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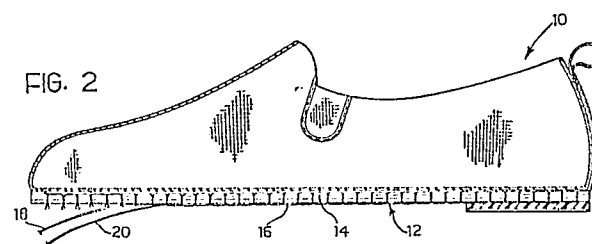
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54 **Footwear with a reinforced fabric sole.**

57 Footwear including a sole constituted by a pack of layers of fabric sewn together, characterised in that the pack of layers (14) of the sole (12) includes a reinforcing layer (18) of thin, wear-resistant sheet material interposed between two layers of fabric, one of which is a visible, lower outer layer (20).



Description

Footwear with a reinforced fabric sole

The present invention relates to footwear including a sole constituted by a pack of layers of fabric sewn together.

The invention has been developed for application to Chinese-style slippers but is not limited to this application.

The soles of this type of footwear have the advantage that they can be made with an attractive appearance, since a coloured or patterned fabric can be used for their outermost layer. However, they have the drawback that the sole is not very resistant to wear.

The object of the present invention is to produce footwear of the type in question, with a sole which may have the same attractive aspect, at least during its initial period of use, but which lasts longer by virtue of greater resistance to wear.

According to the present invention, this object is achieved by means of footwear of the type in question, characterised in that the pack of layers of the sole includes a reinforcing layer of thin, wear-resistant sheet material interposed between two layers of fabric, one of which is a visible, lower outer layer.

The reinforcing layer is preferably made from a rubber compound.

By virtue of this concept, a sole can be produced with a visible layer of fabric of various colours, patterns, etc. This sole can retain its decorative appearance due to the fabric, until the fabric is worn out. At this point, the functionality of the footwear is not compromised since, after the visible layer of fabric has been removed, it can be used until the reinforcing layer of rubber or the like is worn out.

The invention will better be understood from a reading of the detailed description which follows with reference to the appended drawings, given by way of non-limiting example, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of the sole of an article of footwear according to the invention from below, with the visible lower layer partially removed, and

Figure 2 is a longitudinal section of the footwear, in which the reinforcing layer and the visible lower layer of fabric are shown partially detached as if the stitching of the sole has broken.

The drawings show, by way of example, a slipper which comprises an upper 10 of velvet or the like and a sole, generally indicated 12. The sole 12 is constituted by a pack 14 of layers, for example of cotton, held together by a row of machine-stitching 16 of a wear-resistant thread.

According to the invention, the pack of layers of the sole 12 includes a reinforcing layer 18. The layer 18 is made from a thin, wear-resistant sheet material. Preferably, a calendered rubber compound, heavily filled with carbon black or the like, is used for the layer 18.

The reinforcing layer 18 is interposed between a visible, lower, outer fabric layer 20 and the fabric layer immediately above it in the pack of layers 14.

The layers 18 and 20 are also held in the pack by the stitching 16.

The visible layer 20 is preferably made from a strong cloth, such as jute canvas.

The fabric of the layer 20 may be of any desired colour or may even be patterned. With a layer 20 of uniform colour, a decorative effect is achieved by virtue of stitching 16 with a different-coloured thread.

The sole 12 is completed by a heel 22, preferably made from a plastics or rubber element, fixed to the pack of layers 14 by peripheral stitching 24.

Claims

1. Footwear including a sole constituted by a pack of layers of fabric sewn together, characterised in that the pack of layers (14) of the sole (12) includes a reinforcing layer (18) of thin, wear-resistant sheet material interposed between two layers of fabric, one of which is a visible, lower outer layer (20).

2. Footwear according to Claim 1, characterised in that the reinforcing layer (18) is made from a rubber compound.

3. Footwear according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, characterised in that the visible layer (20) is made from strong cloth, such as jute canvas.

