

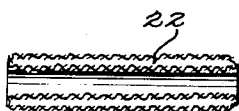
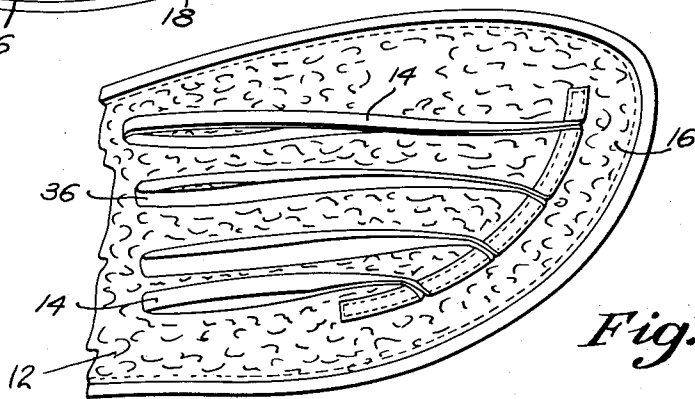
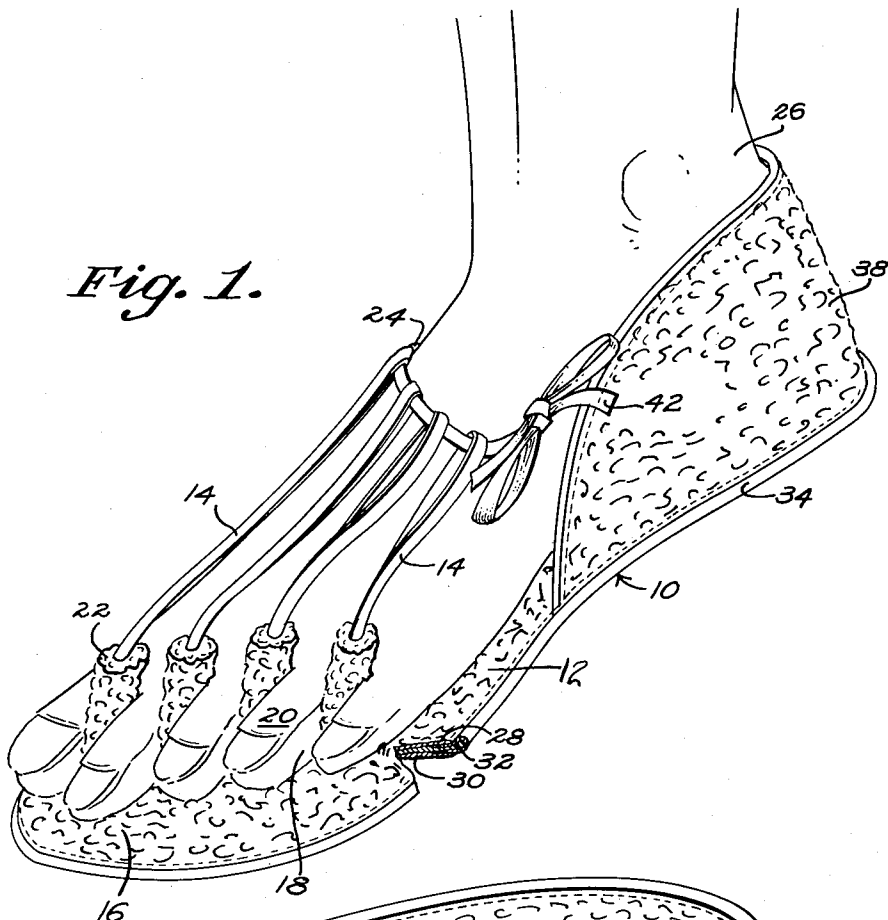
June 26, 1956

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2,751,693

TOE SPACING SANDAL

Filed Jan. 25, 1955



*Fig. 3.*

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2,751,693

**TOE SPACING SANDAL**

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Application January 25, 1955, Serial No. 483,921

1 Claim. (Cl. 36—8.5)

The present invention relates to a sandal for separating the toes of a human foot for purposes such as the application of nail polish, medication and chiropodist treatment.

A number of devices have been developed for the purpose of separating the toes in order to permit medication or application and drying of nail polish without smearing. Such prior art devices are generally uncomfortable to the wearer, not universally adaptable to all toe spacings, and are generally unsatisfactory for household wear. Furthermore, the few which are reasonably satisfactory in these respects have a relatively short useful life because of their mode and material of construction.

Accordingly an object of the present invention is to provide an improved toe separating device in the form of a sandal which overcomes the disadvantages of the prior art devices in that it is comfortable to wear, it is universally adaptable to all toe spacings and it is suitable for household use.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a sandal of the aforesaid type which because of its mode and material of construction has a reasonably long useful life.

These and other objects of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description, taken with the accompanying drawing wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the toe spacing sandal of the present invention;

Figure 2 illustrates details of the construction of the toe straps; and

Figure 3 is a cross sectional view of an individual toe separator.

In its broader aspects the sandal 10 of the present invention includes a sole 12 having a plurality of toe straps 14 attached to the sole near the toe 16 with adjacent toe straps spaced apart approximately the width of the toe and positioned to enter the spaces 18 between the toes 20 of the wearer, a toe separator 22 slidably mounted on each of the toe straps and means 24 for tensioning each of the toe straps in a direction towards the rear of the foot 26 of the wearer.

The sole 12 of the preferred embodiment of the present invention is made up of three members including an insole 28 of a soft attractive cotton fabric such as turkish toweling, an outsole 30 which may be of any suitable material, and a slip sole or center sole 32 which is stiff enough to add strength to the sole and yet sufficiently flexible to afford comfort to the wearer. For example the slip sole 32 may be made from a thin fibrous material. A binding 34 is folded around the outer edge of slip sole 32 and extends inwardly from the outer edge thereof a sufficient distance to allow the three sole members and binding 34 to be securely bound together by stitching around the edge of the sole.

Toe straps 14 attached to the sole near the toe end 16 are spaced apart approximately the width of a toe and positioned to enter the spaces 18 between the toes of the wearer. For the purpose of comfort and adaptability to

the many different toe spacings and sizes, these toe straps should be of small cross-sectional diameter. As shown in the drawings, the toe straps are made up of a single length of binding material of double thickness. In this form, each toe strap constitutes a loop 36 and thereby provides fastening means on the free end of the toe strap for tensioning the same. It is an essential part of the present invention that these toe straps be tensioned in a direction toward the rear of the foot 26 of the wearer. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the looping arrangement just described affords a convenient means for the application of tension to the toe straps.

A toe separator 22 is slidably mounted on each individual toe strap 14 for the purpose of providing proper separation of the toes of the wearer. For proper separation of the toes, it is necessary that the cross-sectional area of the toe separators be relatively large in comparison to the cross-sectional area of the toe strap. Furthermore it is desirable that the material of construction of the toe separator be yieldable enough to permit deformation of the separator by the pressure exerted by the sides of the toes on either side thereof, the bulk of the material of construction of the separator and its compressibility determines the degree of separation of the toes. As shown in Figure 3, a preferred form of toe separator 22 comprises a cylinder of double thickness of a material such as turkish toweling.

A heel-encompassing member 38 is fastened to the other end of the sole in the preferred embodiment of the present invention. Means 24 fastens the sandal on the foot of the wearer. As shown, this means comprises a tie strap of double thickness binding material fastened to the forward ends 42 of the heel encompassing member 38 in a position so as to permit the free ends thereof to bridge the instep of the wearer. This arrangement provides a convenient means for tensioning the toe strap in a direction toward the rear of the foot 26 of the wearer. This is accomplished by insertion of fastening means 24 through the loops 36 of the toe straps 14 and tensioning the fastening means across the instep. By virtue of the looping arrangement, the toe straps adjust themselves by lateral movement to accommodate the natural curvature across the instep.

The sandal of the present invention may be easily applied to the foot to maintain the toes in a properly separated condition while affording comfort to the wearer and neatness of appearance. In order to separate the toes, the slidably mounted toe separators 22 are slid toward the free ends of the toe straps 14 in a position such that the straps may be inserted between the toes without contacting the toes with the toe separators. After this has been done, each individual toe separator 22 is slid consecutively downwardly along the length of its associated toe strap 14 and into the space 18 between adjacent toes created by manual separation of the toes. After the toe separators have been properly positioned between the toes, fastening means 24 is then strung between the loops 36 of the toe straps 14 and tied so as to tension the toe straps in a direction toward the rear of the foot of the wearer.

One of the advantages of being able to separate the toes consecutively as described above and in the sequence desired, lies in the fact that it provides for easier application of medication between the toes as well as reapplication of medication without complete removal of the sandal from the foot of the wearer. Furthermore, the slidably arrangement of each toe separator permits proper adjustment of the separator between the toes and thereby renders the sandal more universally adaptable to all toe spacings. In addition, the fact that the toe straps adjust themselves to accommodate the curvature across the instep of an individual wearer also contributes to the adaptability

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of the sandal to various sizes and shapes of feet. Another important feature of the slidably mounted toe separator is the fact that it is removable from the sandal and separably washable or replaceable, if necessary.

The foregoing description of the present invention is for the purpose of illustration and is not limiting to the scope thereof which is set forth in the claim.

I claim:

A sandal comprising a sole, a plurality of toe straps, the toe straps being longitudinally arranged with respect to the sole and attached to the sole near the toe end thereof with the attachment points of adjacent toe straps spaced apart approximately the width of a toe and positioned to enter the spaces between the toes of the wearer, an elongated toe separator slidably mounted on each of said toe straps, each toe separator being of a sufficiently large cross-section in a plane normal to the length of the toe strap to fill a relatively large portion of the spacing between adjacent toe straps and being deformable by pressure exerted by the toes of the wearer, a heel engaging member fastened to the end of the sole remote from the toe end, strap means including tensioning means therefor

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transversely arranged with respect to the sole and associated with the heel engaging member, the transversely arranged strap means being so arranged as to engage the foot of the wearer when in use and to releasably fasten the sandal on the foot of the wearer, each of the toe straps having means toward the rearward end thereof connecting the same to said transversely arranged strap means, said tensioning means acting to tension said transversely arranged strap means across the front of the foot thereby tensioning each of the longitudinally arranged toe straps in a direction toward the rear of the foot of the wearer.

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