an interchangeable shoe system that relieves the user of the discomfort that is created from the utilization of a zipper as the means for interconnection between two or more elements in an interconnected shoe system. Further, there is need in the art for an interchangeable shoe system that provides the user the ability to interchange the front half of shoe, back half of the shoe, or both halves of the shoe, in comparison to only interchanging the entire upper shoe from font to back. Further, there is need in the art for an interchangeable shoe system that allows the user to quickly change the aesthetic appearance or functionality of the front half of the shoe, back half of the shoe, or both halves of the shoe, while maintaining the strength needed to keep the upper unit and base unit connected during movement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] In accordance with an embodiment, an interchangeable shoe system is provided that is comprised of a removable upper unit and a completed shoe unit. The completed shoe unit can be defined as an orthodox shoe in today's market, such as: sneakers, athletic shoes, hoots, wedges, slip-ons, and other types of shoes known in the art. The removable upper unit and the completed shoe unit can attach and detach from each other.

[0011] The completed shoe unit can have a zipper from the middle of one side of the shoe to the middle of the other side of the shoe. The zipper would extend across the front half of the shoe, beginning at the middle of one side, circling around the toe section, and ending at the other middle side of the shoe. The zipper would be located above the sole of the shoe on the outside material. Additionally, Velcro would be attached to the completed shoe unit in the area that is within the periphery of the zipper, ranging from the portion of the shoe that is located in front, or to the side, of the ankle opening to the toe section of the completed shoe unit. The Velcro, similar to the zipper, would also be located on the outside of the shoe's material.

[0012] The upper unit can be designed in order to form around the completed shoe unit's front portion, extending from the part of the shoe that is located in front, or to the side, of the ankle opening to the toe section of the completed shoe unit. The zipper call partially extend around the periphery of the upper unit. The zipper will be able to connect with the zipper on the completed shoe unit. Additionally, Velcro will be placed within the periphery of the zipper on the upper unit. The Velcro's location on the upper unit will correspond appropriately to the location of Velcro on the completed shoe unit in order to attach to one another. The zipper and Velcro will allow the upper unit to be securely attached, yet removable, to the completed shoe unit in the case of transverse force.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] The features of the inventions disclosed herein are described below with reference to the drawings of the preferred embodiments. The illustrated embodiments are

intended to illustrate, but not to limit the inventions. The drawings contain the following figures:

[0014] FIG. **1** is a perspective of the interchangeable shoe system, according to an embodiment, including a removable upper unit and a completed shoe unit.

[0015] FIG. **2** is a perspective of the completed shoe unit, according to an embodiment.

[0016] FIG. **3** is a perspective of the removable upper unit, according to an embodiment.

[0017] FIG. **4** is a top view of FIG. **1**

[0018] FIG. **5** is a top view of FIG. **2**

[0019] FIG. **6**A is a top view of FIGS. **3** and **6**B

[0020] FIG. **6**B is a below view of FIGS. **3** and **6**A

[0021] FIG. **7** is an opposite perspective of FIG. **1**

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0022] While the present description sets forth specific details of various embodiments, it will be appreciated that the description is illustrative only and should not be construed in any way as limiting. Furthermore, various applications of such embodiments and modifications thereto, which may occur to those who are skilled in the art, are also encompassed by the general concepts described herein.

[0023] As will be described, in further detail below, embodiments of the present inventions provide an interchangeable shoe system that allows the user to change the aesthetic, material makeup, and functionality of the front half portion of the shoe, referred herein as the "upper unit," as well as the base of the shoe, referred herein as the "completed shoe unit." For example, the user may decide to change the upper unit from one that is equipped with laces to one that is not. Additionally, the user may wish change the base of the shoe from an athletic sole to that of a recreational sole.

[0024] One of the many advantages associated with embodiments disclosed herein is that the zipper attached to the completed shoe unit is on the outside. Therefore, the user's foot will not come in direct contact with the zipper, as there will be material separating the user's foot from the zipper. The interconnecting means described herein will securely join the upper unit and completed shoe unit together. Furthermore, the presented interchangeable shoe system is unique in its design as the interchangeable upper unit will only constitute the front half portion of the shoe, instead of the entire top of the shoe. This design is very important as it will allow the user's upper unit and completed shoe unit to be made of different materials, have different colors and serve different functionalities. As a result, embodiments of the interchangeable shoe system can allow the user the option to freely and quickly modify his shoe at any time while still maintaining the aesthetic appeal of a normal shoe sold in today's market. The presented interchangeable shoe system is also beneficial to the user in that the two elements can be replaced in the case of an undesired situation. For instance, if a food product or liquid spills on the upper unit, a user can quickly rectify the situation by changing his stained or wet upper unit for a clean or dry unit. In addition, the removable upper units in the presented interchangeable shoe system will allow a user to travel more lightly if he desires to have multiple footwear attires, in comparison to traveling with multiple shoes. Lastly, the presented interchangeable shoe system is beneficial to the footwear consumer as it will allow users a more affordable way to change their current shoe's aestheticism as well as replace older elements for newer elements.

[0025] The drawings herein are meant to illustrate the preferred embodiments of the present inventions. The drawings are not meant to limit the inventions. FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the interchangeable shoe system **10**, according to an embodiment, comprised of a removable upper unit **12** and a completed shoe unit **14**. The upper unit **12** and completed shoe unit **14** can be interconnected through various means. FIG. **1** represents the shoe system **10** after the upper unit **12** and the completed shoe unit **14** have been connected.

[0026] The interchangeable shoe system **10** is illustrated in FIGS. **1**-**7** as a slip-on shoe. However, it is contemplated that the upper unit **12** and completed shoe unit **14** in the interchangeable shoe system **10** described herein can be modified to incorporate a myriad of types of shoes, designs, materials, functionalities, and shapes. As illustrated in FIG. **2**, the completed shoe unit **14** substantially covers the user's foot as an orthodox slip-on shoe in today's market would, including the toes, forefoot, and the heel portion of the foot below the ankle. The completed shoe unit **14** can be modified to incorporate a variety of types of shoes, such as: boots, athletic shoes, slippers, sandals, wedges, laced shoes, and other types of shoes known in the art. Therefore, although the figures illustrate exemplary embodiments of the completed shoe unit **14**, this element of the interchangeable shoe system **10** can be modified to provide the user with a myriad of personalization options as desired.

[0027] However, in regards to open-toed shoe embodiments, such as sandals, the completed shoe unit **14**, in that type of embodiment, will not be open-toed. Instead, the front half of the completed shoe unit **14** will always be covered, as illustrated by **16**. As shown in FIG. **2**, **16** is a covering which prevents the front half portion of the user's foot from being visible from an outside perspective. The covering provided by **16** is very important to the interchangeable shoe system **10** as it prevents the user's foot from coming into direct contact with the means for interconnection. In the case of the illustrated embodiment, **16** prevents the user's foot from coining into direct contact with the zipper **18** and the Velcro **20**, which serve as the connection means for the interchangeable shoe system **10**. The connecting means **18** and **20** can tend to ensure that the upper unit **12** and the completed shoe unit **14** remain securely attached. However, the connecting means can also include other materials that allow the upper unit **12** to be attached to the completed shoe unit **14**, such as buttons, clips, hooks, straps, clamps, and other types of fasteners known in the art.

[0028] FIG. **3** is a perspective of the removable upper unit **12**. FIG. **6**A illustrates FIGS. **3** and **6**B from a top view and FIG. **6**B illustrates FIGS. **3** and **6**A from a below view. In accordance with a preferred embodiment, the zipper **18** partially surrounds the outer border of the upper unit **12**, as shown in FIGS. **6**A and **6**B. The zipper extends around the upper unit **12** in a U-shape. Referencing FIGS. **6**A and **6**B, the zipper does not extend around the northern side **22** of the upper unit **12**. A variety of types of zippers known in the art may be utilized. As shown in FIG. **6**B, Velcro **20** is attached to the upper unit **12** on the bottom side. The zipper **18** and Velcro **20** on the upper unit **12** will be able to connect with the zipper **18** and Velcro **20** on the completed shoe unit **14**. Once connected, the Velcro **20** from both the upper unit **12** and completed shoe unit **14** will not be visible from an

outside perspective. Additionally, although the exemplary upper unit **12** illustrates the front half portion of a slip-on shoe, it is contemplated that the upper unit **12** can be modified to incorporate a variety of types of shoe tops known in the art.

[0029] FIG. **4** is a top view of FIG. **1**. FIG. **5** is a top view of FIG. **2**. In accordance with a preferred embodiment, FIG. **4** illustrates the interchangeable shoe system **10** once the removable upper unit **12** has been connected to the completed shoe unit **14**. On the other hand, FIG. **5** illustrates the interchangeable shoe system **10** once the removable upper unit **12** has been detached from the completed shoe unit **14**. FIG. **7** is the opposite perspective of FIG. **1**. As illustrated in the exemplary embodiment of the invention, the upper unit **12** fits snugly around the top of the front half of the completed shoe unit **14**. However, the upper unit **12** may be designed to fit loosely around the top portion of the front half of the completed shoe unit **14**, in accordance with a myriad of design options.

What is claimed is:

1. An interchangeable shoe system that is comprised of:

a completed shoe unit that covers the foot as an orthodox shoe would; however, in the case of an open-toed shoe embodiment, such as a sandal, the front half portion of the sandal would be covered: connecting means are on the top of the front half portion of the completed shoe unit in order to attach and detach to the removable upper unit; and

a removable upper unit that has connecting means to attach, and detach, to the top of the front half portion of the completed shoe unit.

2. The interchangeable shoe system of claim **1** wherein the connecting means in an embodiment are zippers and Velcro.

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