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(54) **PEDICURE SLIPPER WITH TOE SEPARATOR AND METHOD**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

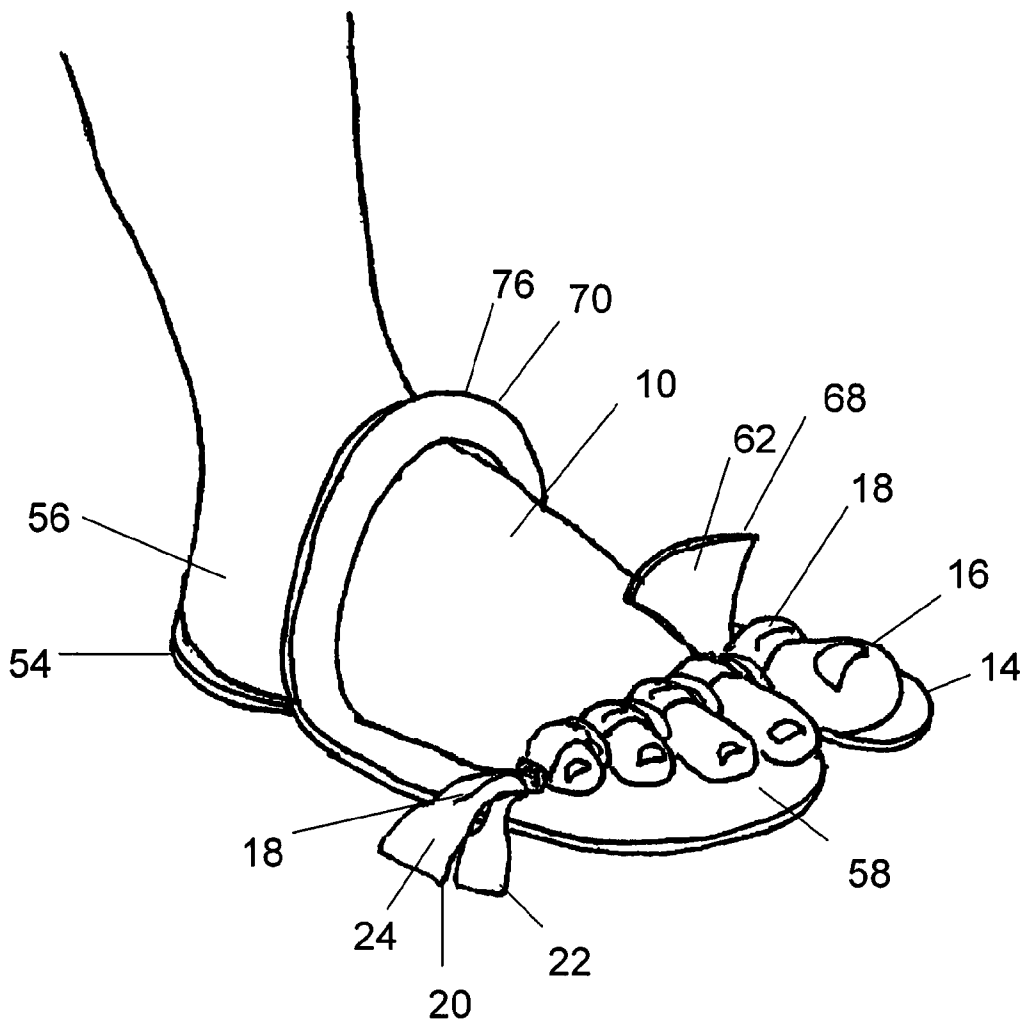
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A pedicure slipper having a toe separator is provided. The pedicure slipper features a thin sole and a fabric toe separator attached to the sole at a single location. The fabric toe separator is wrapped about each toe and about itself between the toes. A tee-shaped toe-retaining member is defined by cuts through the sole and folds to an upright position to be disposed between the big toe and second toe of the wearer. An arcuate cut through the sole defines an ankle-engaging member and folds to an upright position to retain the sole to the ankle of the wearer.

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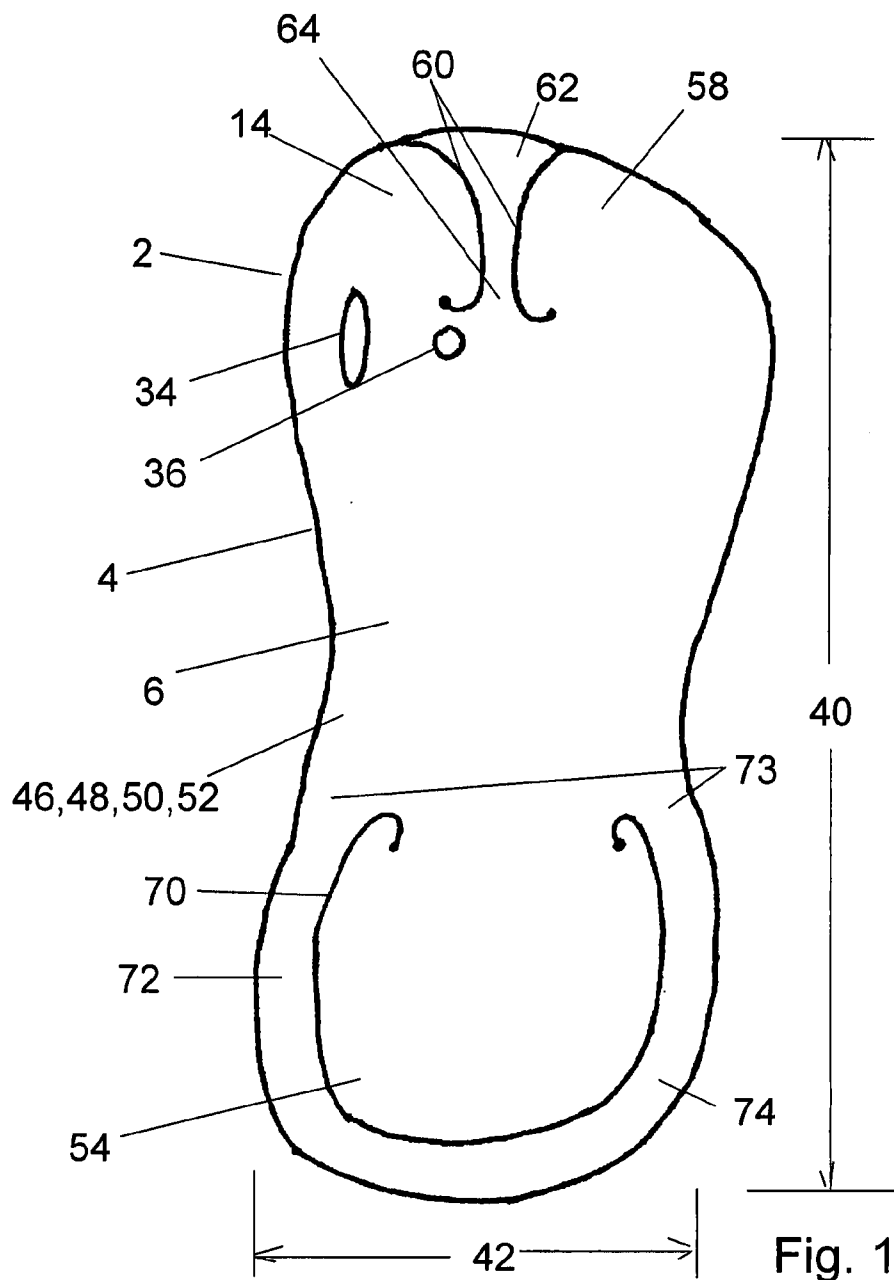


Fig. 1

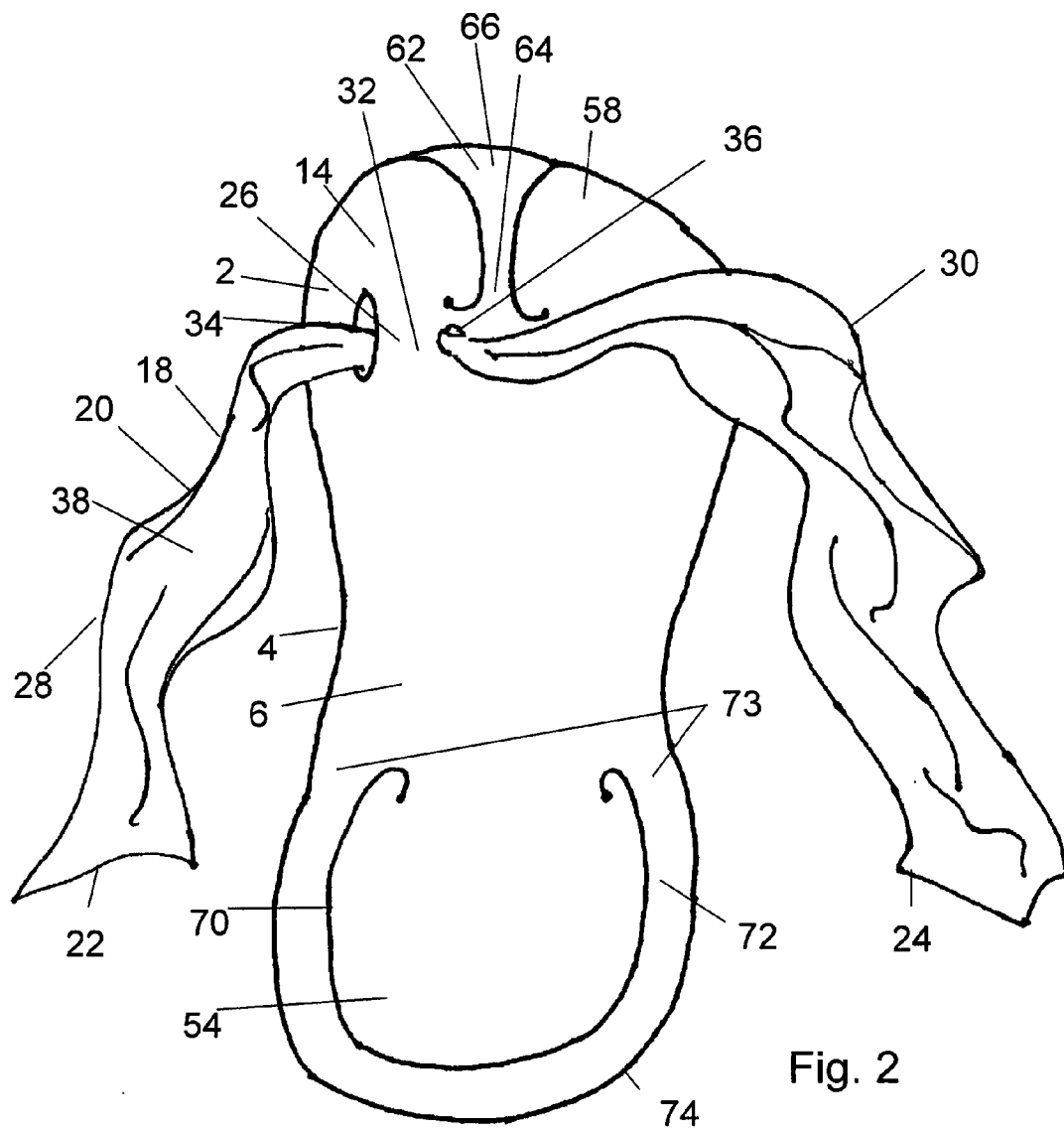


Fig. 2

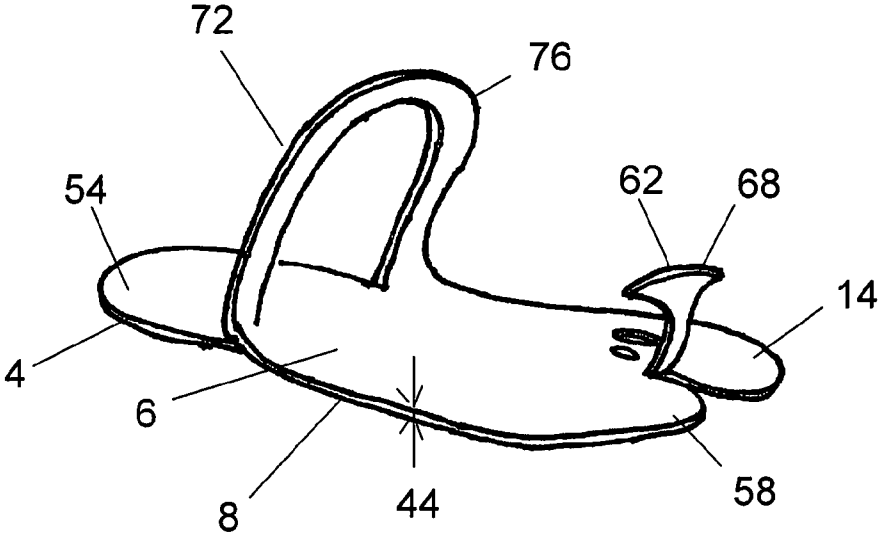
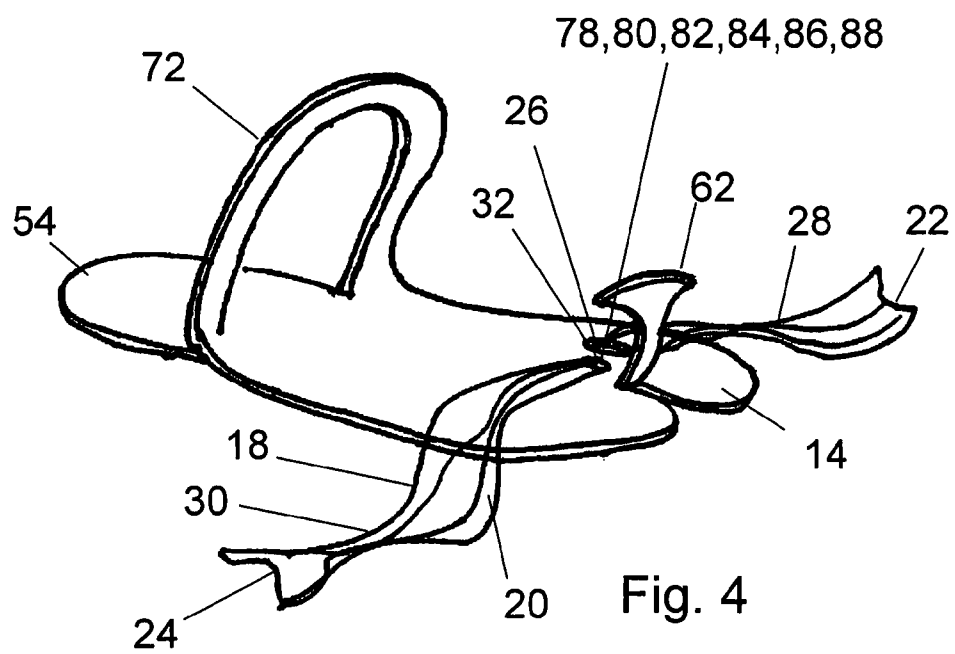


Fig. 3



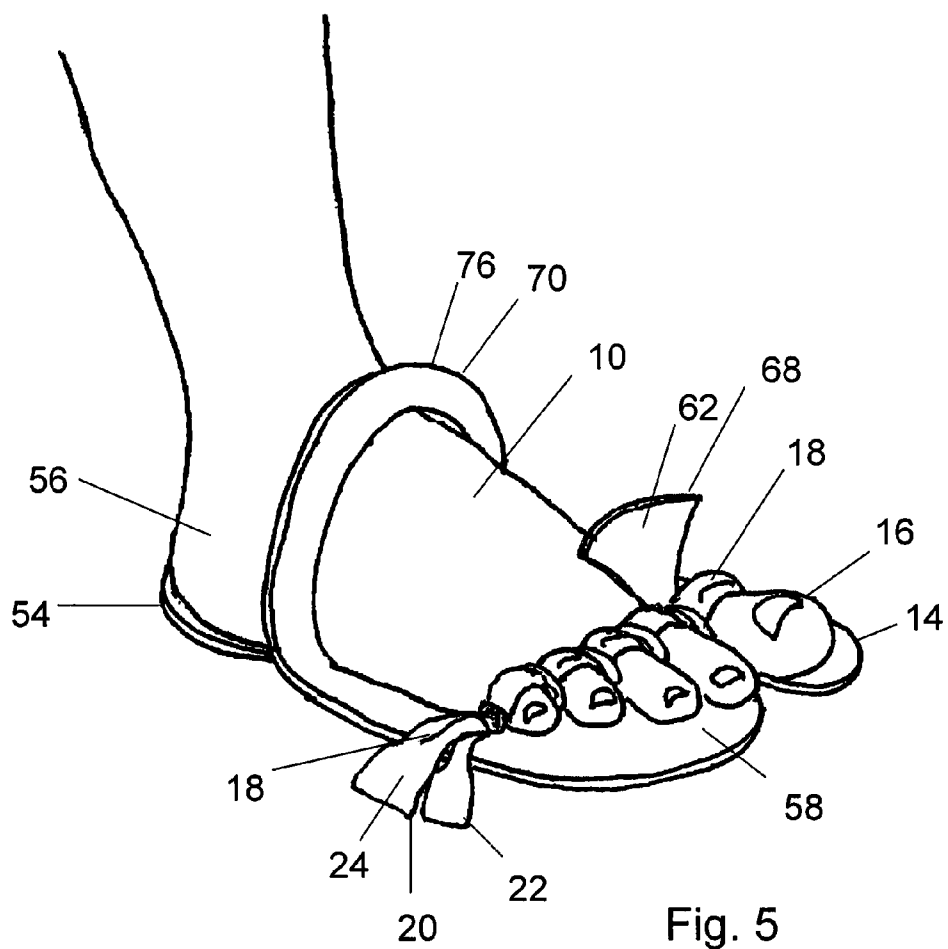


Fig. 5

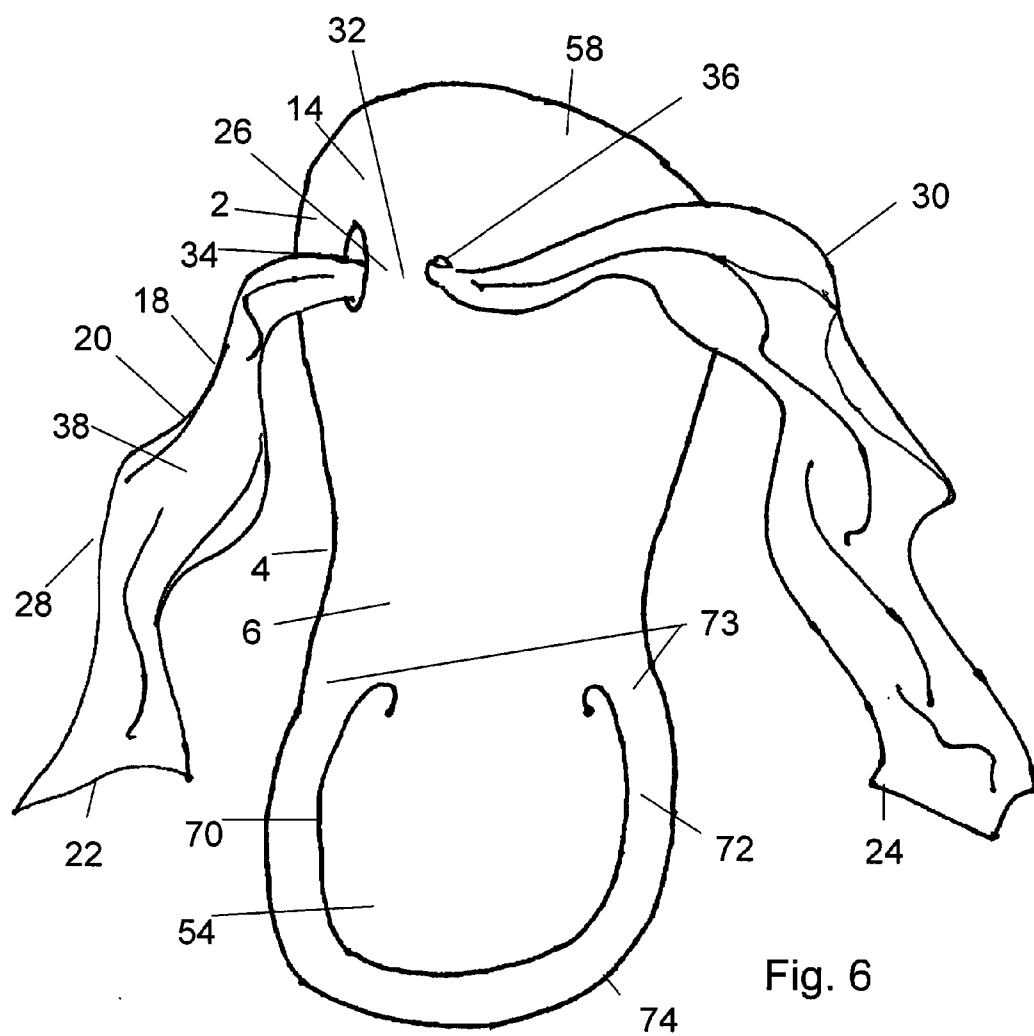


Fig. 6

PEDICURE SLIPPER WITH TOE SEPARATOR AND METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] A. Field of the Invention

[0002] The invention is a slipper with a toe separator for use in administering a pedicure and also is a method of performing a pedicure using the apparatus of the invention.

[0003] B. Description of the Related Art

[0004] A pedicure is a cosmetic treatment of the feet, including the toes and toenails. The conduct of a pedicure in a salon requires that the toes of the client receiving the pedicure be spaced apart and maintained in a spaced apart condition for the application of nail polish. Each toe also must be protected from the other toes and from objects in the environment while the polish dries to prevent damage to the polish. The drying time for nail polish may be 30 minutes to an hour or more and the polish continues to be soft and susceptible to damage after that time.

[0005] In current salon practice, balls of cotton or individual spacers are placed between the toes of the client to separate the toes during application and drying of nail polish. The balls of cotton and individual spacers do not protect the foot of the client from dirt in the environment and do not allow the client to move around while the polish is drying.

[0006] Pedicure sandals or slippers are known in the art and serve to protect the foot of the client from dirt in the environment. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 2,751,693 to Baker issued Jun. 26, 1956, teaches a sandal for separating the toes of a person for application of nail polish. The sandal includes a cup heel and individual toe separators attached to individual straps. U.S. Pat. No. 4,017,987 to Perez issued Apr. 19, 1977 teaches a sandal with plug elements that extend through the sole of the sandal and separate the toes of the wearer. U.S. Pat. No. 5,870,837 to Poulos issued Feb. 16, 1999 teaches a sandal having an ankle strap and a four toe separators. The toe separators are attached to the sole using hook-and-loop fasteners. U.S. Pat. No. 6,116,253 to Armstrong teaches a pedicure slipper where a first cord is attached to the front portion of the slipper that is passed alternatively over and under the toes of the client's foot to separate the toes. U.S. Pat. No. 6,226,893 to Schlamp teaches a pedicure sandal where a sole formed of a sheet material features a continuous cut around the heel. The material separated from the heel is folded forward and attached to the toe area of the sole to receive and to separate the toes. U.S. Pat. No. 6,298,580 to Tadayon teaches a pedicure sandal featuring a sole formed from a sheet material. A strap defined by a single cut around the heel is folded forward to engage the ankle of the wearer. U.S. Pat. No. 6,678,971 to Brooks teaches a pedicure sandal featuring individual T-shaped members that penetrate the sole of the sandal to separate the toes of the foot. U.S. design Pat. 260,047 teaches an ornamental design that features a block having toe-receiving openings attached to the sole. U.S. design Pat. 271,156 to Williamson also teaches an ornamental design for a pedicure sandal featuring a block attached to the sole, the block defining toe-receiving openings. U.S. design Pat. D481,828 to Goldberg issued Nov. 4, 2003 teaches an ornamental design for a pedicure sandal featuring tulip-shaped toe separators and a wide strap located in the portion of the shoe adjacent to the toes.

[0007] The prior art pedicure sandals do not teach the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The invention is a pedicure slipper with a toe separator for use in a salon environment for performing a pedicure. One purpose of the pedicure slipper of the invention is to maintain the toes of a salon client in a separated condition during application of nail polish and while nail polish is drying. A second purpose is to allow the client to move around comfortably and to prevent soiling of the feet of the client through contact with the floor.

[0009] The pedicure slipper of the invention features a one-piece sole that comprises a thin sheet of material, such as a sheet of dense foam, a sheet of rubber, a sheet of cellulosic material or the like. As used in this document, the term 'cellulosic material' means cardboard, paper or other sheet material composed of cellulose. The sole is shaped to conform generally to the outline of the bottom of a human foot. The sole has a first end corresponding to the heel of the client and a second end corresponding to the toes of the client.

[0010] A toe separator is attached to the sole at a location corresponding to the gap between the ball of the foot of the client and the pad of the client's big toe. The toe separator may comprise a single piece of fabric having a first and a second end and defining an intermediate location intermediate to the two ends. The intermediate location of the piece of fabric is attached to the sole. The two lengths of fabric between the intermediate location and the first and second ends define a first fabric length and a second fabric length. The first and second end and the first and second length are not attached to the sole, other than the attachment at the intermediate location. The intermediate location may be attached to the sole by any convenient means, such as by passing the single piece of fabric through a pair of holes communicating through the sole beneath the location corresponding to the client's big toe, by use of an adhesive, by stitching, by thermal welding, by use of a staple or other mechanical fastener, or by any other suitable means known in the art.

[0011] The preferred means for attaching the toe separator to the sole is to provide a single length of a soft, non-woven synthetic fabric composing the toe separator and to provide two openings communicating through the sole in a location corresponding to either side of the client's big toe. The opening distal to the second toe is elongated, allowing the fabric to be displaced to accommodate the wrapping of the big toe and each succeeding toe using the fabric and to fit the slipper to the foot of the client. The single length of fabric passes through both openings, exhibiting the first and a second fabric length on the top side of the sole at the location corresponding to the client's big toe.

[0012] The fabric of the toe separator is adequately strong to withstand wrapping the fabric around the toes, around itself, and tying of the fabric. The fabric is adequately soft to allow ready wrapping to the fabric around the toes of the client's foot consistent with the comfort for the client. The fabric comprising the toe separator is of adequate bulk so that when the first and second fabric lengths are twisted about each other between two toes of the client, the two toes are separated adequately by the bulk of the twisted fabric to allow nail polish to be applied and to prevent each toe from damaging the polish applied to each other toe during drying of the polish and consistent with the comfort to the client.

[0013] The fabric may be a non-woven, woven or knitted fabric composed of natural or synthetic fibers. While a fabric toe separator of any suitable dimension may be used, a polyester non-woven fabric of 19 cm in width and 55 cm in length has proven suitable in practice.

[0014] The thin sheet of material comprising the sole optionally may define a toe retaining member integral to the sole and generally in the shape of a longitudinal cross section of a golf tee. The optional toe retaining member is defined by the sheet material between a first and a second cut. The first and second cuts penetrate the thin sheet material and extend from the second end of the sole and terminate in a location corresponding to the gap between the big toe and the second toe of the client. The sheet material remaining between the first and second cuts corresponds to the gap between the big toe and the second toe of the client and defines a toe retaining member hinge. The toe retaining member hinge allows the toe retaining member to bend from a flat position to an upright position. In use, the Tee-shaped toe retaining member bends upward about the toe retaining member hinge and engages the big toe and second toe of the client, securing the second end of the sole to the big toe and second toe of the client.

[0015] The thin sheet of material comprising the sole also comprises an ankle strap integral to the sole. The ankle strap is defined by an arcuate third cut in the sheet of material. The third cut penetrates the sole and extends around the first end of the sole. A first and a second ankle strap hinge, also defined by the sheet of material, are proximal to the ends of the third cut and allow the ankle strap to fold forward with respect to the sole from a flat position to an upright position.

[0016] In use, the strap is bent about the first and second ankle strap hinges and the top side of the sole is placed in contact with the bottom of the client's foot, with the strap located over the client's ankle. If the optional tee-shaped toe retaining member is used, then the tee-shaped toe retaining member is bent about the toe retaining member hinge and the toe retaining member placed in engagement with the big toe and the second toe of the client. The first or the second fabric length of the toe separator is wrapped around the big toe. The first and second fabric lengths are wrapped around each other in the gap between the big toe and the second toe.

[0017] The first and second fabric lengths then are wrapped around the second toe, with one of the first and second fabric lengths passing over the second toe and the other of the first and the second fabric lengths passing under the second toe. The first and second fabric lengths are wrapped around each other in the space between the second and third toes. The process is repeated until each of the toes is wrapped with the first and second fabric lengths and each adjacent pair of toes is separated by a wrap of the first and second fabric lengths of the toe separator about each other. The free ends of the first and second fabric lengths are tied together, completing the process.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- [0018] FIG. 1 is a plan view of the sole.
- [0019] FIG. 2 is a plan view of the sole with the fabric toe separator.
- [0020] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the sole with the strap and the toe retaining member in the upright position.
- [0021] FIG. 4 is the slipper of FIG. 3 including the fabric toe separator.
- [0022] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the slipper in use on the foot of a wearer.

[0023] FIG. 6 is a plan view of the sole with the toe retaining member omitted.

DESCRIPTION OF AN EMBODIMENT

[0024] The pedicure slipper 2 is illustrated by FIGS. 1 through 6. As shown by FIGS. 1, 5 and 6, the slipper 2 features a sole 4. The sole has a top side 6 and a bottom side 8. The sole is configured to support the foot 10 of a wearer and conforms generally to an outline of a bottom side of the foot 10. The sole defines a big toe location 14 that supports the big toe 16 of the wearer's foot 10.

[0025] FIGS. 2 and 4 illustrate a toe separator 18. The toe separator 18 is composed of a fabric 20 and has a first end 22 and a second end 24. The toe separator 18 defines an intermediate location 26 that is intermediate between the first end 22 and the second end 24. The intermediate location 26 of the toe separator 18 is attached to the sole 4 by a toe separator attachment 32 that is proximal to the big toe location 14 and beneath the big toe 16 of the foot 10 of a wearer when the wearer is wearing the pedicure slipper 2. The portion of the toe separator between the intermediate location 26 and the first end 22 is the first fabric length 28. The portion of the toe separator between the intermediate location and the second end 24 is the second fabric length 30.

[0026] The fabric toe separator 18 is attached to the sole 4 only at a single location. The first end 22 and second end 24 of the toe separator 18 are free and are not attached to the sole 4. The first fabric length 28 and second fabric length 30 also are free and are not attached to the sole, other than at the attachment location.

[0027] In the embodiment illustrated by FIG. 2, the fabric toe separator 18 is attached to the sole 4 by a first opening 34 and a second opening 36, which communicate through the sole 4 between the top side 6 and the bottom side 8. The intermediate location 26 is located adjacent to the bottom side 8 of the sole 4 between the first and second openings 36, 34. The first fabric length 28 is disposed within the first opening 34 and penetrates through the first opening 34 from the bottom side 8 to the top side 6. The second fabric length 30 is disposed within the second opening 36 and penetrates through the second opening 36 from the bottom side 8 to the top side 6 of the sole 6.

[0028] As shown by FIG. 1, the first opening 34 or the second opening 36 may be elongated. Providing an elongated opening 34, 36 allows the slipper 2 to be fitted to the foot 10 of the wearer by adjusting the location at which the fabric toe separator 18 is attached to the sole 4.

[0029] As illustrated by FIG. 4, the intermediate location 26 may be attached to the sole 4 by any conventional means known to the art, including: a staple connection 78 in which the intermediate location is stapled to the sole 4; an adhesively bonded connection 80 in which the intermediate location is glued to the sole 4; a thermal weld connection 82 in which the sole 4 and the intermediate location 26 are joined together by partial melting; a sewn connection 84 in which the intermediate location 26 is stitched to the sole 4; a mechanical interference connection 86, in which the intermediate location is attached to the sole 4 by forcing the toe separator 18 into a small space and in which friction prevents the intermediate location 26 of the toe separator 18 from parting with the sole 4; and a fastener connection 88 in which a mechanical fastener such as a screw, nut, bolt, brad, hook-and-loop fastener, D-ring or other mechanical connector attaches the intermediate location 26 to the sole 4.

[0030] The attachment location 32 preferably is below the big toe 16 of the wearer, but the attachment location 32 may be selected to be a location other than beneath the big toe 16. For example, the attachment location could be beneath any other toe of the foot or between two toes. The toe retaining member 62, the ankle-retaining member 72 or the sole 4 may feature decoration in the form of shapes cut from the material forming the sole 4, such as a row of stars about the ankle-retaining member 72.

[0031] The toe separator 18 is configured to allow the fabric 20 to be wrapped about each toe of the wearer and to be wrapped about itself between the toes of the wearer. The toe separator 18 is configured to be sufficiently bulky to adequately separate the toes of the wearer when the first fabric length 28 and the second fabric length 30 are wrapped about each other between the toes of the wearer. A toe separator 18 comprised of a non-woven synthetic fabric that is 19 cm in width by 55 cm in length has proven suitable in practice.

[0032] The allowable bulkiness of the fabric 20 can be adjusted by adjusting the number of wraps between the toes required for adequate toe separation. For example, a longer piece of a lighter-weight fabric 20 may be used for the toe separator 18, with the proviso that the person administering the pedicure will wrap the first and second fabric lengths 28, 30 about each other more than one time between adjacent pairs of toes. The number of wraps depends upon the desired separation between the toes and the upon the comfort of the wearer.

[0033] The sole 4 has a sole length 40 and a sole width 42 (FIG. 1), each of which is large compared to the sole thickness 44 (FIG. 3). The sole is composed of a generally resilient material, such as a synthetic polymer 46, a rubber 48, a foam 50 or a cellulosic material 52 such as cardboard. The sole 4 has a first sole end 54, which is the end corresponding to the heel 56 of the foot 10 of the wearer. The second sole end 58 corresponds to the toes of the foot 10 of the wearer.

[0034] As shown by FIG. 1, the second end 58 of the sole 4 optionally features first and second cuts 60 that penetrate through the sole 4. The first and second cuts 60 are located between the big toe 16 and the second toe of the wearer's foot 10. The first and second cuts 60 communicate to the second end 58 of the sole 4 and define a toe-retaining member 62. The toe retaining member 62 is shaped generally like a golf tee and defines a toe-retaining member hinge 64.

[0035] The toe-retaining member 62 is bendable about toe-retaining member hinge 64 between a flat position 66, illustrated by FIGS. 1 and 2, and an upright position 68 illustrated by FIGS. 3 through 5. When the toe-retaining member 62 is in the flat position 66, the slipper 2 occupies minimal space for easy transportation and storage. When the toe-retaining member 62 is in the upright position 68, the toe-retaining member 62 is configured to be disposed between the big toe 16 and the second toe of the wearer, as illustrated by FIG. 5.

[0036] Toe retaining member 62 is optional. FIG. 6 illustrates sole 4 with toe retaining member 62 omitted.

[0037] The sole 4 also features an arcuate third cut 70, illustrated by FIGS. 1 and 2. The arcuate third cut 70 penetrates through the sole 4 between the top side 6 and the bottom side 8 and extends about the first end 54 of the sole 4. The arcuate third cut 70 defines an ankle-retaining member 72. The ankle-retaining member 72 defines a pair of ankle-retaining member hinges 73. The ankle-retaining member 72 is bendable about the ankle-retaining member hinges 73 between a flat position 74, illustrated by FIGS. 1 and 2, and an

upright position, illustrated by FIGS. 3, 4 and 5. When the ankle-retaining member 72 is in the flat position 73, the ankle-retaining member 72 occupies minimal space for ease of transportation and storage. When the ankle-retaining member 72 is in the upright position, the ankle-retaining member is configured to secure the sole 4 to the ankle of the wearer, as shown by FIG. 5.

[0038] FIGS. 1 and 2 are plan views of the sole 4 in the flat condition 66, 74. FIG. 2 differs from FIG. 1 in that FIG. 2 includes the toe separator 18, which is composed of a fabric 20. In use, a person administering a pedicure will place the slipper 2 on the foot 10 of the person receiving the pedicure.

[0039] To use the apparatus of the invention, and to practice the method of the invention, the person administering the pedicure will place the toe-retaining member 62 and the ankle-retaining member 72 in the upright position 68, 76, as illustrated by FIG. 3. If the toe separator 18 is not already in position, the person administering the pedicure will attach the intermediate location 26 of the toe separator 18 to the sole 4 at an attachment location 32 that is located proximal to the big toe location 14 and that is beneath or immediately adjacent the big toe 16 of the foot 10 when the slipper 2 is in place on the foot 10 of the wearer.

[0040] The person administering the pedicure then will place the slipper on the foot of the person receiving the pedicure with the ankle-retaining member 72 over the ankle of the wearer. If the sole 4 is equipped with a toe-retaining member 62, toe-retaining member 62 will be disposed between the big toe 16 and second toe of the wearer. As illustrated by FIG. 5, the person administering the pedicure will then wrap the toes of the foot 10 with the fabric 20 comprising the toe separator 18. The person administering the pedicure will wrap the first fabric length 28 and second fabric length 30 of the toe separator 18 about the big toe 16 of the foot 10. The person administering the pedicure then will wrap the first fabric length 28 and the second fabric length 30 about one another between the big toe 16 and the second toe of the foot 10. The person administering the pedicure then will wrap the first and second fabric lengths 28, 30 about the second toe of the foot 10 and about each other between the second and third toes. The person administering the pedicure will repeat the above process for the fourth and fifth toes of the foot. The person administering the pedicure will tie first end 22 and second end 24 of the fabric 20 one to the other, securing the slipper 2 in place on the foot 10 and separating the toes.

[0041] The person administering the pedicure then will apply nail polish to the toenails of foot 10 and allow the nail polish to dry while the person receiving the pedicure wears the slippers.

[0042] The following are named elements.

[0043] a pedicure slipper 2

[0044] a sole 4

[0045] a top side 6

[0046] a bottom side 8

[0047] a foot 10

[0048] an outline of a bottom of said foot

[0049] a big toe location 14

[0050] a big toe 16

[0051] a toe separator 18

[0052] a fabric 20

[0053] a first end 22

[0054] a second end 24

[0055] an intermediate location 26

[0056] a first fabric length 28

- [0057] a second fabric length 30
- [0058] a toe separator attachment 32
- [0059] a first opening 34
- [0060] a second opening 36
- [0061] non-woven and woven synthetic and natural fabrics 38
- [0062] a sole length 40
- [0063] a sole width 42
- [0064] a sole thickness 44
- [0065] a synthetic polymer 46
- [0066] a rubber 48
- [0067] a foam 50
- [0068] a cellulosic material 52
- [0069] a first sole end 54
- [0070] a heel 56
- [0071] a second sole end 58
- [0072] a first and a second cut 60
- [0073] a tee-shaped toe-retaining member 62
- [0074] a toe-retaining member hinge 64
- [0075] a flat position 66
- [0076] an upright position 68
- [0077] an arcuate third cut 70
- [0078] an ankle-retaining member 72
- [0079] first and second ankle-retaining member hinge 73
- [0080] a flat position 74
- [0081] an upright position 76
- [0082] a staple connection 78
- [0083] an adhesively bonded connection 80
- [0084] a thermal weld connection 82
- [0085] a sewn connection 84
- [0086] a mechanical interference connection 86
- [0087] a fastener connection 88

I claim:

1. A pedicure slipper apparatus, the pedicure slipper apparatus comprising:
 - a. a sole, said sole having a top side and a bottom side, said sole being configured to support a foot of a wearer, said top side of said sole being configured to conform generally to an outline of a bottom of said foot, said sole defining a big toe location, said big toe location being configured to support a big toe of said foot when said foot is supported by said sole;
 - b. a toe separator, said toe separator being composed of a fabric, said toe separator having a first end and a second end, said toe separator defining an intermediate location, said intermediate location being intermediate between said first end and said second end, said fabric defining a first fabric length between said intermediate location and said first end, said fabric defining a second fabric length between said intermediate location and said second end, said intermediate location being attached to said sole at said big toe location to define a toe separator attachment, said first end and said first fabric length and said second end and said second fabric length not being otherwise attached to said sole.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said toe separator attachment comprises:
 - a. a first opening communicating through said sole;
 - b. a second opening communicating through said sole, said first and said second openings being located at said big toe location, said intermediate location on said fabric being disposed between said first opening and said second opening and adjacent said bottom side of said sole, said first fabric length passing from said intermediate

location through said first opening from said bottom side of said sole to said top side, said second fabric length passing from said intermediate location through said second opening from said bottom side of said sole to said top side.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said fabric is selected from the list consisting of non-woven and woven synthetic and natural fabrics.

4. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said fabric being selected and configured to be adequately flexible and adequately bulky to separate each said toe of said foot and to prevent contact between each toenail of each said toe with any other of said toes of said foot when said sole supports said foot and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each of said toes and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each other between each of said toes.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said fabric is adequately soft so as not to cause discomfort to said wearer when said sole supports said foot and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each of said toes and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each other between each of said toes.

6. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said sole has a sole length, a sole width and a sole thickness, said sole thickness being small compared to its length and width, said sole being composed of a material selected from a list consisting of: a synthetic polymer, a rubber, a foam and a cellulosic material.

7. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said sole has a first sole end corresponding to a heel of said foot when said sole is supporting said foot, said sole has a second sole end corresponding to said toes when said sole is supporting said foot, said big toe location being located at said second sole end, said big toe location being defined by a first and a second cut communicating through said sole and intersecting said second sole end, said first and said second cut defining a Tee-shaped toe-retaining member, said first and said second cut defining a toe-retaining member hinge, said toe-retaining member hinge being located between said big toe and a second toe of said foot when said sole is supporting said foot.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein said toe-retaining member hinge is configured to bend from a flat position to an upright position, said toe-retaining member when in said upright position being configured to engage said big toe and said second toe and to retain said sole on said big toe and said second toe when said sole is supporting said foot.

9. The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said first end of said sole defines an arcuate third cut communicating through said sole, said third cut defining an ankle-retaining member, said ankle-retaining member being bendable between a flat position and an upright position, said ankle-retaining member when in said upright position being configured to receive said foot and to retain said sole to the ankle of the wearer.

10. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said toe separator attachment is selected from the list consisting of a staple connection, an adhesively bonded connection, a thermal weld connection, a sewn connection, a mechanical interference connection and a fastener connection.

11. A method for administering a pedicure, the method comprising:

- a. providing a pedicure slipper, said pedicure slipper comprising a sole having a top side and a bottom side, said sole being configured to support a foot of a wearer, said top side being configured to conform generally to an

outline of a bottom of said foot, said sole defining a big toe location, said big toe location being configured to support a big toe of said foot when said foot is supported by said sole, said pedicure slipper having a toe separator, said toe separator being composed of a fabric, said toe separator having a first end and a second end, said toe separator defining an intermediate location, said intermediate location being intermediate between said first end and said second end, said fabric defining a first fabric length between said intermediate location and said first end, said fabric defining a second fabric length between said intermediate location and said second end, said intermediate location being attached to said sole at said big toe location to define a toe separator attachment, said first end and said first fabric length and said second end and said second fabric length not being otherwise attached to said sole;

- b. placing said pedicure slipper on a foot of a wearer;
- c. applying a nail polish to a toe nail of said foot.

12. The method of claim **11** wherein said toe separator attachment further comprises:

- a. a first opening communicating through said sole;
- b. a second opening communicating through said sole, said first and said second openings being located at said big toe location, said intermediate location on said fabric being disposed between said first opening and said second opening and adjacent said bottom side of said sole, said first length passing from said intermediate location through said first opening from said bottom side of said sole to said top side, said second length passing from said intermediate location through said second opening from said bottom side of said sole to said top side.

13. The method of claim **12** wherein said step of placing said slipper on said foot of said wearer further comprises:

- a. placing said bottom of said foot in contact with said top side of said sole;
- b. wrapping said first fabric length and said second fabric length about each said toe of said foot and wrapping each of said first fabric length and said second fabric length about the other of said first fabric length and said second fabric length between each adjacent two of said toes, said fabric being selected from a list consisting of non-woven and woven synthetic and natural fabrics.

14. The method of claim **13** wherein said fabric is selected and configured to be adequately flexible and adequately bulky to separate each said toe of said foot and to prevent contact between each toenail of each said toe with any other of said toes of said foot when said sole supports said foot and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each of said toes and said first and said second fabric lengths are wrapped about each other between each of said toes.

15. The method of claim **13** wherein said sole has a first sole end corresponding to a heel of said foot when said sole is supporting said foot, said sole has a second sole end corresponding to said toes when said sole is supporting said foot, said big toe location being located at said second sole end, said big toe location being defined by a first and a second cut communicating through said sole and intersecting said second sole end, said first and said second cut defining a tee-shaped toe-retaining member, said first and said second cut defining a toe-retaining member hinge, said toe-retaining member hinge being located between said big toe and a second toe of said foot when said sole is supporting said foot, said toe-retaining member hinge being configured to bend from a flat position to an upright position, said toe-retaining member when in said upright position being configured to engage said big toe and said second toe and to retain said sole on said big toe and said second toe when said sole is supporting said foot, said step of placing said slipper on said foot of said wearer further comprising:

- a. bending said toe retaining member to said upright position; and
- b. engaging said big toe and said second toe by said toe retaining member.

16. The method of claim **13** wherein said first end of said sole defines an arcuate third cut communicating through said sole, said third cut defining an ankle-retaining member, said ankle-retaining member being bendable between a flat position and an upright position, said ankle-retaining member when in said upright position being configured to receive said foot and to retain said sole to an ankle of the wearer.

17. The method of claim **11** wherein said toe separator attachment is selected from the list consisting of a staple connection, an adhesively bonded connection, a thermal weld connection, a sewn connection, a mechanical interference connection and a fastener connection.

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