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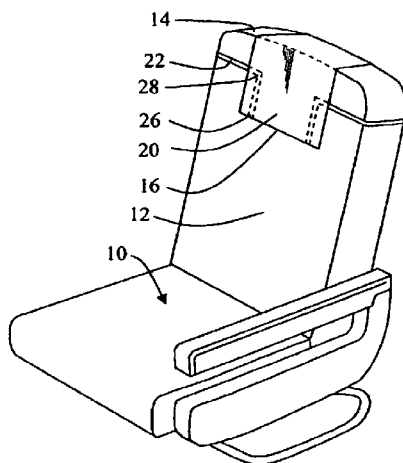
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(54) **Title:** SELF-FASTENING HEADREST COVER



(57) **Abstract:** A removable headrest cover for a seat is described having improved features for securing and attaching the cover to a headrest. The improved features include integrated elastic elements that serve to secure the cover to a headrest, eliminating the need for engaging receptacles on the seat. The positioning and placement of attachment points for the elastic provide versatility to the headrest cover that allows it to be used with many different seat configurations. Methods for efficiently manufacturing and packaging the cover are also described.



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AMENDED CLAIMS
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I Claim:

1. A cover for releasable securement on the headrest portion of a seat or chair for engaging a seated person's head, the cover comprising:

5 (a) a section of flexible sheet-like material having a top surface; and

(b) first and second elongated elastic members, each of the elastic members fixedly attached to the sheet-like material in at least two locations thereon, the first elongated elastic member separated from the second elongated elastic member;

10 wherein the elastic members may each be separately stretched in generally opposing directions at least partially around the headrest to position the top surface of the sheet-like material such as to receive the head of a person seated in the seat or chair.

2. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the flexible sheet-like material has first and second lateral side regions, the first elastic member fixedly attached to the sheet-like material in at
15 least two locations within the first side region of the sheet-like material and the second elastic member fixedly attached in at least two locations within the second side region of the sheet-like material, the at least two attachment locations of the first elastic member separated from the at least two attachment locations of the second elastic member.

20 3. The cover of Claim 2 wherein each of the first and second lateral side regions has an end section and an intermediate section and the elastic members are each attached within an end section and an intermediate section of the side regions, wherein a top section of the sheet-like material bounded by the attached elastic members may be positioned over a top portion of the headrest and a front section of the sheet-like material not bounded by the attachment of
25 the elastic members may hang below the top section of the sheet-like material on the headrest to present a portion of the top surface of the sheet-like material to receive the head of the person seated in the seat or chair,

4. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the flexible sheet-like material has first and second
30 lateral side regions, the first elastic member attached in at least three locations within the first side region of the sheet-like material and the second elastic member attached in at least three locations within the second side region of the sheet-like material.

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5. The cover of Claim 4 wherein each of the first and second lateral side regions has a first and second end section, and an intermediate section and the elastic members are each attached within the two end sections and the intermediate section of the side regions so as to extend along a full length of the side regions, wherein a top section of the sheet-like material bounded by the attached elastic members between said first end section and the intermediate section may be positioned over a top portion of the headrest and a front section of the sheet-like material bounded by the attached elastic members between the second end section and the intermediate section, hangs below the top section of the sheet-like material on the headrest to present a portion of the top surface to receive the head of the person seated in the seat or chair,
6. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by an adhesive bonding.
7. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by sewing.
8. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by stapling.
9. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by heat bonding.
10. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by RF bonding.
11. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the elastic members are fixedly attached to the sheet-like material by ultrasonic bonding.
12. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the section of flexible sheet-like material comprises a section of fabric.
13. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises a woven material.

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14. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises a non-woven material.
15. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises a natural leather material.
- 5 16. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises an imitation leather material.
17. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises paper material.
18. The cover of Claim 12 wherein the fabric comprises a film material.
- 10 19. The cover of Claim 12 wherein at least a portion of the fabric includes a hydrophobic material.
20. The cover of Claim 12 wherein at least a portion of the fabric includes an antimicrobial compound.
- 15 21. The cover of Claim 12 wherein at least a portion of the fabric includes a fire retardant material.
- 20 22. The cover of Claim 12 wherein at least a portion of the fabric comprises a gas permeable material.
23. The cover of Claim 12 wherein at least a portion of the fabric includes a microencapsulated fragrance material,
- 25 24. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the section of flexible sheet-like material comprises a generally rectangular section of material.
- 30 25. The cover of Claim 1 wherein the section of flexible sheet-like material comprises a first layer and a second layer of sheet-like material, the first layer adhered to the second layer on at least three sides thereof, the layers thereby forming a pocket, wherein the pocket thus formed by the layers of sheet-like material may receive and partially enclose an object.

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26. The cover of Claim 25 wherein the layers of flexible sheet-like material are sized and shaped to form a pocket suitable for receiving and partially enclosing a pillow,

27. The cover of Claim 25 wherein the layers of flexible sheet-like material are sized and
5 shaped to form a pocket suitable for receiving and carrying a plurality of personal items,

28. The cover of Claim 27 wherein the layers of flexible sheet-like material comprise a handle structure positioned proximate to an edge of the sheet-like material wherein the layers are not adhered together,

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29. A cover for releasable securement on the headrest portion of a seat or chair for engaging a seated person's head, the cover comprising:

(a) a section of flexible sheet-like material having first and second lateral side regions and a top surface, the first and second lateral side regions each said lateral side regions
15 having two end sections and an intermediate section; and

(b) first and second elongated elastic members, the first elastic member attached to the sheet-like material at the two end sections and the intermediate section of the first lateral side region so as to extend along a full length of the first side region, the second elastic member attached to the sheet-like material at the two end sections and the intermediate section of the
20 second lateral side region so as to extend along a full length of the second side region;

wherein the elastic members may be stretched at least partially around the headrest such that a top section of the sheet-like material bounded by the attached elastic members between one end section and the intermediate section may be positioned over a top portion of the headrest and a front section of the sheet-like material bounded by the attached elastic
25 members between the remaining end section and the intermediate section, may hang below the top section of the sheet-like material on the headrest to present a portion of the top surface of the sheet-like material to receive the head of the person seated in the seat or chair.

30. A method for manufacturing a plurality of headrest covers comprising the
30 manufacturing steps of:

(a) providing a length of sheet-like material in a roll, the roll of sheet-like material having two lateral generally parallel edges;

(b) providing two parallel lengths of elongated elastic members;

AMENDED SHEET (ARTICLE 19)

(c) aligning a first length of elastic member with a first edge of the sheet-like material and a second length of elastic member with a second edge of the sheet-like material;

(d) attaching each of the elastic members to the sheet-like material at a plurality of spaced points along the length of the material, at least every other attachment point being
5 configured to be separable into two adjacent attachment points;

(e) cutting through the elastic member and the sheet-like material at least at every other attachment point; and

(f) partially cutting through a balance of the sheet-like material extending between the cut-through attachment points so as to create a perforated separation line between each of the
10 plurality of headrest covers.

31. The method of Claim 30 further comprising the step of separating each of the plurality of headrest covers from each other before packaging.

15 32. The method of Claim 31 further comprising the step of stacking the separated headrest covers in a dispensing package.

33. The method of Claim 31 further comprising the step of individually packaging each of the separated headrest covers.

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34. The method of Claim 30 further comprising the step of rolling the plurality of headrest covers into a roll and packaging the roll for dispensing the headrest covers one at a time from the roll by tearing along the perforated separation lines.

AMENDED SHEET (ARTICLE 19)

STATEMENT UNDER ARTICLE 19 (1)

Dear Sir:

This Statement is being submitted in conjunction with Article 19 Amendments and comprises remarks regarding the amendments made to the claims and the references cited by the International Searching Authority (ISA).

Claims 1, 2, and 6 - 24 are rejected under the inventive step requirement in light of the combination of Japan Reference JP 2002-330845 (D1) and U.S. Patent No. 5,975,638 (D2).

D1 shows clip-on elastic straps. A first strap has two clip-on ends while a second strap oriented at right angles to the first, slides along the first (at one end) and has a single clip-on end opposite the sliding end.

D2 shows a single elastic band that passes through two holes on the front of the sheet and simply "passes over" the sheet on the back to hold it in place. (See Column 2, Lines 14 - 20 in the Patent).

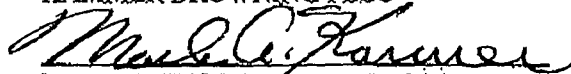
The present Invention therefore differs from the referenced devices in a number of ways: (1) The elastic members are permanently attached to the sheet-like material (therefore "fixedly attached" in the amended claim language); (2) The elastic members are separate from each other ("separated" in the amended claim language); and (3) The elastic members are structured to be stretched "in generally opposing directions" (in the amended claim language) around the headrest. Therefore, the amendments made to the claims reflect an effort to clarify these three basic distinctions.

Claim 1 has been amended to reflect and clarify all three distinctions. The balance of the rejected claims all depend from Claim 1 (directly or indirectly). Claim 2 has been amended to clarify the first two distinctions mentioned (fixedly and separated). Claims 6 - 11 have been amended to reflect the use of the terms "fixedly attached" in amended Claim 1.

The balance of the claims have either been allowed or depend from Claim 1 in such a manner that the amendments to Claim 1 should likewise distinguish the dependent claims.

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Date

Respectfully submitted
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