

(21) Application No 8805600.7

(22) Date of filing 09.03.1988

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(51) INT CL'
A45D 8/26

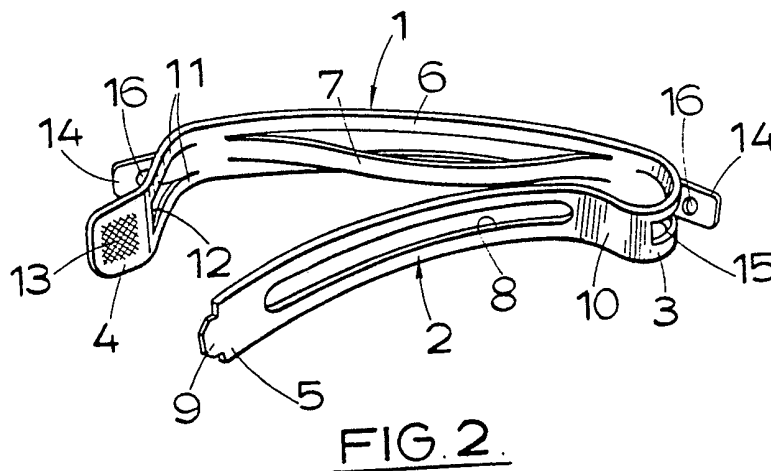
(52) UK CL (Edition J)
A4V V12

(56) Documents cited
None

(58) Field of search
UK CL (Edition J) **A4V, E2A**
INT CL' **A45D, F16B**

(54) **Hair clasps**

(57) A hair clasp of resilient, preferably strip, material comprises a base (1) and tongue (2) joined by an integral spring (3), which urges the tongue away from the base, and a retainer (4) integral with the base which releasably holds the tongue (2) in a closed position against the action of the spring. The base is bowed away from the tongue and has a flexed intermediate portion (7) projecting towards the tongue and through a slot (8) in the tongue when the tongue is in the closed position. The base also has anchorage tabs (14) at either end to which a decoration may be attached.



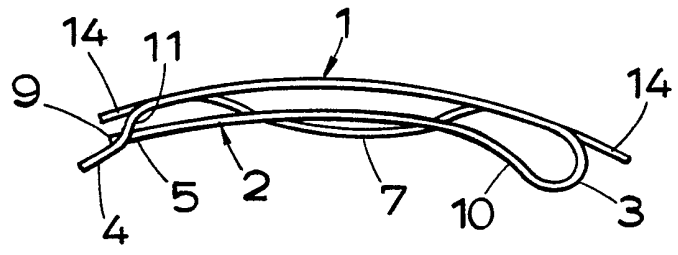


FIG. 1.

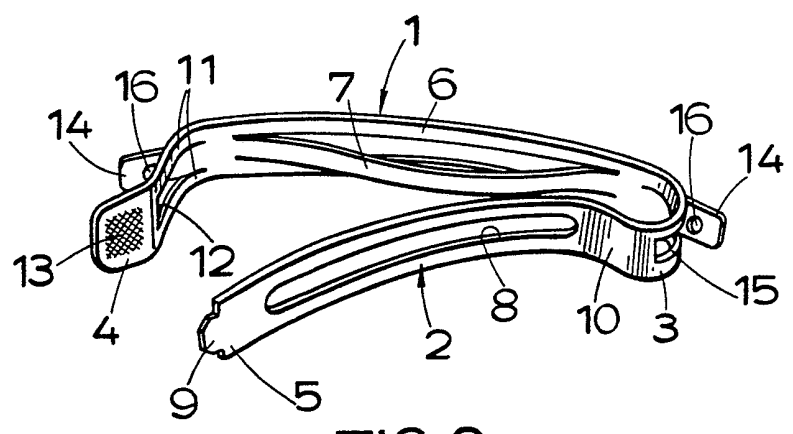


FIG. 2.

HAIR CLASPS

This invention relates to hair clasps of the kind comprising a base which may carry a decoration or have
5 a decorative top or finish, and a tongue linked at its one end to the base. In use the tongue is pushed under a lock of hair and the tongue and base are closed gripping the hair between them.

10 Clasps of this kind have usually been linked together by a hinge mechanism and a catch has been provided to hold the tongue in the closed position. Conveniently clasps of this kind have been manufactured in two or more pieces which then have to be assembled
15 to form the clasp. Closing the clasps frequently requires lateral manipulation of the tongue to engage the retainer.

In our British patent application No. 8800404 a
20 hair clasp is provided which comprises a bar and a tongue linked at one end of the tongue by an integral spring which urges the tongue away from the base, and a retainer formed integrally with the base with which the end of the tongue remote from the spring is releasably
25 engageable to hold the tongue in a closed position relative to the base. Such a hair clasp is hereinafter referred to as "as set forth". The base, tongue, spring and retainer can be made all in one, and may be made from a unitary strip of material.

30 The present invention is concerned with a modification of the hair clasp as set forth.

According to the present invention a hair clasp is
35 provided as set forth which is made of resilient material and in which the base is bowed longitudinally

of and away from the tongue, and has at an intermediate part of its length an elongate portion extending longitudinally of the tongue which is joined at opposite ends to the body of the base and is flexed out of the body towards the tongue.

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The provision of the flexed portion has the advantage that it helps the body of the base to retain its bowed shape, and it puts the body under spring tension which can be used to urge the tongue towards the retainer, thereby enhancing the security of the engagement between the tongue and the retainer, to hold the tongue in the closed position. Furthermore, as the flexed portion is directed toward the tongue it provides a means of enhancing the retention of the hair clasp on a lock of hair.

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Preferably the flexed portion is at an intermediate part of the width of the base so that it is contained within the body of the base. It is also preferred, to enhance further the security of the hair clasp, that the flexed portion projects further from the body of the base than the spacing between the body and the tongue when the tongue is in the closed position, and the tongue has an opening in it for the flexed portion to protrude through.

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If the bar is to carry a decoration it may have a portion or portions adapted, for example by the provision of a fixing hole, to provide an anchorage or anchorages for the decoration. In an embodiment the body of the base is provided with anchorage tabs adjacent its opposite ends, beyond the ends of the flexed portion, for the attachment of the decoration, which may, for example, be a decorative plastics strip or moulding.

An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

5 Figure 1 is a side view of a hair clasp in accordance with the present invention, in a closed position, and

10 Figure 2 is a perspective view of the hair clasp in an open position.

In this embodiment the hair clasp is made from a single strip of spring steel which is formed into an elongate base 1, a tongue 2 joined by an integral
15 spring 3 to the base at one end and extending underneath the base, and at the end of the base remote from the spring 3 a retainer 4 with which a free end 5 of the tongue 2 releasably engages. The base, tongue, spring and retainer are all of the same width. When
20 the free end 5 of the tongue is engaged with the retainer 4, thereby holding the tongue in a closed position, as shown in Figure 1, the tongue extends in spaced parallel relationship to the base.

25 Base 1 comprises a body portion 6, Figure 2, which like the tongue 2 is bowed longitudinally, and a flexed portion 7 which projects in a bow from the concave side of the body portion towards the tongue and tensions the body portion. The flexed portion 7 is formed by an
30 intermediate strip of the base which extends centrally of the body portion 6 for a substantial part of the length of the base, being defined by parallel slits extending longitudinally of the base, and is joined only at its ends to the body portion. The extent of
35 the projection of the flexed portion 7 is greater than the space between the body portion and the tongue when

the tongue is in the closed position, by about half as much again as shown in Figure 1.

5 There is a slot 8 in the tongue 2 through which the flexed portion 7 protrudes when the tongue is in the closed position. At its free end 5 the tongue is stepped inwardly to form a tip 9 that is narrower than the remainder of the tongue.

10 The spring 3 is provided by forming the part of the strip between the base 1 and the tongue 2 into a generally C-shaped curve which turns downwards and forwards from the base and then has an upwardly-directed portion 10 which merges with the tongue. The action of the spring is to urge the tongue
15 away from the base into an open position, as shown in Figure 2.

At the end of the base remote from the spring 3
20 two narrow integral, strip-like, hangers 11 extend downwards from either side of the body portion 6 and are joined to the retainer 4, which is in the form of a platform extending almost parallel to the body portion. The tip 9 of the tongue is able to extend
25 into the space between the two hangers 11 and engage over an adjacent edge 12 of the retainer to secure the tongue in its closed position. The retainer can be resiliently deflected against the spring tension of the body portion for the tip 9 to be engaged with, and
30 released from, the retainer. The underside of the retainer is roughened by knurling 13 to provide a non-slip surface for bearing contact by a finger or thumb to deflect the retainer. In the closed position of the tongue the hangers 11 restrain lateral movement
35 of the tip 9 relative to the base.

At its opposite ends adjacent to the spring 3 and the hangers 11 the base is formed with a pair of integral anchorage tabs 14 which are defined as narrower extensions of the body portion 6 and continue the bow of the body portion. The anchorage tabs 14 are pieced out of the metal of the strip leaving an aperture 15 at the spring which extends around a substantial part of the C-shaped curve of the spring, and the space between the hanger 11 at the retainer. A hole 16 is formed in each anchorage tab for securing a decoration on the base by means of rivets, headed pegs on the base or other suitable fixings.

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CLAIMS

- 5 1. A hair clasp comprising a base and a tongue linked
at one end of the tongue by an integral spring which
urges the tongue away from the base, and a retainer
formed integrally with the base with which the end of
the tongue remote from the spring is releasably
10 engageable to hold the tongue in a closed position
relative to the base, the hair clasp being made of a
resilient material, the base being bowed longitudinally
of and away from the tongue and having at an
intermediate part of its length an elongate flexed
15 portion, extending longitudinally of the tongue, the
flexed portion being joined at opposite ends to the
body of the base and flexed out of the body towards the
tongue.
- 20 2. A hair clasp according to claim 1 wherein the
flexed portion is at an intermediate part of the width
of the base.
- 25 3. A hair clasp according to claim 2 wherein the
tongue has an opening through which the flexed portion
protrudes when the tongue is in the closed position.
- 30 4. A hair clasp according to any preceding claim
wherein the base has at least one portion adapted to
provide an anchorage for a decoration.
5. A hair clasp according to claim 4 wherein the body
of the base is provided with anchorage tabs adjacent
to its opposite ends, beyond the flexed portion.

6. A hair clasp according to any preceding claim wherein the base, tongue, spring and retainer are made from a unitary strip of resilient material.

5 7. A hair clasp according to claim 6 as dependent from Claim 5 wherein the anchorage tabs are pierced out of the strip leaving apertures in the strip.

10 8. A hair clasp according to claim 7 wherein one of the apertures extends around a substantial part of the spring.

15 9. A hair clasp according to claim 7 or claim 8 wherein the retainer is joined by laterally spaced hangers to the base, and one, or another one, of the apertures forms a space between the hangers into which the said end of the tongue remote from the spring extends when engaged with the retainer in the closed position of the tongue.

20 10. A hair clasp substantially as described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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