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(54) **WAIST-SECURING FASTENER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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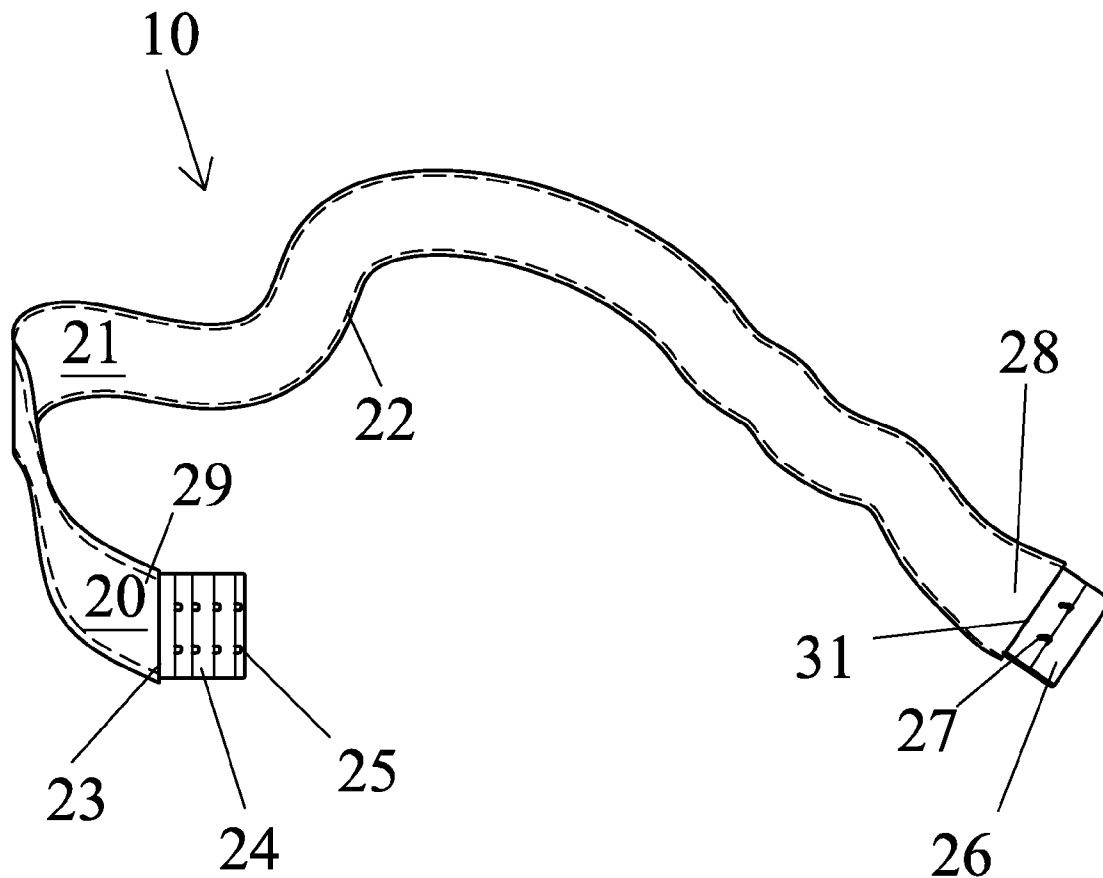
A pant fastener for securing the waist of pants, skirts, and the like, including an outer fabric casing, at least one inner band disposed within the casing, and complementary closure elements disposed near the opposing ends of the casing. The pant fastener is configured to wrap around two or more belt loops anywhere along the circumference of the waistband, except across the fly. When closed, the pant fastener provides a snug fit, holding up the pants or skirt, without the need to thread the fastener through all of the belt loops, as is the case with an ordinary belt. Because the pant fastener does not cross the fly, the pants or skirt can be undone in a hurry, enabling children especially to take them off quickly. The pant fastener may be created as a fashion accessory to provide ornamental, as well as functional use.

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# Fig. 1

## Prior Art

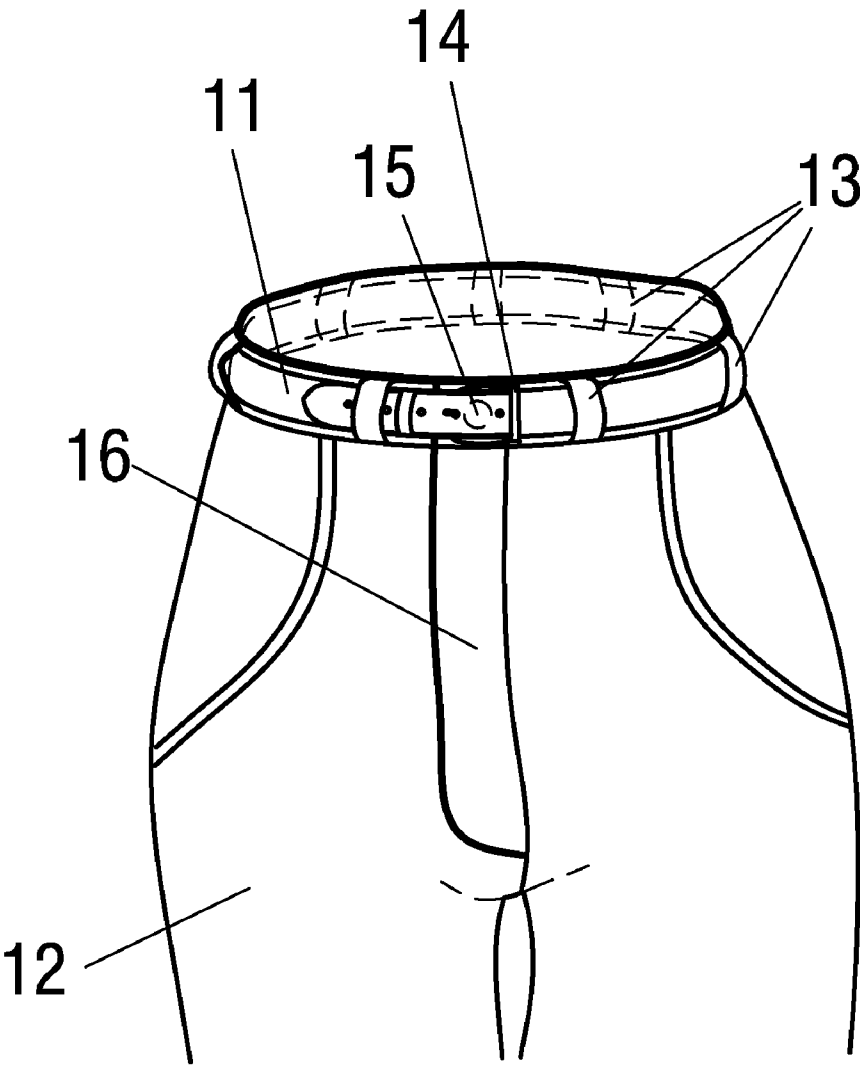
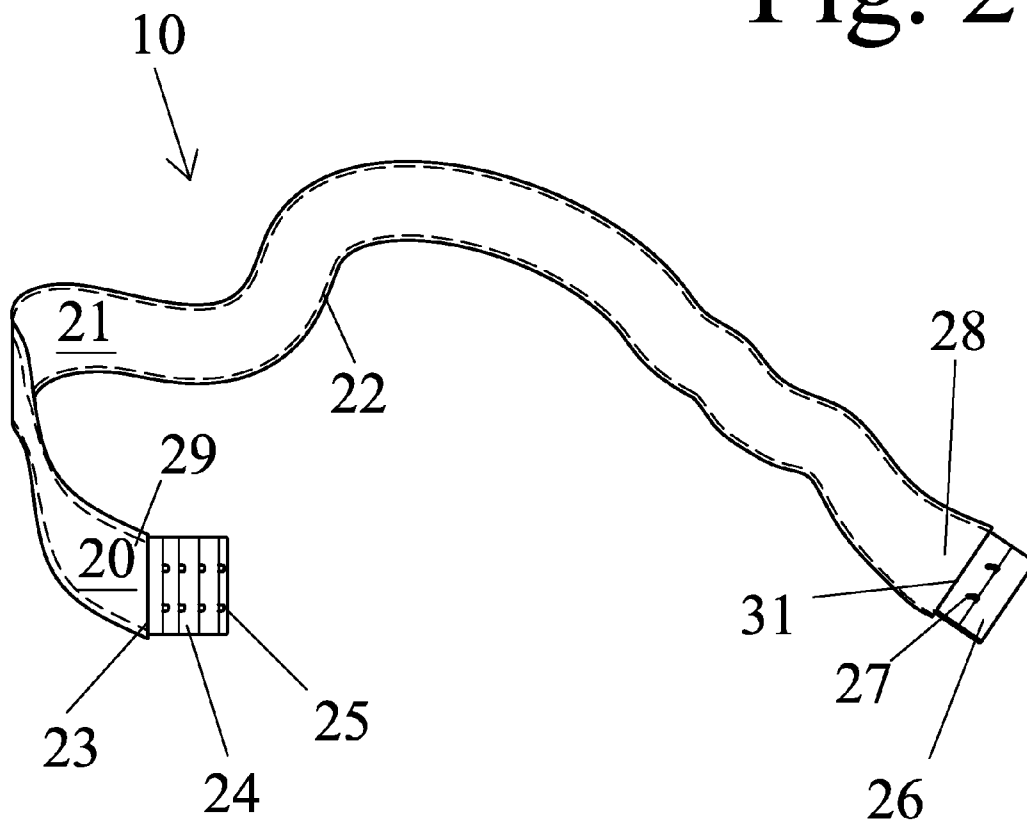


Fig. 2



# Fig. 3

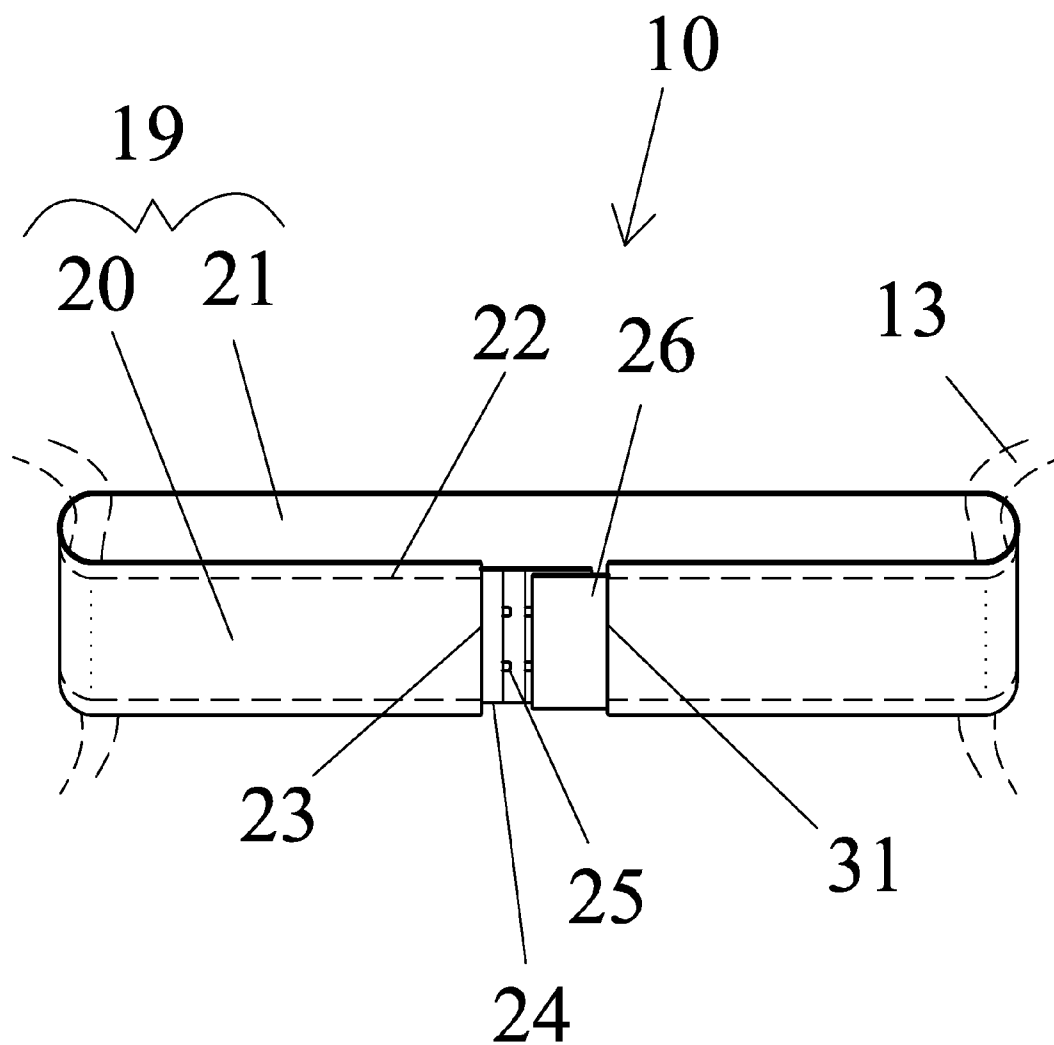


Fig. 4

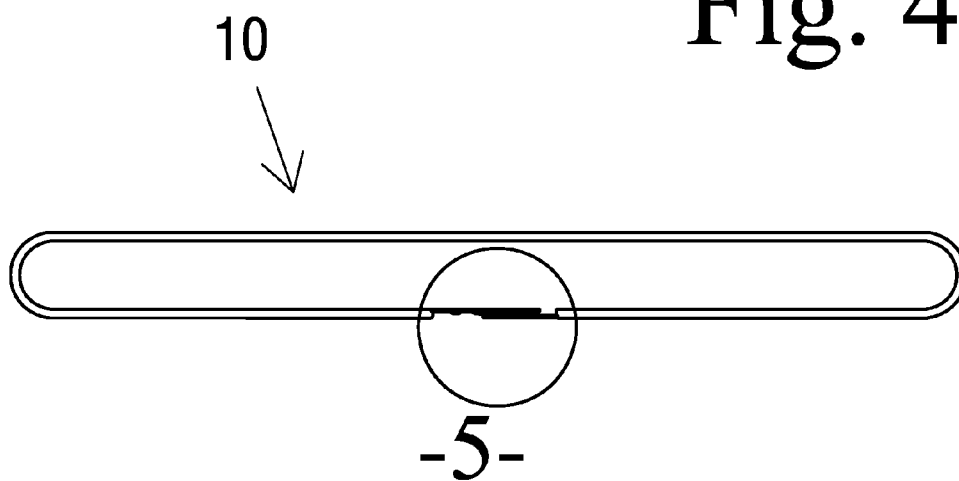


Fig. 5

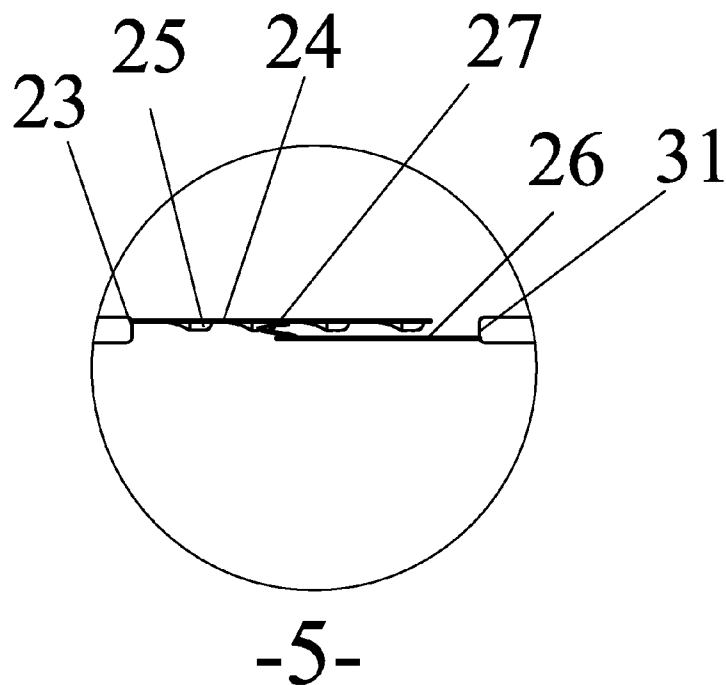
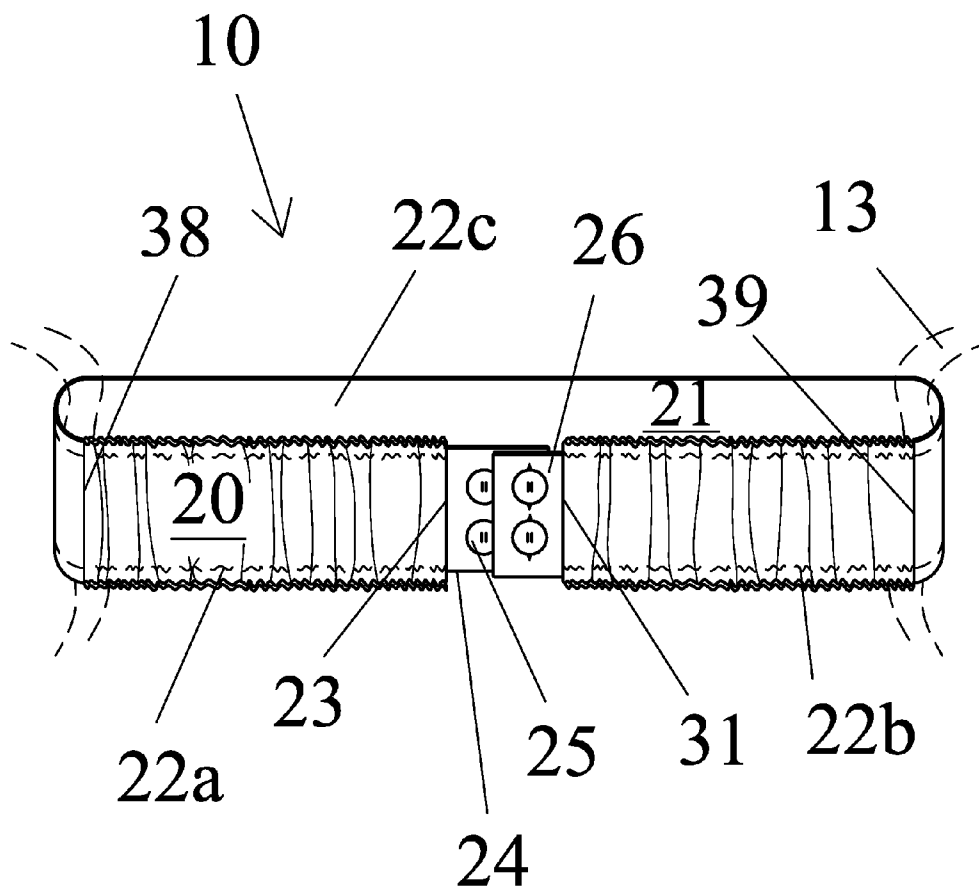


Fig. 6



# Fig. 7

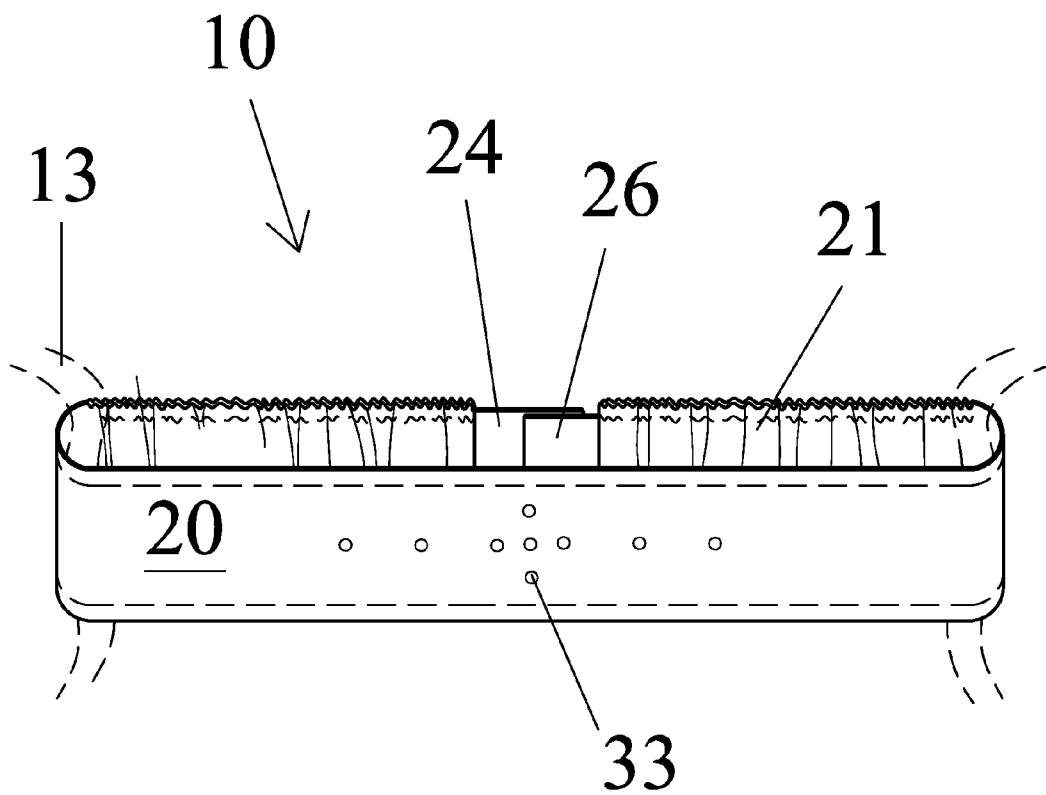
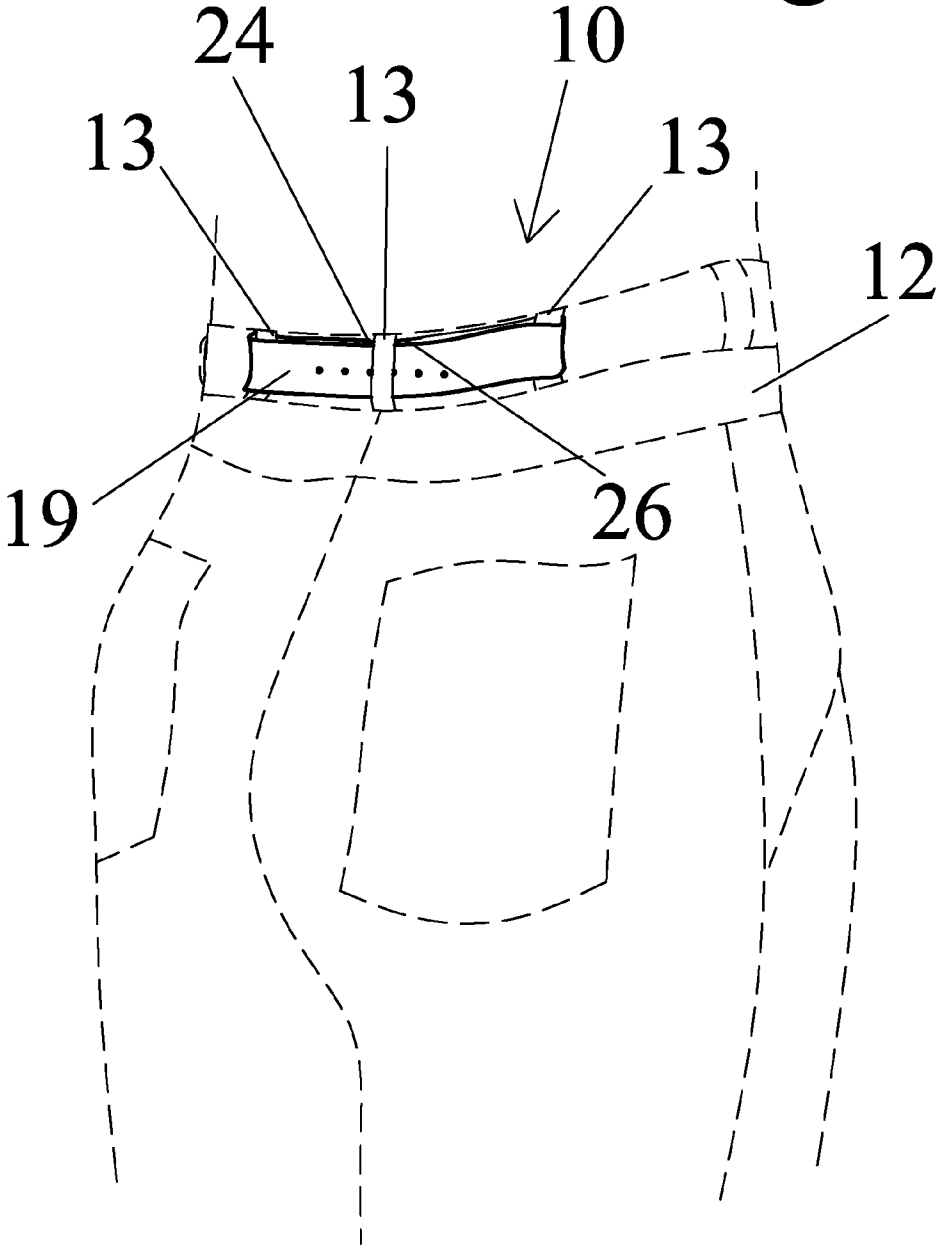


Fig. 8





## WAIST-SECURING FASTENER

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention generally relates to garment accessories and more specifically to a waist-securing pant fastener for pants, skirts, and the like.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Traditional belts are used to securely hold up pants, skirts and other lower garments (e.g., shorts, skorts, etc.). For convenience, all of these lower garments are referred to here as "pants." One disadvantage of traditional belts is that in order to be worn appropriately, they must be threaded through all of the belt loops of a pair of pants. Though this is an everyday task that most people pay little attention to, it is a difficult job for children, the elderly, and the handicapped, that lack experience, dexterity, or flexibility. Moreover, even the able-bodied frequently miss belt loops at the back or on the sides, contributing to a sloppy overall appearance.

[0003] Another disadvantage of traditional belts is that they must be appropriately sized to the waist of the individual wearer. Though belts having multiple belt holes (or buckle closures not relying on belt holes) provide a range of sizes, the fact is that the traditional belt can still only accommodate a relatively narrow range of sizes. Thus, individuals whose waist size changes over time may find they can no longer use the belts they own. Further, a single size range limits the extent to which belts may be shared, for example, among siblings in a family. Thus, for example, if two sisters of dissimilar size each want a red belt and a blue belt to coordinate with special outfits, they must acquire four belts instead of sharing two, despite the fact that they may use belts in these colors only rarely.

[0004] Yet another disadvantage of traditional belts is that they roughly double the amount of time it takes to unfasten and remove pants. This is because a fastened belt prevents access to the buttons, snaps or hooks holding up pants. In order to remove pants, the wearer must first unfasten the traditional belt and then unfasten the pants in a two-step process. Again, for the able-bodied, this may be a small inconvenience. However, for children, the elderly, or the handicapped, this may be a serious disadvantage. For example, small children pay little attention to (or become easily distracted from) the need to relieve themselves until the onset of urgent need. Then, they must quickly remove their pants to accommodate the urgent need. In these circumstances, removing pants in a two-step process may result in an unwanted accident.

[0005] Prior art solutions have failed to fully address all of the disadvantages of traditional belts. One alternative to the traditional belt is suspenders. However, though suspenders may address the problem of waist size, they are not necessarily easier for children, the elderly, or the handicapped to get on and off. Moreover, suspenders fail to make pants removal a one-step process. Further, suspenders are quite noticeable, thereby often considered to be making a fashion statement, which may be undesirable and/or unfashionable. Additionally, to use suspenders with pants, each pair of pants must be modified by adding buttons for suspender attachment, which is a time-intensive, uneconomical alteration.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 641,489 issued to Bartelstone dispenses with the traditional belt by employing a two-part pant fastener, each side of which is fastened to pants at a belt-loop

member. However, the Bartelstone fastener works like a traditional belt in that it closes by means of a buckle at the front of the pants. Thus, pants removal remains a two-step process. The same is true of the inventions disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 1,016,538 issued to Ashworth and U.S. Pat. No. 1,607,156 issued to Godshaw. Further the Ashworth fastener also requires buttons to be fastened to the pants.

[0007] The pant fasteners of U.S. Pat. No. 2,562,386 issued to McCormick, U.S. Pat. No. 2,837,748 issued to Manning, and U.S. Pat. No. 3,001,204 issued to Harrison overcome the disadvantage of two-step pants removal by being positioned at the back. However, these inventions are positioned within the interior of the pants, making them relatively inaccessible to the wearer.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 4,486,904 issued to Gonce discloses a pant fastener with arrow-like heads anchoring it to the pants. However, to use this fastener, the pants must be configured with slits to accommodate the anchors, thus limiting its use to specially configured pants.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 4,800,594 issued to Young discloses a belt-loop binder for securing pants. The somewhat elongated binder has two opposing ends, each of which is configured to double back around one of two adjacent belt loops. Each opposing end is configured with a set of complementary hook and loop fibrous pads, such as are sold under the trademark of Velcro®, so that, when the opposing end is doubled back, the Velcro® fibrous pads are engageable. Though the Young fastener overcomes many of the disadvantages of prior art fasteners, it is suboptimal in requiring a two-step closure process (since the binder must be closed at both ends). Also, the use of Velcro® fibrous pads as the closure means presents two significant limitations: (1) Velcro® fibrous pads degrade through repeated washing, limiting the usefulness of Young's fastener over time, and (2) the relatively high cost of the Velcro® fibrous pads limit the attachment length and thus, make it impractical to extend the closure ends of the Young fastener to accommodate a greater range of waist sizes, in addition to unnecessarily boosting the overall cost of the device.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 4,920,581 issued to Gray discloses a waistband reducer using a large rectangle of flexible material buttoned within the interior of pants to keep the pants snugly around the waist. In addition to presenting the disadvantages of being used within the interior of pants, as described above, Gray's invention is disadvantageously anchored to pants with buttons, making it more difficult to use than fasteners wrapping around belt loops. Additionally, the waistband reducer requires alteration of the pants, requiring the addition of buttons before the waistband reducer can be attached.

[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 4,999,853 issued to Tanner discloses a waist belt based on the use of Velcro® fibrous pads along most of its length to provide infinite adjustability to changing waist sizes. However, this invention is not practical as it employs the maximum possible amount of Velcro® fibrous pads, which are relatively expensive and degrade through repeated washing. Further, Tanner's invention does not overcome the disadvantage of making pants removal a two-step process.

[0012] U.S. Pat. No. 5,566,397 issued to Scott discloses a pant fastener that wraps around each of two belt loops at either end, in the same manner as Young and Bartelstone described above (though not necessarily using Velcro® fibrous pads). Like Young, the design of Scott's fastener is suboptimal in requiring a two-step closure process (since the fastener must be closed at both ends).

[0013] U.S. Pat. No. 5,638,550 issued to Hube discloses a pant fastener that adjusts by means of an air tube that is inflated to tighten the fastener around the waist, and deflated to loosen it. Such a fastener is obviously complicated to make and use, and unsuited to children, the elderly, or the handicapped.

[0014] U.S. Pat. No. 6,389,605 issued to Srivastava discloses a pant fastener that is really a fashion accessory versus a practical means to hold up pants. Its two ends fasten directly to the fabric of a garment.

[0015] U.S. Pat. No. 6,671,888 issued to Wallace discloses an invention directed to enabling the handicapped to wear a simple Velcro® fibrous pad-type pant fastener that is easy for them to take on and off, but whose appearance resembles a traditional belt. Because this device is intended to simulate a traditional belt, it requires a two-step process of pants removal; moreover, it depends upon Velcro® fibrous pads along with the disadvantages their use presents. All of these disadvantages are also present in the invention disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,678,898 issued to Jones et al. (featuring a non-functioning, decorative buckle to simulate the appearance of a traditional belt while employing Velcro® fibrous pads as the true closure means).

[0016] U.S. Pat. No. 6,842,912 issued to King et al. discloses a traditional belt modified to conceal an expansion feature beneath a loop of the belt. Though overcoming the waist-size limitations of traditional belts, this invention fails to make pants removal a one-step process. The same is true of the modified, full waistband disclosed in U.S. Publication No. 2005/0050615 filed by Stickney.

[0017] Accordingly, there is an established need for an efficient, convenient pant fastener that is easier to attach and detach with limited dexterity, yet securely holds the pants snugly to the waist when in use.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0018] The present invention consists of a waist-securing pant fastener that wraps around at least two belt loops of the pants. It is installed on the rear or side of the pants prior to donning the pants. When installed, the pant fastener provides a snug fit, holding up the pants without the need to thread the fastener through all of the belt loops, as is the case with an ordinary belt. Since the pant fastener is not a full waistband, it more readily accommodates a broad range of waist sizes. Moreover, because there is no closure at the front, pants can be undone in a one-step process, enabling children, the elderly, or handicapped to undo their pants quickly. The pant fastener may be created as a fashion accessory to provide ornamental, as well as functional use.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] The preferred embodiments of the invention will hereinafter be described in conjunction with the appended drawings, provided to illustrate and not to limit the invention. The components in the figures are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon illustrating the principles of the invention. In the figures, like reference numerals designate like elements throughout the different views, and in which:

[0020] FIG. 1 depicts a front perspective view of a traditional belt, as existing in the prior art, being worn to hold up a pair of pants;

[0021] FIG. 2 depicts a perspective view showing the first preferred embodiment of the waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the open position;

[0022] FIG. 3 depicts a perspective view showing the first preferred embodiment of the waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the closed, in-use position;

[0023] FIG. 4 depicts a top view showing the first preferred embodiment of the closed waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the closed, in-use position;

[0024] FIG. 5 depicts a detail taken from circle -5- of FIG. 4 showing the first preferred embodiment of the closed waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the closed, in-use position;

[0025] FIG. 6 depicts a perspective view showing the second preferred embodiment of the waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the closed, in-use position, with the surface that would normally be against the waist and concealed (when in use) facing the viewer, in an embodiment where this portion of the fabric enclosure is bunched or crinkled;

[0026] FIG. 7 depicts a perspective view showing the second preferred embodiment of the waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention in the closed, in-use position, with the surface that would normally face outward from the waist (when in use) facing the viewer, in an embodiment where this portion of the fabric enclosure is not bunched or crinkled; and

[0027] FIG. 8 depicts a side perspective view of the upper back portion of a pair of pants with the waist-securing pant fastener of the present invention being worn to hold up the pants.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0028] Shown throughout the figures, the present invention is directed toward a practical, efficient, and convenient waist-securing pant fastener that improves the ease with which pants can be quickly removed, even with limited dexterity, yet securely holds the pants snugly to the waist. The easy-to-use novel pant fastener can be used with any of a wide variety of existing pants, skirts, shorts, or other lower garments that have belt loops (herein referred to as “pants”).

[0029] In the following description, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a more thorough description of the present invention. It will be apparent, however, to one skilled in the art, that the present invention may be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well-known features have not been described in detail so as not to obscure the invention. For clarity and conciseness, several of the drawings show in schematic, or omit, parts that are not essential in that drawing to a description of a particular feature, aspect or principle of the invention being disclosed. Thus, the best mode embodiment of one feature may be shown in one drawing, and the best mode of another feature may be called out in another drawing.

[0030] The figures are numbered and annotated so that one skilled in the art of fasteners for pants, by reference to the figures, will easily be able to understand the materials and methods of fabrication and will be able to easily assemble the parts to achieve the functionality shown.

[0031] FIG. 1 depicts a front perspective view of a traditional belt 11 as existing in the prior art being worn to hold up a pair of pants 12. In order to perform its function, the belt 11 must be threaded through the numerous belt loops 13 in the front, sides, and rear of the waist. Further, in order to perform its function, the belt 11 must be fastened by means of a buckle

14 at the front. As can be seen from FIG. 1, the button closure 15 of the pants (depicted in dotted lines to indicate concealment beneath the belt 11 and buckle 14) must be undone in order to open the zippered fly 16 and remove the pants 12. However, the button closure 15 cannot be conveniently undone nor, in any case, can the pants 12 be removed without unfastening the belt 11 at the buckle 14. It can readily be seen from FIG. 1 that if a pant fastener performs its entire function without crossing over button closure 15, the pants 12 could be removed in a one-step process.

[0032] Referring now to the perspective views of FIG. 2 and FIG. 3, a novel waist-securing pant fastener, shown generally as reference number 10, is illustrated in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the pant fastener 10 includes an elongated outer fabric casing 19 (FIG. 3), a first complementary closure element 25, a second complementary closure element 27 (FIG. 2), and preferably an inner band 22.

[0033] In the exemplary embodiment depicted, the outer fabric casing 19 is an elongated casing having two opposing ends 28, 29 and comprising an exterior sheathing 20 and an interior facing sheathing 21. Exterior sheathing 20 comprises a front fabric piece and interior facing sheathing 21 comprises a back fabric piece. Exterior sheathing 20 and interior facing sheathing 21 are preferably formed of a single fabric doubled over and joined at a single lateral edge, but may alternatively be formed of separate materials and joined at the two opposing lateral edges. Outer fabric casing 19 may be made of any material suitable to a garment accessory. The exterior sheathing 20 is attractive enough to be the visible surface of the accessory, for example, denim. The material or materials of the outer fabric casing 19 should also be fully washable, and able to withstand repeated washings without degradation.

[0034] An optional, but preferable, inner band 22 (represented with dotted lines) is disposed within the outer fabric casing 19. The inner band 22 may enhance the outer fabric casing 19 by providing a measure of strength, durability, resilience, and/or pliability. The inner band 22 of the first embodiment is made of any material suitable to a garment accessory and fully washable, being able to withstand repeated washings without degradation. However, preferably inner band 22 is made of a durable elastic material, as in the second embodiment of FIG. 6-7. The use of an elastic material is considered preferable, because it enables the pant fastener 10 to more readily adjust to a greater range of waist sizes, as will be made clear below. Further the inner band 22, in at least some embodiments, provides the elasticity necessary to keep the pants tight to the body and provides structure and stability to support the width of pant fastener 10, reducing folding and/or puckering.

[0035] Preferably disposed at the opposing ends 28, 29 of the pant fastener 10 are a first tab 24 and a second tab 26. First tab 24 and second tab 26 may be the same width of outer fabric casing 19 or, alternatively, may be slightly narrower or wider than outer fabric casing 19. First tab 24 and second tab 26 are permanently attached to the opposing ends 29, 28 of the outer fabric casing 19 and of the opposing ends of the inner band 22 at the seams 23 and 31. Any convenient means may be used to permanently fasten first tab 24 and second tab 26 at the seams 23 and 31, such as sewing, stapling, gluing, etc. First tab 24 and second tab 26 may be constructed of any durable material suitable to a garment accessory, such as fabric, plastic, leather, etc.

[0036] First tab 24 and second tab 26 are outfitted with a first complementary closure element 25 and a second complementary closure element 27, respectively. The first complementary closure element 25 and second complementary closure element 27 serve as the closure means of the pant fastener 10 and, as such, form a mating pair. The first complementary closure element 25 and second complementary closure element 27 are configured to be engaged after the pant fastener 10 has been looped around two or more belt loops 13 (FIG. 8) and are configured to be detachable. For example, the pant fastener 10 might be removed for washing, for storage, or to be used with other garments.

[0037] Thus, as depicted in a first exemplary embodiment in FIG. 2 and FIG. 3, the first complementary closure element 25 may comprise one or more female eyes and the second complementary closure element 27 may comprise one or more male hooks, with each of the one or more hooks configured to detachably engage one eye. Preferably the first complementary closure element 25 comprises multiple rows of eyes spaced apart according to the number of incremental waistband adjustments desired. More rows closer together provide a greater number of possible incremental waistband adjustments than fewer rows farther apart. Preferably, second complementary closure element 27 comprises only one row of hooks, since the use of more rows of hooks would require the user to fasten more hooks to the eyes of the first complementary closure element 25 without providing any significant benefit.

[0038] Those skilled in the art will understand that any number of suitable closure means may be employed as first complementary closure element 25 and second complementary closure element 27, serving as the closure means of the pant fastener 10 and, as such, form a mating pair. Examples include, but are not limited to snaps, buttons (as illustrated in the second embodiment of FIGS. 6-7), and Velcro® fibrous pads. To the extent such other closure means are used, the first tab 24 and a second tab 26 must be configured to accommodate them. For example, snaps could be configured in rows in the same manner as the hooks depicted in FIG. 2 and FIG. 3, but Velcro® fibrous pads would be more advantageously employed as continuous inner and outer (respectively) surfaces of first tab 24 and a second tab 26.

[0039] Further, if desired, the first tab 24 and second tab 26 can be formed of the same material as outer fabric casing 19 and joined at seam 23 and seam 31 to the outer fabric casing 19. Optionally, the first tab 24 and second tab 26 can be formed integrally with outer fabric casing 19, only designating a specific terminal portion of outer fabric casing 19. For example, a first single piece of fabric can form exterior sheathing 20 and first tab 24 and with a second piece of fabric forming interior facing sheathing 21 and second tab 25, in which case, first tab 24 and second tab 26 are only conceptual, designating the terminal portion of outer fabric casing 19. Or, alternatively a single, folded over piece of fabric can form exterior sheathing 20 and interior facing sheathing 21 and the conceptual first tab 24 and second tab 25.

[0040] FIG. 4 and the detailed view of FIG. 5 depict a top perspective view of the novel pant fastener 10 in the closed position. In order to provide closure, first tab 24 and second tab 26 overlay one another, and their closure means, first complementary closure element 25 and second complementary closure element 27, are mated. First tab 24 and a second tab 26 may be made longer or shorter to expand or reduce the range of waist sizes to be accommodated, provided first

complementary closure element **25** and second complementary closure element **27** are provided accordingly.

**[0041]** FIG. 6 illustrates a second exemplary embodiment of the waist-securing pant fastener **10** of the present invention, illustrating a variation in the type of first complementary closure elements **25** and second complementary closure elements **27**, a variation in the inner band **22**, and a variation in the outer fabric casing **19**. FIG. 6 depicts a perspective view of the pant fastener **10** in the closed position with the surface that would normally be against the waist and concealed (when in use) facing the viewer, in an embodiment where this normally concealed portion of the outer fabric casing **19** is bunched or crinkled due to the inclusion of an elastic section of inner band **22**.

**[0042]** Although first tab **24** and second tab **26** may be configured in size and in number of first complementary closure elements **25** and second complementary closure elements **27** (e.g., hooks or snaps, etc.) to accommodate a wider or narrower range of waist sizes, the range of waist sizes accommodated may be increased even more or alternatively by making the pant fastener **10** stretchable.

**[0043]** To make the pant fastener **10** stretchable, attention must be paid to both the inner band **22** and the outer fabric casing **19**. The inner band **22** is made stretchable by constructing it from a material that is elastic, such as rubber or, preferably, stretchable fabric. Stretchable fabric may be less suitable for the outer fabric casing **19**, however, due to issues of durability and attractiveness. For example, denim may be deemed a more suitable fabric for the outer fabric casing. To the extent the fabric chosen for the outer fabric casing **19** is not stretchable or elastic, the non-flexibility of the outer fabric casing **19** would impede the benefit of the elastic inner band **22**.

**[0044]** To overcome this limitation, all or a portion of the fabric used for the outer fabric casing **19** may be gathered, resulting in the bunching or crinkling as shown in FIG. 6. The excess fabric present in the folds and creases of the outer fabric casing **19** depicted in FIG. 6 allow it to be stretched to match stretching of the elastic inner band **22**. To accomplish this, it may be understood that not all of the outer fabric casing **19** need be bunched or crinkled. It suffices that merely a part of the outer fabric casing **19** be bunched or crinkled, as depicted in FIG. 6, to provide enough flexibility to match the elastic quality of the inner band **22**. It also does not matter whether the bunching or crinkling of the outer fabric casing **19** be situated at the surface facing the waist (as worn), as depicted in the second exemplary embodiment of FIG. 6, or at the surface facing outward from the waist when being worn (not shown), or along the entire length of outer fabric casing **19** (not shown). Similarly, it does not matter whether the bunching or crinkling of the outer fabric casing **19** be situated adjacent to first tab **24** and second tab **26**, as depicted in FIG. 6, or at some other location of the pant fastener **10**. In any of these configurations, the benefit of flexibility may nevertheless be realized.

**[0045]** As shown in FIG. 6, the inner band **22** is in at least two separate parts **22a**, **22b**. Inner band **22a**, **22b** provide the elasticity necessary to keep the pants tight to the body. Inner band **22a**, **22b** extend from the seams **23**, **31** at first tab **24** and second tab **26** to a first and a second side seam **38**, **39**, respectively, up to approximately the place where the pant fastener **10** loops around the belt loops **13** on either side. Inner band **22a** and inner band **22b** are both approximately one fourth of the total length of the outer fabric casing, in order to

reach from first tab **24** and second tab **26** to the seams **38**, **39**. Seams **38** and **39** are where the inner band **22** terminates at either side. Seams **38** and **39** may be created by sewing, stapling or any other means that will close off inner band sections **22a**, **22b** and prevent either of inner band sections **22a**, **22b** from migrating throughout the length of the outer fabric casing **19**. Optionally, a third section of inner band **22c** may be disposed within the outward facing portion of the pant fastener **10**. The third section of inner band **22c** may be formed of a different material than the first and second sections of inner band **22a**, **22b**. The third inner band section **22c** provides width stability, keeping the width of the pant fastener **10** from folding, wrinkling, or puckering.

**[0046]** In FIG. 7 the second exemplary embodiment of the pant fastener **10** is illustrated in a front perspective view in the closed position with the surface of the exterior sheathing **20** of outer fabric casing **19** that would normally be visible and facing outward from the waist (when in use) facing the viewer. In this second embodiment this displayed, visible portion of the outer fabric casing **19** is not bunched or crinkled. The embodiment depicted in FIG. 7 is configured to conserve material and provide a different aesthetic look by eliminating the inner band **22** over part of the length of the pant fastener.

**[0047]** As can be seen, the result of the two inner band sections (first inner band section **22a** and second inner band section **22b**) only extending along the normally concealed portion of the outer fabric casing **19** is a visible, outward portion of the outer fabric casing **19** that appears flat. This may be advantageous in providing a surface that is more conducive to ornamentation or embellishments **33** or which the user simply considers more attractive. Embellishments **33** include any conventional ornamental devices for application to fabrics, such as, for example, embroidery, sewn on buttons or imitation stones—such as rhinestones (as illustrated), textured paint, graphics, rivets, or appliqués.

**[0048]** Maintaining a flat visible, outward portion may also make the pant fastener **10** easier to put on, because the wearer no longer has two bunched or crinkled surfaces rubbing against one another. The advantages of bunching or crinkling may nevertheless be maintained at the portion of the pant fastener **10** that is against the waist and concealed from view and, of course, inner band material is conserved.

**[0049]** FIG. 8 depicts a perspective view of the upper back portion of a pair of pants **12** with the pant fastener **10** being worn to secure the waist of the garment to the user's waist, holding up the pants. As illustrated in FIG. 8, first tab **24** and second tab **26** (together with first complementary closure element **25** and second complementary closure element **27**) are positioned beneath the center belt loop **13**. In actual use, the pant fastener **10** may be hooked or snapped or pressed (in the case of Velcro® fibrous pads) together to the side of center belt loop **13**, and then slidably positioned beneath the center belt loop **13** for more convenient and attractive wearing. Center belt loop **13** preferably is positioned over the pant fastener **10**, as illustrated, preventing the pant fastener **10** from moving upward when stretched.

**[0050]** For embodiments employing stretchable construction materials, namely, an elastic material for inner band **22** and a wholly or partially bunched or crinkled outer fabric casing **19**, such flexible construction materials may be sufficient to provide the tension necessary to comfortably contract the waistband of the pants and hold them up appropriately. To the extent more tension is needed to perform this function, or

for embodiments not employing stretchable construction materials, the necessary tension may be obtained by closing the pant fastener 10 using a row of female first complementary closure elements 25 closer to seam 23, causing greater overlap of first tab 24 and second tab 26 (in the case of Velcro® fibrous pads, by simply increasing the overlap of first tab 24 and second tab 26) for a snugger fit.

[0051] It may be appreciated by anyone skilled in the art that functional equivalence may be achieved using different complementary closure elements than those specifically cited or depicted in the figures, different tab lengths, and more or less seams placed at different intervals along the length of the pant fastener. Such variations are virtually infinite in number and, thus, too numerous to set forth or separately claim, but are expressly contemplated in this disclosure and claimed.

[0052] Similarly, though depicted in the figures as worn at the back of the waistband of pants, the pant fastener may be worn anywhere around the circumference of the waistband, except across the pants closure 15, and wrapped around a greater or lesser number of contiguous belt loops 13, without sacrificing any of the advantages enumerated herein.

[0053] Since many modifications, variations, and changes in detail can be made to the described preferred embodiments of the invention, it is intended that all matters in the foregoing description and shown in the accompanying drawings be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

We claim:

1. A fastener for securing the waist of a garment comprising:
  - an elongated outer fabric casing, having a first and a second opposing end, and comprising an exterior sheathing and an interior facing sheathing;
  - a first tab disposed at said first opposing end of said outer fabric casing;
  - a second tab disposed at said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing;
  - a first complementary closure element disposed on said first tab; and
  - a second complementary closure element disposed on said second tab and configured to detachably engage with said first complementary closure element.
2. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 1, further comprising at least one inner band disposed within said outer fabric casing.
3. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 2, wherein said at least one inner band comprises a stretchable fabric.
4. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 3, wherein said at least one inner band comprises:
  - a first inner band section approximately one fourth the length of said outer fabric casing and disposed at said first opposing end of said outer fabric casing; and
  - a second inner band section approximately one fourth the length of said outer fabric casing and disposed at said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing.
5. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 4, wherein said first opposing end and said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing are configured with extra gathered fabric, wherein said extra gathered fabric of said first opposing end and of said second opposing end each extend approximately one fourth the length of the outer fabric casing.

6. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein:

- said first complementary closure element comprises at least one eye of a hook and eye type fastener; and
- said second complementary closure element comprises at least one hook of a hook and eye type fastener.

7. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein:

- said first complementary closure element comprises a hook fibrous pad of a hook and loop type complementary fastener; and
- said second complementary closure element comprises a loop fibrous pad of a hook and loop type complementary fastener.

8. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein:

- said first complementary closure element comprises at least one button; and
- said second complementary closure element comprises at least one buttonhole.

9. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein said exterior sheathing and said interior facing sheathing are formed of the same type of fabric.

10. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein said exterior sheathing and said interior facing sheathing are formed of the different types of fabric.

11. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein:

- said first tab is attached to said first opposing end of said outer fabric casing by sewing with thread; and
- said second tab is attached to said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing by sewing with thread.

12. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein said first tab and said second tab are formed integrally with said outer fabric casing of a single piece of fabric.

13. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 5, wherein a forward facing portion of said outer fabric casing is not gathered, but is generally flat.

14. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 13, wherein said forward facing portion of said outer fabric casing is ornamented with at least one embellishment.

15. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 14, wherein said at least one embellishment comprises embroidery.

16. The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 14, wherein said at least one embellishment comprises imitation stones.

17. A fastener for securing the waist of a garment comprising:

- an elongated outer fabric casing formed of a flexible material, having a first and a second opposing end, and comprising an exterior sheathing and an interior facing sheathing;

a first inner band section of stretchable material disposed within said first opposing end of said outer fabric casing and extending approximately one fourth of the length of said outer fabric casing, wherein said first opposing end of said outer fabric casing is gathered and bunched to accommodate the stretching of said first inner band section;

a second inner band section of stretchable material disposed within said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing and extending approximately one fourth of the length of said outer fabric casing, wherein said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing is gathered and bunched to accommodate the stretching of said second inner band section;

a first tab disposed at first opposing end of said outer fabric casing;

a second tab disposed at said second opposing end of said outer fabric casing;

a first complementary closure element disposed on said first tab; and

a second complementary closure element disposed on said second tab and configured to detachably engage with said first complementary closure element.

**18.** The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 17, wherein:

said first complementary closure element comprises at least one eye of a hook and eye type fastener; and said second complementary closure element comprises at least one hook of a hook and eye type fastener.

**19.** The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 17, wherein:

said first complementary closure element comprises a hook fibrous pad of a hook and loop type complementary fastener; and

said second complementary closure element comprises a loop fibrous pad of a hook and loop type complementary fastener.

**20.** The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 17, wherein:

said first complementary closure element comprises at least one first snap fastener; and

said second complementary closure element comprises at least one second snap fastener configured to be complementary to, and engageable with, said at least one first snap fastener.

**21.** The fastener for securing the waist of a garment, as recited in claim 17, wherein a forward facing portion of said outer fabric casing is substantially flat and is ornamented with at least one embellishment.

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