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(54) **Cover**

(57) A loose fitted cover (20), for an outdoor chair (21) having a seat, a back and two arms, is adapted to closely fit to and cover substantially the whole of the chair (21) whilst the chair (21) is in use, and is formed of at most four pieces of fabric (31, 32, 33) sewn together along at most seven seams (34, 35, 36, 37, 39). In a preferred form, a first piece of fabric (31) is adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair (21) and the outside of the two arms, a second piece (32) is adapted to the shape of the inside of the back and the

inside of the arms, and a third piece (33) is adapted to the shape of the seat and lower front of the chair (21), the three pieces of fabric (31, 32, 33) being sewn together along six seams (34, 35, 36, 37). For a small chair (21), a first piece of fabric (41) is adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair (21) and the outside of the two arms, and a second piece (42) is adapted to the shape of the inside of the back, the inside of the arms, the seat and the lower front of the chair (21), the two pieces of fabric (41, 42) being sewn together along three seams (43, 44).

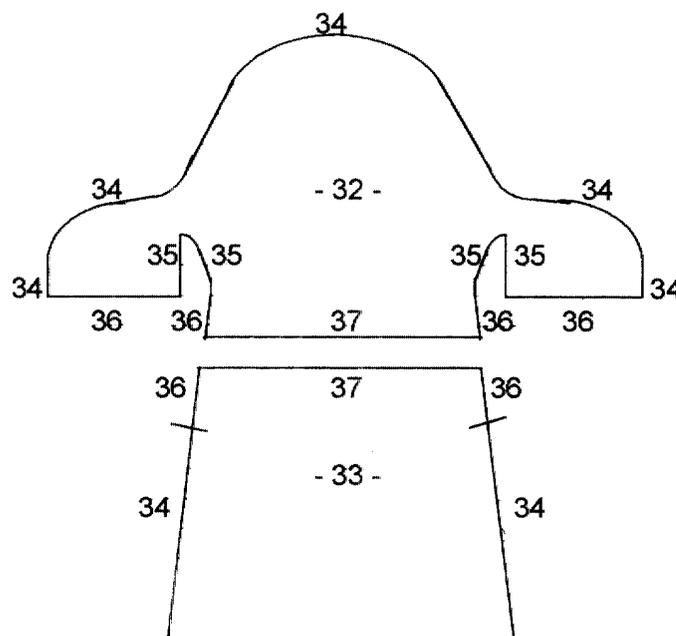


Fig. 4

Description

[0001] This invention relates to covers, and in particular to loose fitted covers for seating furniture, hereinafter referred to as chairs whether intended to seat one person or adapted to seat more than one person such as a settee.

[0002] Loose fitted covers for upholstered chairs are known and are provided to protect the chairs, which cannot readily be cleaned. They have the advantage that they can be readily removed for cleaning and then replaced. However such covers for upholstered chairs are necessarily formed from many pieces of fabric in order that the finished article fits snugly to the furniture. Generally at least ten pieces of fabric must be cut and sewn together along at least seventeen seams in producing a cover for the carcass of an upholstered domestic lounge chair, with extra pieces required to cover the cushions of the chair. In addition such covers usually are fitted by means of mechanical fasteners, touch-and-close fasteners, ties or elastic straps. Because of this construction, such covers are difficult to manufacture and in consequence relatively costly. Loose cushions for conservatory and outdoor chairs are known, comprising either just a seat cushion or combined seat and back cushions which are retained in place by straps or pockets around the back of the chair. They do not cover all of the item of such chairs since it would be too costly to produce for conservatory or outdoor chairs covers of the type used on upholstered chairs. Loose protective covers for outdoor chairs are known for the purpose of protecting such chairs from adverse weather conditions when the chairs are not in use. Such covers simply envelop and do not fit to the chair, or envelop several such chairs stacked for storage purposes, and are not intended to be in place when the chairs are in use. These non-fitted protective covers would be awkward and uncomfortable to sit on if left in place when the chairs are in use.

[0003] It is an object of the present invention to provide a loose fitted cover for an outdoor chair which avoids at least to a significant extent the disadvantages described above of known covers.

[0004] The invention provides a loose fitted cover for outdoor chair having a seat, a back and two arms, adapted to closely fit to and cover substantially the whole of the chair, the cover being formed of at most four pieces of fabric sewn together along at most seven seams. Preferably the cover is formed of at most three pieces of fabric sewn together along at most six seams.

[0005] Preferably the cover is formed of a first piece of fabric adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair and the outside of the two arms thereof, a second piece adapted to the shape of the inside of the back and the inside of the arms, and a third piece adapted to the shape of the seat and lower front of the chair. In this case, a first seam may run along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and lower front of

the chair when the cover is in place on the chair. A pair of second seams may run down the inside of join between the back of the chair and the arms. A pair of fourth seams may run along the join between the inside of the arms and the seat. A sixth seam may run adjacent the join between the bottom of the inside of the back and the seat. Alternatively the fabric adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair and the outside of the two arms thereof may be formed of two pieces joined by a seventh seam running down the centre of the back.

[0006] As a further alternative, the cover may comprise two pieces of fabric sewn together along three seams. In this case the cover may be formed of a first piece of fabric adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair and the outside of the two arms thereof, and a second piece adapted to the shape of the inside of the back, the inside of the arms, the seat and the lower front of the chair. A first seam may run along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and lower front of the chair when the cover is in place on the chair. A pair of second seams may run along the join between the inside of the arms and the seat.

[0007] The cover may be of a cotton or polyester/cotton mixture fabric and may be treated so as to be fire retardant. The fabric may be plain dyed self colour or may be patterned.

[0008] The invention also comprises a loose fitted cover and an outdoor chair, the cover being adapted to closely fit to and cover substantially the whole of the chair and being formed of at most four pieces of fabric sewn together along at most seven seams. The chair may be of a plastics material, and may be a moulded plastics material chair.

[0009] The invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a plan of a known cover for an upholstered chair prior to making-up,

Fig. 2 is a front view of an upholstered chair with the cover of Fig. 1 thereon,

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of cover for an outdoor chair on the chair,

Fig. 4 is a plan of the cover of Fig. 2 prior to making-up, and

Fig. 5 is a plan view of a second embodiment of cover for an outdoor chair prior to making-up.

[0010] Referring now to Figs. 1 and 2, there is shown a cover 10 for an upholstered chair prior to making up and in situ on an upholstered chair. The cover 10 comprises ten pieces, an outside back piece 11, an inside back piece 12, a seat piece 13, two overarm pieces 14, two side gussets 15, two front arm face pieces 16 and a front valance 17. These ten pieces 11 to 17 must be cut from a roll of fabric and subsequently joined by sewing along 17 seams to form a fitted cover for the upholstered chair. This process is time consuming and costly,

and results in a considerable amount of waste fabric, particularly if the fabric is patterned and pattern matching of the assembled pieces is required. Whilst such cost may be accepted in the case of upholstered furniture, it is not acceptable in the case of the much less expensive outdoor chairs, in particular outdoor chairs of a moulded plastics material.

[0011] Referring now to Fig 3, there is shown a cover 20 fitted to a moulded plastics material chair 21. The cover 20 covers substantially the whole of the chair 21, only the bottom of the legs 22 of the chair 21 being visible. In Fig. 4 there is shown the cover 20 prior to making-up. The cover 20 comprises three pieces. A first piece of fabric 31 is cut to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair 21 and the outside of the two arms of the chair 21. A second piece of fabric 32 is cut to the shape of the inside of the back and the inside of the arms of the chair 21. A third piece of fabric 33 is cut to the shape of the seat and lower front of the chair 21. After the three pieces of fabric 31, 32 and 33 are sewn together and the cover 20 is in place on the chair 21, a first seam 34 runs along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and lower front of the chair 21 adjacent the front legs 22. A pair of second seams 35 run down the inside of join between the back and the arms of the chair 21. A pair of fourth seams 36 run along the join between the inside of the arms and the seat of the chair 21. Finally a sixth seam 37 runs adjacent the join between the bottom of the inside of the back and the seat of the chair 21. To finish the cover 20 a hem 38 is formed along the bottom edge of the cover 20. In the event that chair 21 is for more than one person, and/or the material from which the cover 20 is produced has a large pattern to be matched on making up in to the cover 20, it may not be possible to produce the piece 31 as a single piece, in which case two pieces are cut and joined by a seventh seam 39 which runs down the centre of the back of the chair 21.

[0012] This first described embodiment of cover 20 is particularly suited for use with a full size outdoor chair 21 to accommodate an adult. However, in the case of a child's outdoor chair, a second embodiment of cover 40 as shown in Fig. 5 is suitable. This cover 40 is made of two pieces of fabric 41, 42. In this case the cover 40 when placed on a smaller chair of the type 21 shown in Fig. 3, has the same appearance as cover 20 except that seam 37 is not present. The cover 40 is formed of a first piece of fabric 41 cut to the shape of the outside of the back and the outside of the two arms of the chair 21, and the second piece 42 is cut to the shape of the inside of the back, the inside of the arms, the seat and the lower front of the chair 21. With such a construction, a first seam 43 runs along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and the lower front of the chair 21 adjacent the front legs 22 when the cover 40 is in place on the chair 21. A pair of second seams 44 run along

the join between the inside of the arms and the seat of the chair 21. To finish the cover 40 a hem 38 is formed along the bottom edge of the cover 40.

[0013] The covers 20, 40 may be of a cotton or polyester/cotton mixture fabric and may be treated so as to be fire retardant. The covers 20, 40 may be simply 'dropped onto' the chair 21 when required for use and simply lifted off again when not required. No ties, straps or mechanical fastenings are required. Since the number of pieces and seams are considerably reduced by comparison with covers for upholstered furniture, the cost of producing the covers for outdoor chairs is even more markedly reduced. For added comfort a cushion may be placed on the chair 21 after fitting the cover 20, 40. The covers 20, 40 may be readily removed for washing. The covers 20, 40 may be of a plain dyed self colour or patterned material so as to improve the appearance of outdoor chairs of moulded plastics material. Although conservatory furniture is generally of a more pleasing appearance than outdoor furniture, the covers 20, 40 may add to their appearance or simply provide an inexpensive change in appearance. As an alternative to the purchase of relatively expensive conservatory furniture, the outdoor chairs 21 may be covered with the covers 20, 40 and be used indoors as conservatory chairs to provide a less expensive option.

Claims

1. A loose fitted cover (20), for an outdoor chair (21) having a seat, a back and two arms, **characterised in that** the cover (20) is adapted to closely fit to and cover substantially the whole of the chair (21), and **in that** the cover (20) is formed of at most four pieces of fabric (31, 32, 33) sewn together along at most seven seams (34, 35, 36, 37, 39).
2. A cover according to claim 1, **characterised by** being formed of a first piece of fabric (31) adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair (21) and the outside of the two arms thereof, a second piece (32) adapted to the shape of the inside of the back and the inside of the arms, and a third piece (33) adapted to the shape of the seat and lower front of the chair (21), the three pieces of fabric (31, 32, 33) being sewn together along six seams (34, 35, 36, 37).
3. A cover according to claim 2, when in use on an outdoor chair (21) **characterised in that** a first seam (34) runs along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and lower front of the chair (21).
4. A cover according to claim 3, **characterised in that** a pair of second seams (35) run down the inside of

joins between the back of the chair (21) and the arms.

5. A cover according to claim 4, **characterised in that** a pair of fourth seams (36) run along the joins between the inside of the arms and the seat and a sixth seam (37) runs adjacent the join between the bottom of the inside of the back and the seat. 5
6. A cover according to claim 1, **characterised by** two pieces of fabric joined by a seam (39) running down the centre of the back so as to form a first piece (31) adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair (21) and the outside of the two arms thereof, a second piece (32) adapted to the shape of the inside of the back and the inside of the arms, and a third piece (33) adapted to the shape of the seat and lower front of the chair (21). 10
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7. A cover according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the cover (40) is formed of a first piece of fabric (41) adapted to the shape of the outside of the back of the chair (21) and the outside of the two arms thereof, and a second piece (42) adapted to the shape of the inside of the back, the inside of the arms, the seat and the lower front of the chair (21), the two pieces of fabric (41, 42) being sewn together along three seams (43, 44). 20
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8. A cover according to claim 7, when in use on an outdoor chair **characterised in that** a first seam (43) runs along the top of the back, down the sides of the back, along the top of the arms and down the front of the arms and lower front of the chair (21). 30
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9. A cover according to claim 8, **characterised in that** a pair of second seams (44) run along the join between the inside of the arms and the seat.
10. A cover according to any one of claims 1 to 9, **characterised in that** the fabric (31, 32, 33, 41, 42) is treated so as to be fire retardant. 40
11. A loose fitted cover and an outdoor chair, **characterised in that** the cover (20) is adapted to closely fit to and cover substantially the whole of the chair (21) and **in that** the cover (20) is formed of at most four pieces of (31, 32, 33) sewn together along at most seven seams (34, 35, 36, 37, 39). 45
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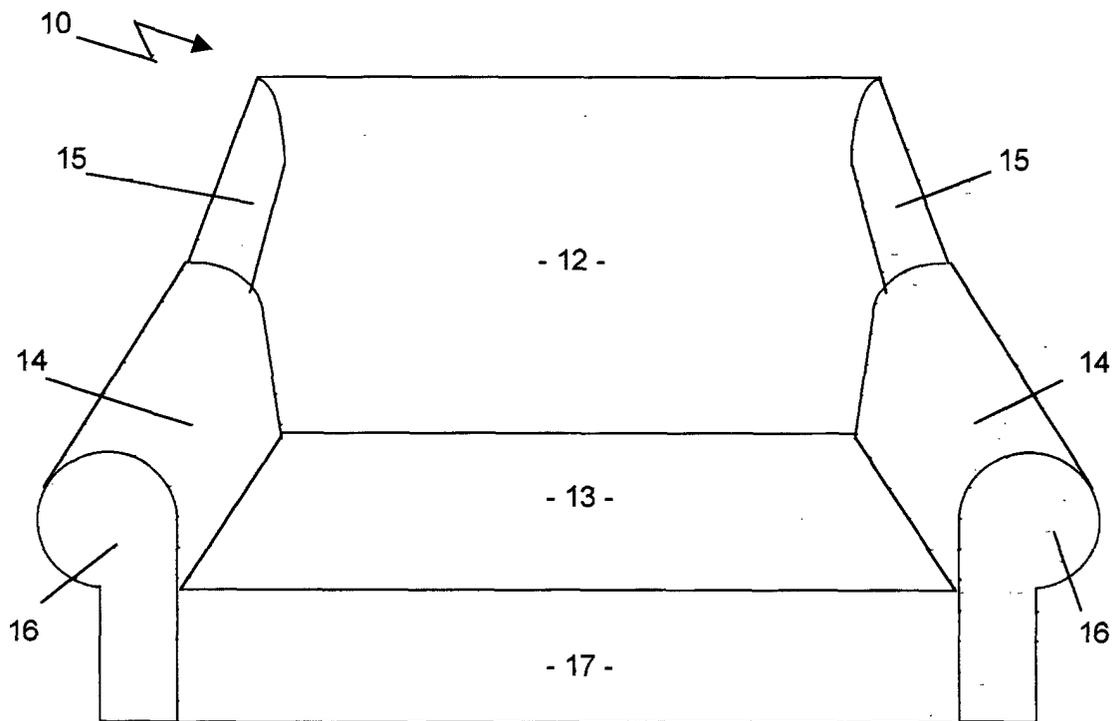
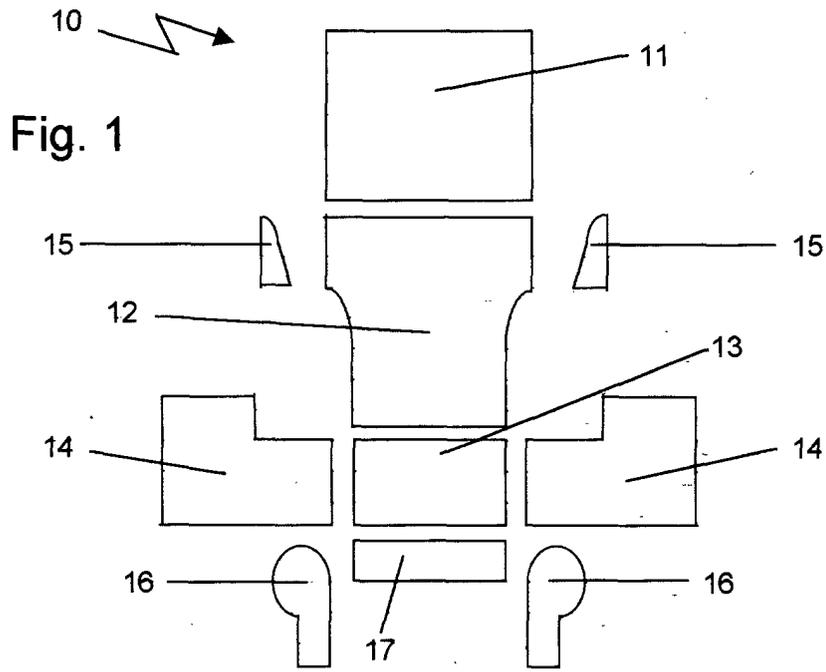


Fig. 2

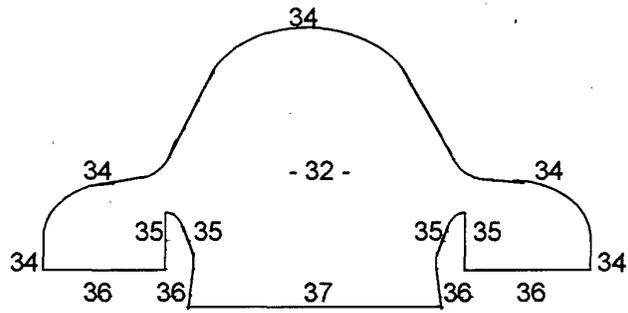
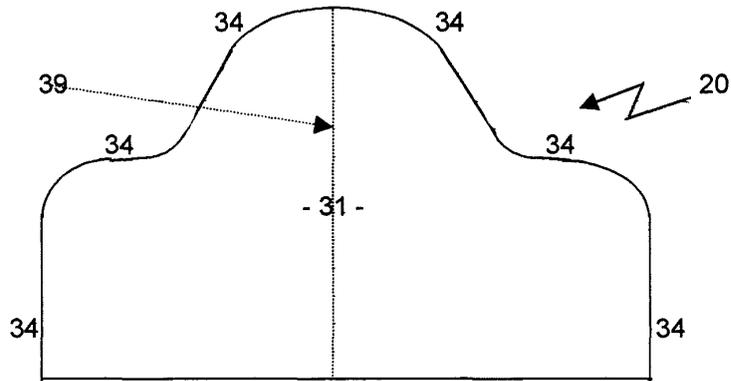
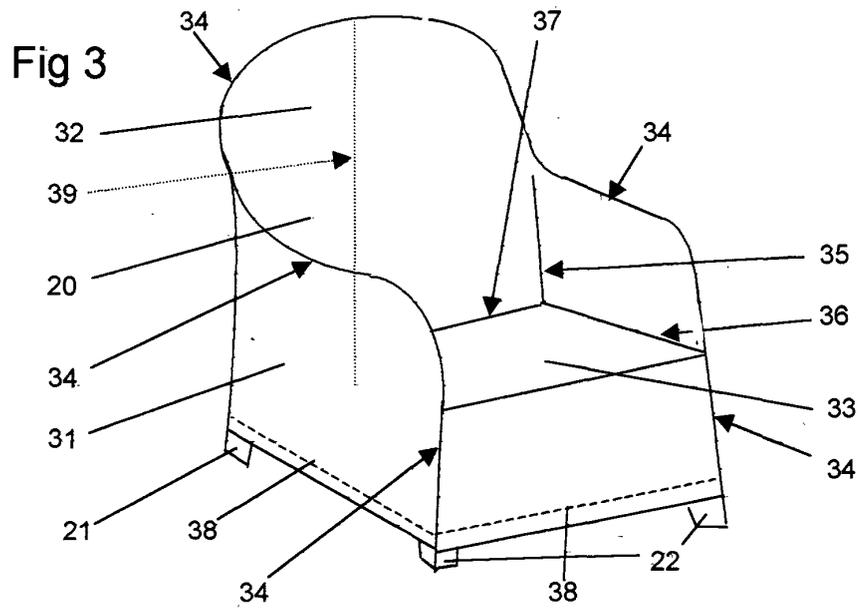
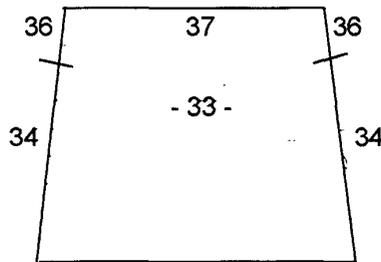


Fig. 4



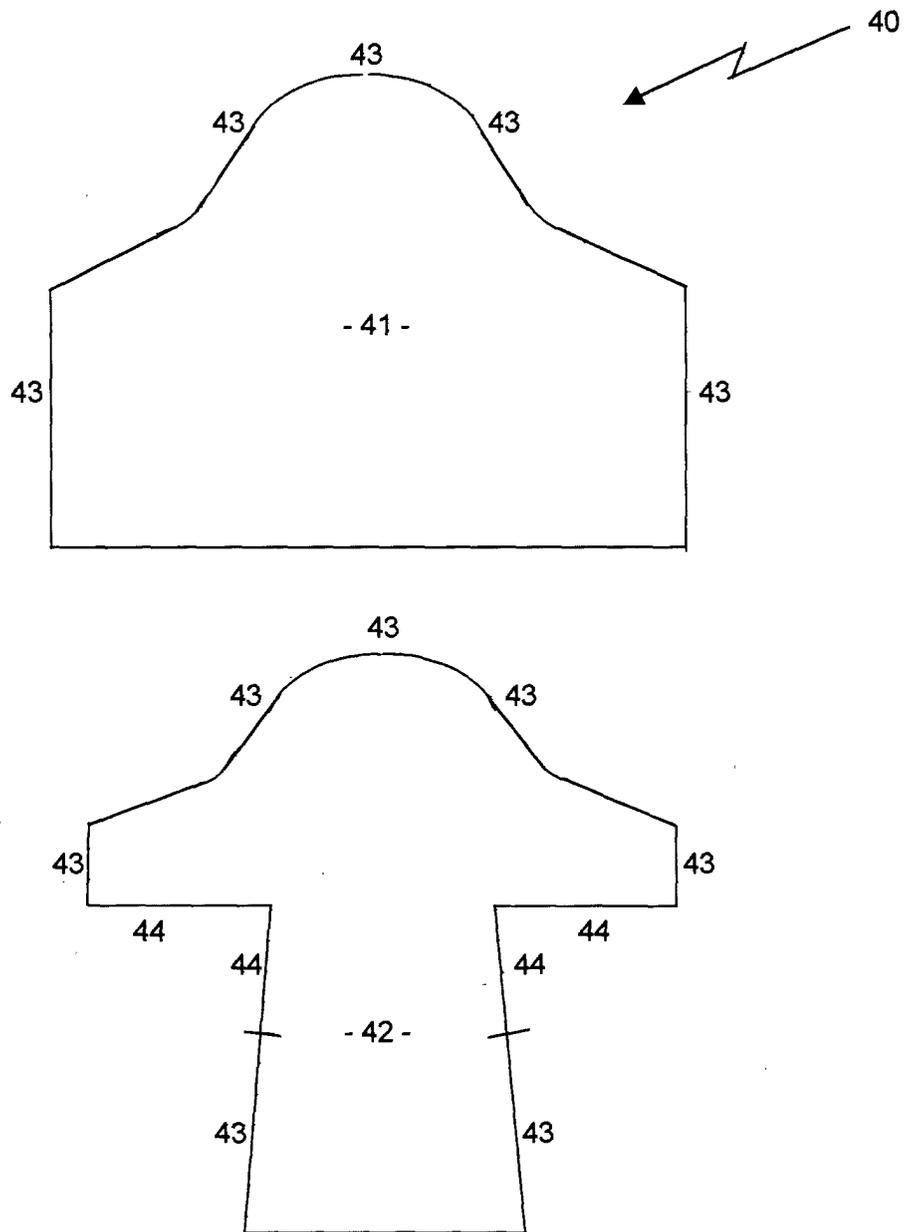


Fig. 5



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Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
BERLIN		14 June 2001	Cuny, J-M
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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		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	

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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