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(71) Applicant(s)
Peter Sanders
15 Bridport Road, Springfield, CHELMSFORD, Essex,
CM1 6NB, United Kingdom

(72) Inventor(s)
Peter Sanders

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service
Peter Sanders
15 Bridport Road, Springfield, CHELMSFORD, Essex,
CM1 6NB, United Kingdom

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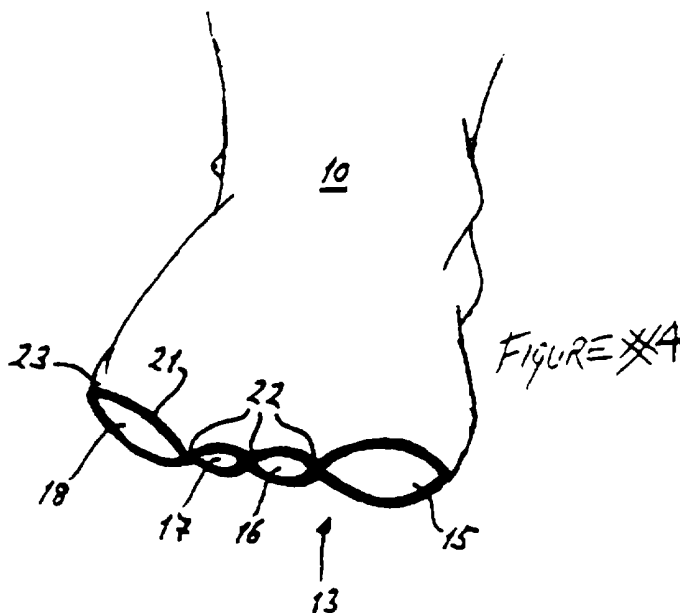
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(56) Documents Cited
GB 0357071 A SE 008903007 A US 5623734 A
US 5054129 A

(58) Field of Search
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(54) Abstract Title
Hosiery garment with openings for the toes

(57) A hosiery garment 10 comprises an upper leg portion and a lower foot portion. The lower foot portion has a number of openings 13 through which in use the toes protrude. There may be between two and five openings for the toes, however ideally four openings 15-18 are provided, the opening 15 intended for the big toe, 18 intended to accommodate both the little toe and its neighbour and 16 and 17 intended for the other two toes. The boundaries of the openings are stitched 21 and the connections 22 between the openings are reinforced by stitching.



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Figure X1

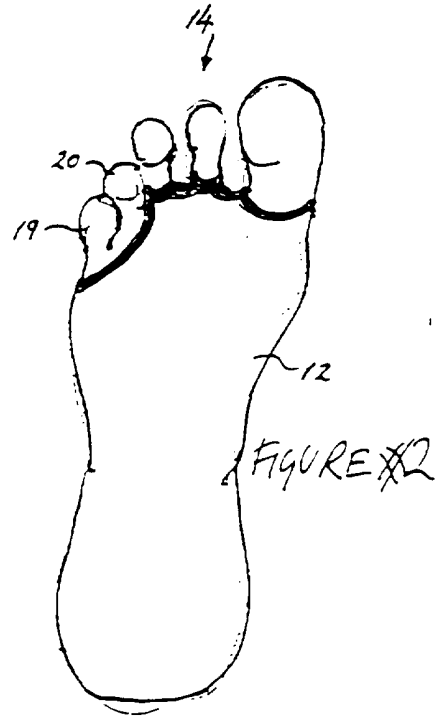
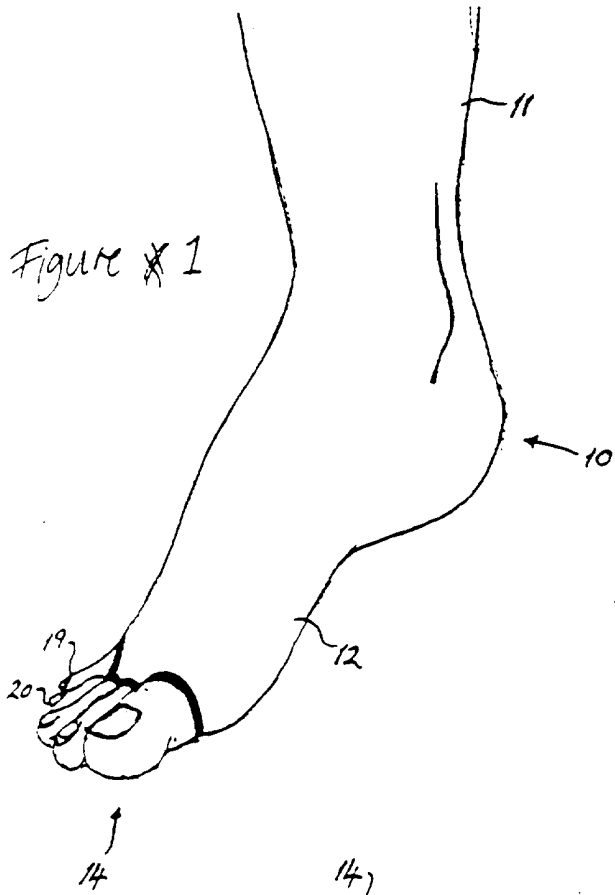


FIGURE X2

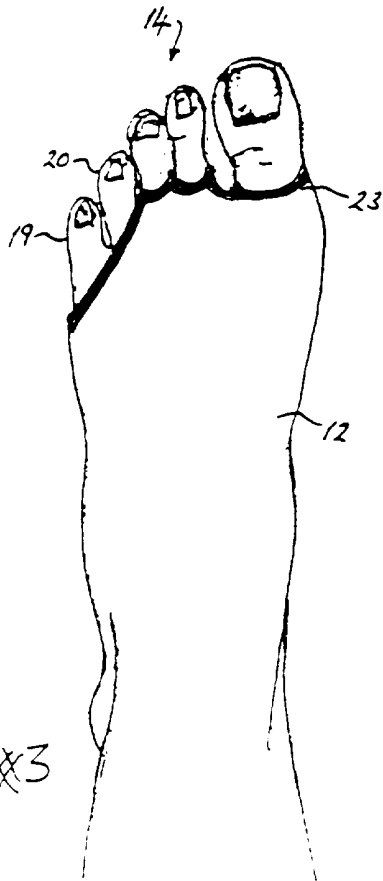


FIGURE X3

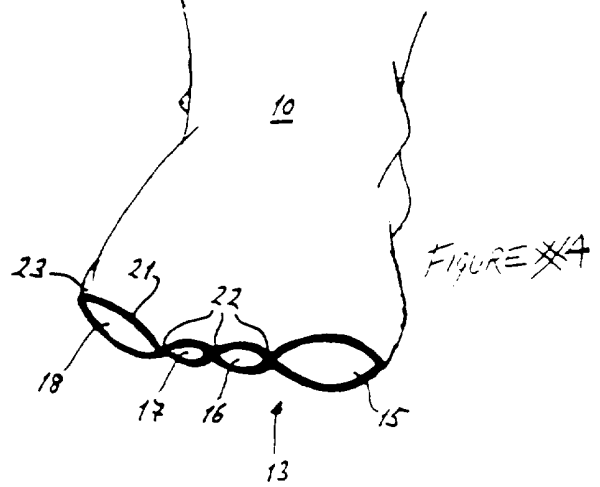


FIGURE X4

HOSIERY GARMENT

The invention relates to hosiery garments and in particular hosiery garments suitable to be worn in warm weather.

Conventional hosiery, e.g. stockings or tights, extends all the way from the toes and covers the feet and at least part of the legs. The toe portion is enclosed, being normally stitched to form a seam in the region of the toes.

This known garment is quite comfortable in winter and at other times of the year when it is cool, but in summer it can lead to excessive perspiration and, consequently, a high level of discomfort for the wearer.

In accordance with the invention there is provided a hosiery garment comprising a plurality of openings through each of which, in use, one or more of the wearer's toes protrude.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention there are four openings, one of said openings serving to accommodate the little toe and its neighbour.

The openings may be bounded by stitching.

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

Figure 1 is a general view of an embodiment of the hosiery garment according to the invention as worn by a wearer;

Figure 2 is an underside view of the hosiery garment illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a plan view of the hosiery garment illustrated in Figure 1, and

Figure 4 is a general view of the hosiery garment itself as included in Figures 1 to 3.

Referring now to the drawings, which show a preferred embodiment of the invention, a hosiery garment 10 in the form of a stocking or one limb of a pair of tights comprises an upper leg portion 11 for at least partial covering of the wearer's leg and a lower foot portion 12. The foot portion 12 does not cover the whole foot but has a series of openings 13 (see
5 in particular Figure 4) through which the toes 14 protrude. Figure 4 shows the garment as intended for the right foot; four openings 15-18 are provided, the opening 15 being intended for the big toe and the openings 16-18 being intended for the other toes in order.

A feature of the embodiment shown in the drawings is that the opening 18 is designed to accommodate both the little toe 19 and the adjacent toe 20. Dispensing with the provision
10 of two discrete openings at this point allows the design of the garment to be simplified, and hence its manufacturing costs to be reduced, without the risk that the end 23 of the garment will ride up over the foot.

Alternative embodiments of the invention (not shown) dispense with one or two of the openings illustrated in the drawings. Thus in one case three openings in total are provided,
15 one of which is allocated to the big toe while the other two accommodate two each of the other toes, while in the other case two openings only are provided, one opening being for the big toe and its neighbour, for example, while the other opening serves to take the three smaller toes.

In a still further embodiment (not shown), one opening is provided for each toe, i.e. five
20 openings in all.

In the preferred embodiment of the invention the openings are stitched at their boundaries (see stitching 21 in Figure 4) and the connections 22 between the openings are reinforced by stitching. Other ways of forming the openings are... **[ANY OTHER WAYS?]**.

In conclusion, the garment according to the invention allows greater freedom for the toes,
25 with greater comfort resulting from the possibility of enhanced circulation of air around the toes, by the provision of openings through which the toes protrude, the invention at the same time preventing riding-up of the garment over the foot in use.

CLAIMS

1. A hosiery garment comprising a plurality of openings through each of which, in use, one or more of the wearer's toes protrude.
2. A hosiery garment as claimed in Claim 1, in which there are four openings, one of said openings serving, in use, to accommodate the little toe and its neighbour.
3. A hosiery garment as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2, in which said openings are bounded by stitching.
4. A hosiery garment substantially as shown in, or as hereinbefore described with reference to, the drawings.



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Claims searched: 1-3

Examiner: Steven McIlroy
Date of search: 9 February 1998

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:
UK CI (Ed.P): A3V
Int CI (Ed.6): A41B 11/00, 11/14 A43B 7/06, 7/08, 7/34, 17/08
Other: Online: WPI

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
X	GB 0357071 A (Hedges) See especially the figures	1
X	US 5623734 A (Pugliatti) See especially figures 1-4 and lines 9-12 in column 4	1-3
X	US 5054129 A (Baehr) See especially figures 3 and 6 and lines 31-66 in column 5	1, 3
X	SE 8903007 A (I B G Edenbro) See especially the figure	1

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.