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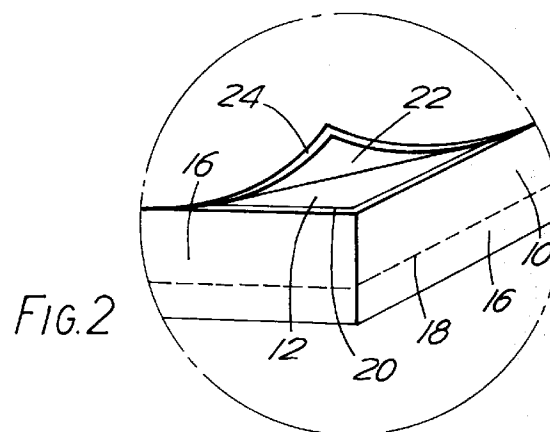
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(54) **Covers.**

(57) A bed sheet comprises a first member (16) locatable around the mattress, a sheet member (22) adapted to cover the surface and fixing means (20,24) adapted to attach the sheet member to the first member and to maintain the sheet member spread in a tensioned state over the surface.



This invention relates to bed linen and other forms of covers.

It is well known to use a fitted sheet both to cover and protect a mattress. In certain circumstances a waterproof protective cover is also used; this may or may not be fitted.

Although a fitted sheet stays taut and does not wrinkle, it is often awkward and difficult to change and this is inconvenient when the sheet has to be changed often.

One object of the present invention is to provide a flexible cover which overcomes some of the disadvantages of previous fitted sheets.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided a flexible cover for covering a surface of an article comprising a first member locatable around the article, a sheet member adapted to cover the surface and fixing means adapted to attach the sheet member to the first member and to maintain the sheet member spread in a tensioned state over the surface.

One of the advantages of this is that the sheet member is easily removed and replaced, so that if it is soiled it may be changed. In addition the sheet member cover is maintained in a tensioned state.

By 'tensioned state' we mean substantially fully - extended and wrinkle-free; it is not absolutely necessary for the sheet member to be subject to tensile stress, although in practice it may be found preferable for the sheet member to be subject to moderate tension.

Preferably the first member is in the form of a sleeve or is a fitted undersheet which may comprise a waterproof member spread over the surface of the article.

Preferably the sheet member includes part of the fixing means for attaching the sheet member to the first member.

Advantageously the fixing means comprises a snap action fastener or the fixing means comprises a burr-type fastener, either in the form of an elongated strip or of spaced-apart tabs or pads.

In the preferred embodiments, the cover is in the form of a fitted bed-sheet or in the form of a seat cover.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a removably attachable covering sheet member having one part of a fixing member, the sheet member being adapted to be removably attached by the fixing member to a second part of the fixing member to form a tensioned protective cover located substantially on a flat surface of an article.

Reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 is a diagram of a sheet according to one aspect of the present invention;

Figure 2 is an enlarged diagram of part A of Figure

1, and

Figure 3 shows a modified form of the sheet of Figure 1.

Referring to the figures, a fitted bottom sheet is shown generally at 10. The fitted sheet has a protective layer 12 which covers the top surface of a mattress 14. Side portions 16 are attached to the protective layer and extend around the edge of the mattress to hold the protective layer in place. The side portions of the sheet include a tensioning member 18, either of elastic or in the form of a drawstring for example, which holds the sheet in place.

A fastener 20 for example a strip or series of spaced-apart pads of Velcro (Trade Mark), burr-fastener or the like, is attached to the surface of the protective layer 12 around the edge thereof. A top cover sheet 22 is attached to the protective layer using the fastener, the covering having a matching fastener 24.

It will be appreciated that protective layer 12 itself may be omitted, and the fastener may be located on the side portions 16 which then form a sleeve or cuff around the mattress 14. Then the topsheet 22 may have slots or cut-outs at its corners to permit its edges to extend slightly down the sides of the mattress to engage the fastener 16.

The cover maybe easily attached and removed. This means that instead of having to move the mattress (as is necessary to change a conventional fitted sheet), the top cover 22 can be changed by merely removing and replacing it.

If the undersheet including protective layer 12 is used, then properly fitting this so as to be wrinkle-free will automatically ensure that an appropriately-sized top sheet will also be wrinkle-free. If the protective cover is omitted, the sleeve formed by the portions 16 is best fitted to the mattress 14 with the top cover 22 already attached, to ensure they together are correctly positioned. Thereafter the top cover can be removed and replaced as necessary.

The protective layer may be fabricated of a waterproof material, a safety air fabric, for use in cots or the like, or any other appropriate material. Typically the side portions 16 and the top sheet 22 are made from matching bed linen material. For example, linen, cotton, polyester, polyester mixes etc.

The fastener may be of any suitable type, for example, a burr-type fastener as described, or snap action fasteners, buttons, draw strings, ties or the like.

In Figure 3 the burr-fastener strip 20,24 is replaced by a series of spaced-apart tabs 26 on the sheet and correspondingly placed pads (not shown) on the side portions or cuff 16.

It will be appreciated that the invention could be used in other applications than that described. For example, the protective layer and/or side portions may form a protective seat covering and the top cover may form a removable cover thereto. Alternatively

the arrangement may be adapted to be used as a table covering.

Two or more top covers could be provided for each protective layer. This may be of particular utility in institutional applications such as hospitals. The protective layer remains in situ for most of its life and the top covers may be interchanged many times.

If more than one top cover is provided, they may be of different patterns and designs.

A plurality of top covers may be attached on top of each other by appropriate fasteners, so that each successive top cover may be removed when soiled thereby exposing a clean top cover. In this arrangement it may be preferable for the top covers to be waterproofed on one surface, and/or may be disposable.

In addition if the fabric is of a certain type only one part of the fastening means, for example the hooked part of Velcro, may be required, the fabric itself acting as the other part.

having one part of a fixing member, the sheet member being adapted to be removably attached by the fixing member to a second part of the fixing member to form a tensioned protective layer located substantially on a flat horizontal surface of an article.

10. A removably attachable covering sheet member according to Claim 13, in the form of a bed sheet.

Claims

1. A flexible cover for covering a surface of an article comprising a first member locatable around the article, a sheet member adapted to cover the surface and fixing means adapted to attach the sheet member to the first member and to maintain the sheet member spread in a tensioned state over the surface.
2. A flexible cover according to Claim 1, wherein the first member is in the form of a sleeve.
3. A flexible cover according to Claim 1, wherein the first member comprises a fitted under sheet.
4. A flexible cover according to Claim 3, wherein the undersheet comprises a waterproof member to be spread over the surface.
5. A flexible cover according to any preceding claim, wherein the sheet member includes part of the fixing means for attaching the sheet member to the first member.
6. A flexible cover according to any of Claims 1 to 5, wherein the sheet member comprises a plurality of layers, each adapted to be attached one to the next by said fastening means.
7. A flexible cover according to Claim 6, wherein the layers are disposable.
8. A flexible cover according to any preceding claim, wherein the cover is in the form of a fitted sheet.
9. A removably attachable covering sheet member

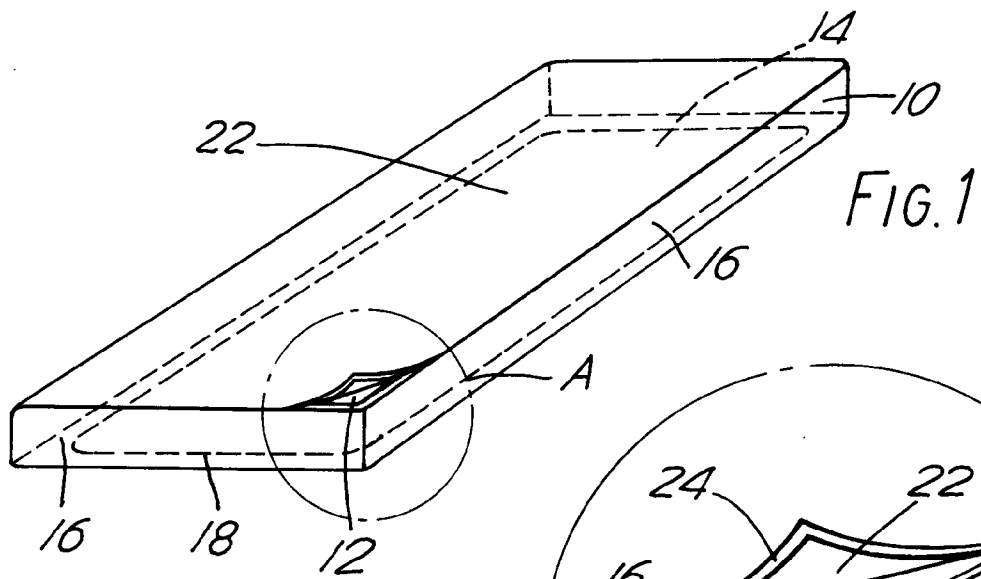
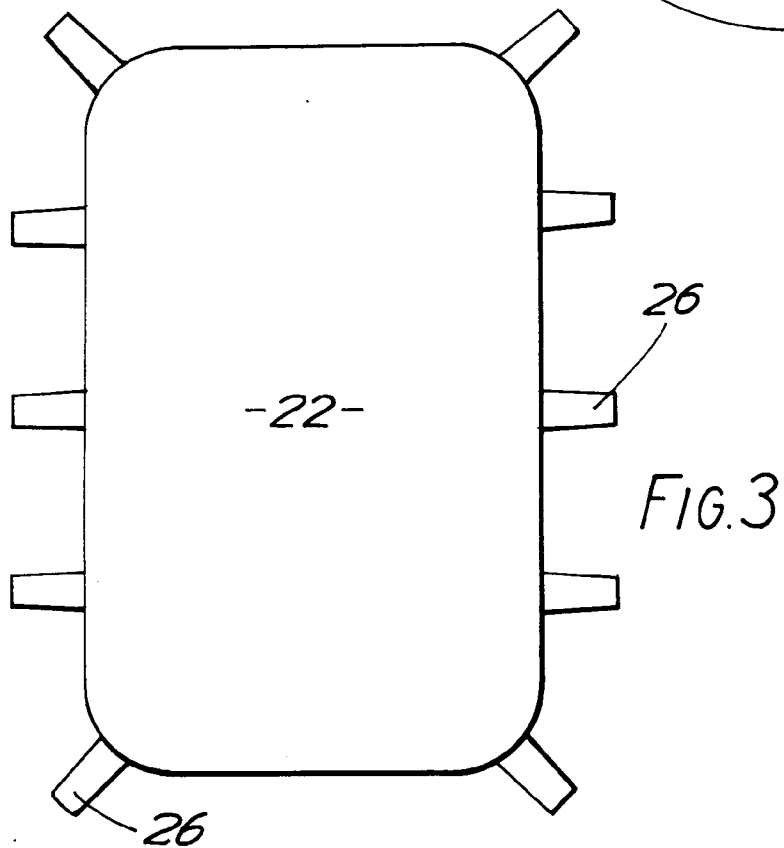
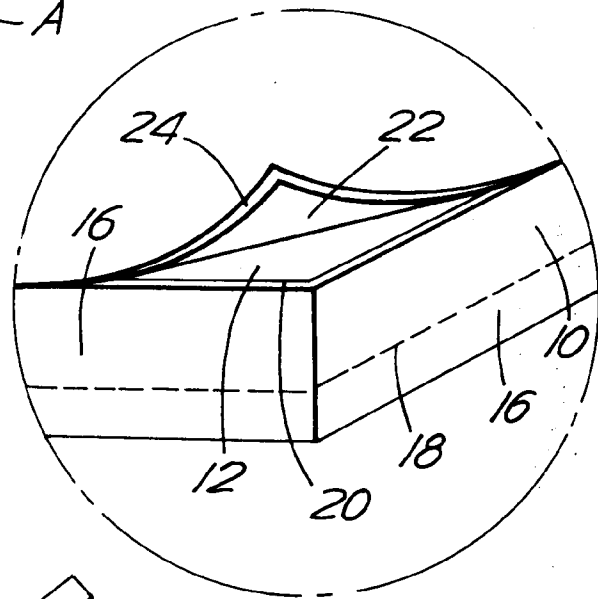


FIG. 2





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 93 30 0983

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X	US-A-5 042 099 (BRENNER ET AL) * column 2, line 40 - column 5, line 38; figures * ---	1-10	A47G9/02 A47C21/06 A47C31/11 A47G11/00
X	US-A-2 516 363 (BLOCK ET AL) * column 3, line 29 - column 4, line 21; figures * ---	1-5,8-10	
X	US-A-4 899 408 (ILLINGWORTH) * column 3, line 27 - column 4, line 43; figures * ---	1-5,8-10	
X	US-A-5 003 655 (KAFAI) * column 4, line 24 - column 5, line 39; figures * ---	1-5,8-10	
A	US-A-3 654 059 (ZISBLATT) * claims; figures * -----	7	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			A47G A47C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 25 MAY 1993	Examiner VISTISEN L.
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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