

US Patent & Trademark Office

Patent Public Search | Text View

United States Patent	12389877
Kind Code	B1
Date of Patent	August 19, 2025
Inventor(s)	Ratliff; Troy

Pet groomers' accessories

Abstract

The present development comprises devices for use by an animal groomer during the grooming process. The tie-off attachment comprises a base with a suction cup fixedly attached to a bottom face, and a quick release toggle and attachment ring fixedly attached to the top face. The clipper mat comprises a heavy-duty mat fitted with at least one magnet on an upper face of the mat.

Inventors:	Ratliff; Troy (Owensboro, KY)
Applicant:	Ratliff; Troy (Owensboro, KY)
Family ID:	1000007368765
Appl. No.:	18/240154
Filed:	August 30, 2023

Related U.S. Application Data

us-provisional-application US 63374019 20220831

Publication Classification

Int. Cl.: **A01K1/04** (20060101); **A47G23/00** (20060101); **B25H3/06** (20060101); **F16B47/00** (20060101); **F16M13/02** (20060101); A47G23/06 (20060101)

U.S. Cl.:

CPC **A01K1/04** (20130101); **A47G23/00** (20130101); **B25H3/06** (20130101); **F16B47/006** (20130101); **F16M13/022** (20130101); A47G2023/0666 (20130101)

Field of Classification Search

CPC: A01K (1/04); F16B (47/006); F16M (13/022)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Patent No.	Issued Date	Patentee Name	U.S. Cl.	CPC
5660276	12/1996	Winnard	N/A	N/A
5725096	12/1997	Winnard	N/A	N/A
5829392	12/1997	Coleman	119/676	A01K 1/04
7887109	12/2010	Liao	294/187	B66C 1/0225
7992908	12/2010	Finck	N/A	N/A
8234725	12/2011	Roth	4/577.1	A47K 17/022
8235337	12/2011	Ostendarp	N/A	N/A
8496222	12/2012	Li	N/A	N/A
9057398	12/2014	Yang	N/A	N/A
2002/0117119	12/2001	Brown	119/795	A01K 1/04
2006/0207521	12/2005	Klauck	119/786	A01K 1/04
2007/0257167	12/2006	Richter	N/A	N/A
2009/0071416	12/2008	Grbic	119/792	A01K 13/001
2010/0133863	12/2009	Liao	294/65	B66C 1/0212
2013/0092088	12/2012	Sharp	119/61.5	A01K 5/01
2013/0276675	12/2012	Guerrero	N/A	N/A
2016/0032960	12/2015	Feldman et al.	N/A	N/A

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Patent No.	Application Date	Country	CPC
3154007	12/2008	JP	N/A

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Machine Translation of JP-3154007-U, Wang Y Y, Sep. 24, 2009 (Year: 2009). cited by examiner

Amazon.com: YYST Suction Cup Hook Cleat for Pet Dog & cat Bathtub, Shower & Bathing, Grooming Tether—No Leash, accessed Nov. 15, 2024, product first available Sep. 1, 2018, https://www.amazon.com/YYST-Suction-Bathtub-Bathing-Grooming/dp/B07H1GNGLJ/ref=sr_1_2?crid=39OE7I1I7LU3Y&dib=eyJ2ljoiM (Year: 2021). cited by examiner

Amazon.com: Dog Bathing Tether with Heavy Suction Cup, Dog Grooming Tub Restraint Soft Nylon Leash with Adjustable Collar for Pet Dog Cat Shower and Grooming Red, accessed Nov. 15, 2024, product first available Nov. 24, 2020, https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08P38YDGZ/ref=sspa_dk_detail_4?psc=1&pd_r (Year: 2020). cited by examiner

Amazon.com: Agape Heavy Duty Dog Bathing Suction Cup with Adjustable Collar Restraint Leash, Powerful Reusable Pet Grooming Tub Loop, Portable Dog Bath Holder, accessed Nov. 15, 2024, product first available Aug. 14, 2024, <https://www.amazon.com/Agape-Adjustable-Restraint-Powerful-Reusable/dp/B0> (Year: 2024). cited by examiner

Primary Examiner: Berona; Kimberly S

Assistant Examiner: Walter; Katherine June

Attorney, Agent or Firm: Law Office of J. L. Simunic, PLLC

Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO PRIOR APPLICATIONS (1) The present application claims priority to U.S. 63/374,019 filed 31 Aug. 2022.

FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

(1) Not applicable.

JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT

(2) Not applicable.

REFERENCE TO A “SEQUENCE LISTING”, A TABLE, OR A COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING APPENDIX SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC AND AN INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE OF THE MATERIAL ON THE COMPACT DISC

(3) Not applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING PRIOR DISCLOSURES BY AN INVENTOR OR JOINT INVENTOR

(4) The subject matter of the instant invention was described in website <https://alphagroomingproducts.com/products/alpha-axt> on 31 Aug. 2021 and first made available for sale on 31 Aug. 2021.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1) Field of the Invention

(5) The invention relates to a tie-off attachment for use by pet groomers.

(2) Description of Related Art Including Information Disclosed Under 37 CFR 1.97 and 37 CFR 1.98

(6) During the pet grooming process, the animal being groomed is normally fitted with a grooming loop. The grooming loop includes a loop at one end that fits around the animal's neck and a latch at the opposing end. During the grooming process, the latch is attached in some manner to a grooming table to limit the movement of the animal.

(7) Not all grooming tables have attachments for the latch at a convenient position. This can create problems for the groomer because the animal cannot be secured at an optimum position. In addition, pet grooming services become more personalized—for example, grooming services may be provided at the animal's residence. In this situation, the groomer may not have a grooming table available, and thus, may not have any means to attachment of the grooming loop latch.

(8) Further, the grooming process requires easy access to a variety of tools, such as clippers and shavers. Laying these tools on the grooming table such that they are in easy reach of the groomer also normally means that they are within the range of the animal being groomed. If the animal becomes antsy or moves around during the grooming process, the tools can easily be knocked off the grooming table or pushed out of reach of the groomer.

(9) Thus, it would be beneficial if an attachment to secure the grooming loop that could easily

attach to any flat surface and at any location on the flat surface was available. In addition, it would be beneficial if some means to retain the grooming tools within a reasonable distance of the groomer was available.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

(10) The present development comprises devices for use by an animal groomer during the grooming process. The tie-off attachment comprises a base with a suction cup fixedly attached to a bottom face, and a quick release toggle and attachment ring fixedly attached to the top face. The clipper mat comprises a heavy-duty mat fitted with at least one magnet on an upper face of the mat.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

- (1) FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the tie-off development of the present invention;
- (2) FIG. 2 is a top view of the tie-off development of FIG. 1;
- (3) FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the tie-off development of FIG. 1 shown with a grooming loop attached; and,
- (4) FIG. 4(a) is a top view of a first embodiment of the clipper mat, and FIG. 4(b) is a top view of a second embodiment of the clipper mat.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENT

- (5) The present development comprises devices for use by an animal groomer during the grooming process, such as when grooming a domestic dog. The devices may be used together or separately.
- (6) The first device is a tie-off attachment. Most animal grooming tubs have one or two tie-offs that will work for one size of animal, but can be difficult to use when larger or smaller animals are being groomed. This requires the groomer to constantly change out grooming loops, add extensions, or drill in a new tie-off point. The tie-off attachment of the present development allows a groomer to place a tie-off point for their grooming loops on nearly any flat surface. It further provides the flexibility to move the pet around as needed without having to worry about the placement of the tie-off.
- (7) An exemplary tie-off attachment is shown in FIGS. 1-3. The tie-off attachment **10** comprises a base **12** having a top face **13** and a bottom face **15**. A suction cup **17** is fixedly attached to the bottom face **15**. The suction cup **17** allows the tie-off attachment to adhere to almost any relatively flat surface. A quick release toggle **14**, that defines a pivot section **14a**, and an attachment ring **16** are fixedly attached to the top face **13**. The ring **16** allows for a grooming loop to easily attach to the tie-off attachment **10**. The quick release toggle **14** has a sealed position and an unsealed position. When the tie-off attachment **10** is adhered to the surface, the toggle **14** is in the sealed position; to release the tie-off attachment **10** from the surface, the toggle **14** is moved to the unsealed position. When the toggle **14** is moved to the unsealed position it causes the suction cup **17** to release from the surface so the tie-off attachment can be easily removed or moved to a new location. In a preferred embodiment, the toggle **14** has an ergonomic design. In a preferred embodiment, the tie-off attachment includes a suction loss indicator **18**.
- (8) In a preferred embodiment, the tie-off attachment **10** is made from cast aluminum with stainless steel fittings and a hardened plastic handle. Although this material combination is not required, it is recommended that the materials selected allow the tie-off attachment to withstand the wet, harsh, humid environments of a grooming salon.
- (9) An optimum size for the tie-off attachment is about 4.5" in diameter. This makes the tie-off attachment **10** small enough to allow for easy one-handed manipulation but large enough to accommodate the toggle **14** and ring **16**.
- (10) During the pet grooming process, the animal being groomed is normally fitted with a grooming loop **30**. The grooming loop **30** includes a loop **32** at one end that fits around the animal's

neck and a latch **34** at the opposing end. The tie-off attachment **10** allows the animal groomer to attach the latch to limit the movement of the animal. The tie-off attachment **10** may be attached to a grooming table, if available, or to any essentially flat surface, such as a wall in a mobile grooming vehicle. To use the tie-off attachment **10**, the groomer selects a desired tie-off point. The tie-off attachment **10** is then attached to the surface by pressing the suction cup **17** against the surface until the suction cup **17** adheres to the surface and the suction loss indicator **18** shows no suction loss. The grooming loop latch is then reversibly attached to the tie-off attachment ring **16**. During the grooming process, the groomer can change the location of the tie-off attachment **10** without releasing the grooming loop latch from the tie-off attachment **10** by using the quick release toggle **14**. The groomer presses on the suction loss indicator **18** while simultaneously moving the quick release toggle **14** from a sealed position to an unsealed position. When the toggle **14** is moved to the unsealed position it causes the suction cup **17** to release from the surface so the tie-off attachment can be easily removed or moved to a new location. The tie-off attachment **10** is then attached to the surface at the new location by pressing the suction cup **17** against the surface until the suction cup **17** adheres to the surface and the quick release toggle **14** is in the sealed position and the suction loss indicator **18** shows no suction loss. Because of the design of the tie-off attachment **10**, the tie-off attachment **10** may be moved by the groomer using one hand so the groomer's second hand may support the animal being groomed. When the grooming process is complete, the groomer releases the grooming loop latch from the attachment ring **16** and can transport the groomed animal away from the grooming table.

(11) The second device is a clipper mat **20**, as shown in FIGS. **4(a)** and **4(b)**. The clipper mat **20** comprises a heavy-duty pad **22** fitted with at least one magnet **24** on an upper face **23** of the mat. During the grooming process, the groomer normally uses a variety of metal-inclusive objects, such as electric clippers and scissors. The magnetic inserts **24** allow the groomer to place the grooming objects in a secure and easily accessible location.

(12) The size of the clipper mat **20** may vary to accommodate the desired number of magnets. For example, as shown in FIG. **4(a)**, a 12"×18" pad **22** can easily accommodate four magnets **24**. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. **4(b)**, a smaller pad **22**, such as a 6"×9" pad, may be used with fewer magnets. However, both the larger and the smaller mats **20** function to hold the metal-inclusive objects. In a preferred embodiment, the heavy-duty pad **22** has an anti-skid surface on a bottom face (not shown). Optionally, two-sided tape can be added to the bottom face for extra security, such as when used in mobile units.

(13) Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which the presently disclosed subject matter pertains. All patents, patent applications, published applications and publications, databases, websites and other published materials referred to throughout the entire disclosure herein, unless noted otherwise, are incorporated by reference in their entirety. Representative methods, devices, and materials are described herein, but are not intended to be limiting unless so noted.

(14) The terms "a", "an", and "the" refer to "one or more" when used in the subject specification, including the claims. The term "reversibly attached" as used herein means that at least a first element and a second element can be connected together and then separated from each other without affecting the integrity of either element. The term "ambient temperature" as used herein refers to an environmental temperature of from about 0° F. to about 120° F., inclusive.

(15) Unless otherwise indicated, all numbers expressing quantities of components, conditions, and otherwise used in the specification and claims are to be understood as being modified in all instances by the term "about". Accordingly, unless indicated to the contrary, the numerical parameters set forth in the instant specification and attached claims are approximations that can vary depending upon the desired properties sought to be obtained by the presently disclosed subject matter.

(16) As used herein, the term "about", when referring to a value or to an amount of mass, weight,

time, volume, concentration, or percentage can encompass variations of, in some embodiments $\pm 20\%$, in some embodiments $\pm 10\%$, in some embodiments $\pm 5\%$, in some embodiments $\pm 1\%$, in some embodiments $\pm 0.5\%$, and in some embodiments to $\pm 0.1\%$, from the specified amount, as such variations are appropriate in the disclosed application.

(17) It is understood that, in light of a reading of the foregoing description, those with ordinary skill in the art will be able to make changes and modifications to the present invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention, as defined herein. For example, those skilled in the art may substitute materials supplied by different manufacturers than specified herein without altering the scope of the present invention.

Claims

1. A method of securing an animal during grooming comprising: fitting the animal with a grooming loop having a loop at one end and a latch at the opposing end, wherein the latch is reversibly attached to a tie-off attachment, wherein the tie-off attachment is reversibly attached to a surface by a suction cup affixed to a bottom face of the tie-off attachment, wherein the tie-off attachment has a quick release toggle and a suction loss indicator that can be depressed by a groomer, wherein the tie-off attachment further has a tie-off attachment ring affixed to the tie-off attachment, and wherein the grooming loop latch is reversibly attached to the tie-off attachment ring; and changing the position of the tie-off attachment by keeping the grooming loop latch attached to the tie-off attachment ring while pressing on the suction loss indicator and simultaneously moving the quick release toggle from a sealed position to an unsealed position to release the suction cup from the surface, and then selecting a new location and pressing the suction cup against the surface at the new location until the suction cup adheres to the surface and the quick release toggle is in the sealed position and the suction loss indicator shows no suction loss.
 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the groomer releases the grooming loop latch from the attachment ring when the grooming process is complete.
 3. An animal groomer's tie-off attachment comprising: (a) a base having a top face and a bottom face; (b) a suction cup fixedly attached to the bottom face, wherein the suction cup will adhere to a surface; (c) an attachment ring fixedly attached to the base; (d) a quick release toggle fixedly attached to the top face, wherein the quick release toggle has a sealed position wherein the suction cup is adhered to the surface and an unsealed position wherein the suction cup releases from the surface, and wherein the quick release toggle can be moved from the sealed position to the unsealed position; and, (e) a suction loss indicator, wherein the suction cup is configured to be released from the surface by pressing the suction loss indicator while simultaneously moving the quick release toggle from the sealed position to the unsealed position.
 4. The tie-off attachment of claim 3 wherein the tie-off attachment is made from materials selected to allow the tie-off attachment to withstand wet, harsh, humid environments of a grooming salon.
 5. The tie-off attachment of claim 4 wherein the tie-off attachment is made from cast aluminum, stainless steel, and plastic.
-