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(54) **INTERCHANGEABLE NAIL SYSTEM**

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A45D 31/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC ***A45D 31/00*** (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A nail system includes a nail component; and a base component. The nail component is configured to attach to the base component, and the base component is configured to attach to a nail plate of a person's digit. The nail component has an upper, outer nail surface that is configured to cover a nail plate and the base component for providing a desired aesthetic presentation of the digit when the nail component is attached to the base component and the base component is attached to the nail plate. In some embodiments, the nail component is configured to detach from the base component for use of another nail component with the base component. The nail component preferably is configured to detach from the base component while the base component is attached to the nail plate for interchanging the nail component with another nail component having a different aesthetic appearance.

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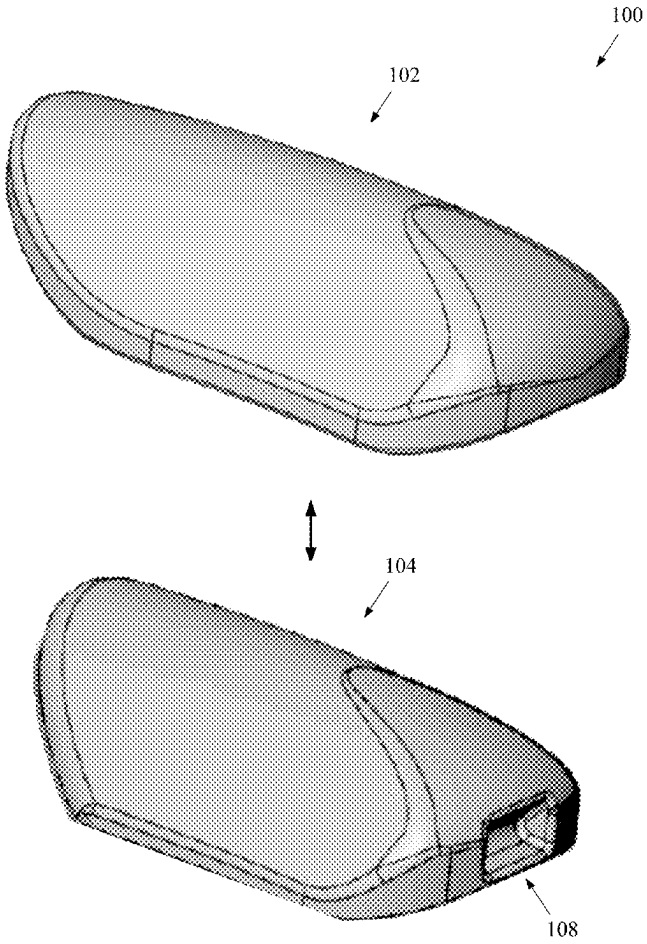

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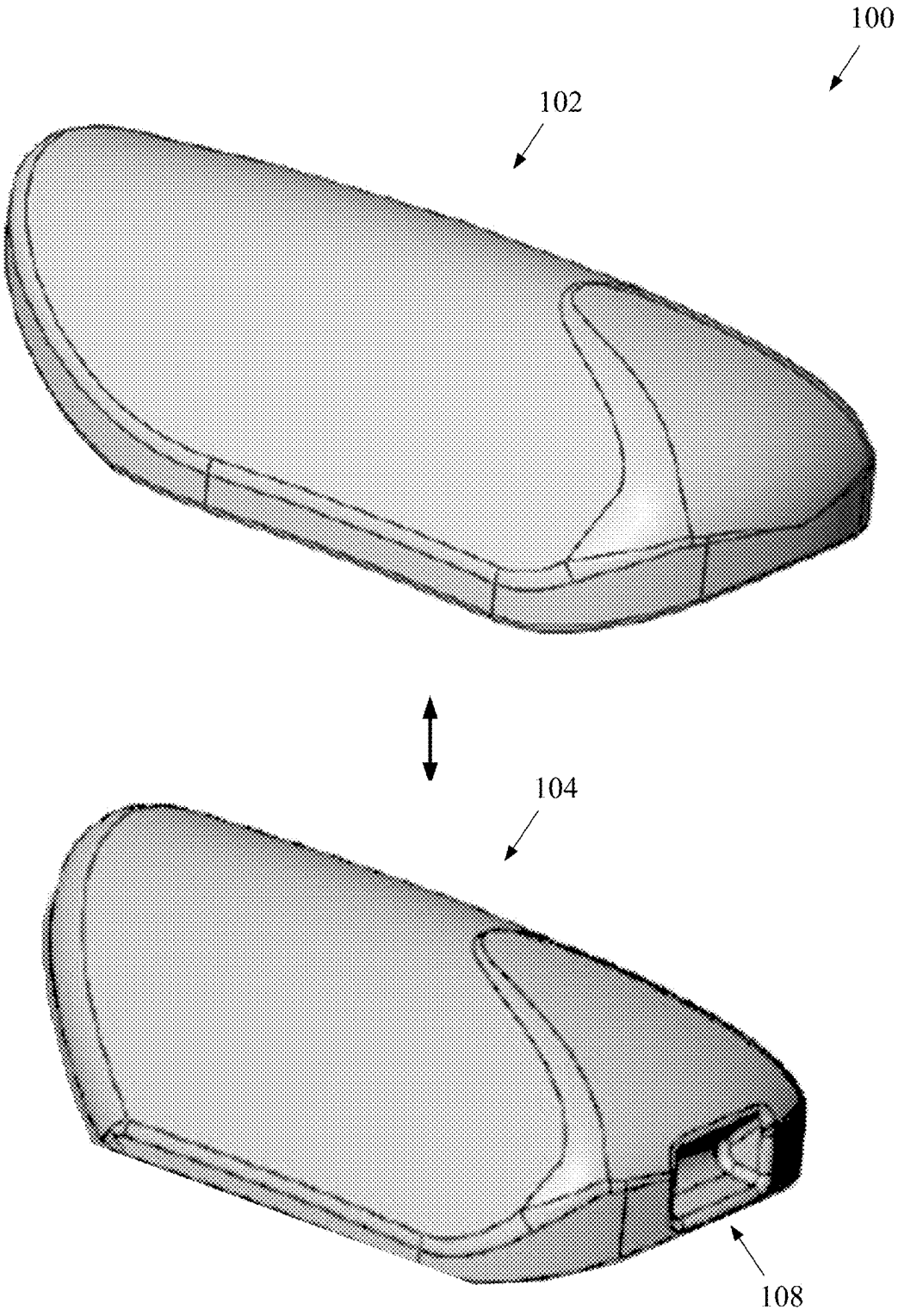

FIG. 1

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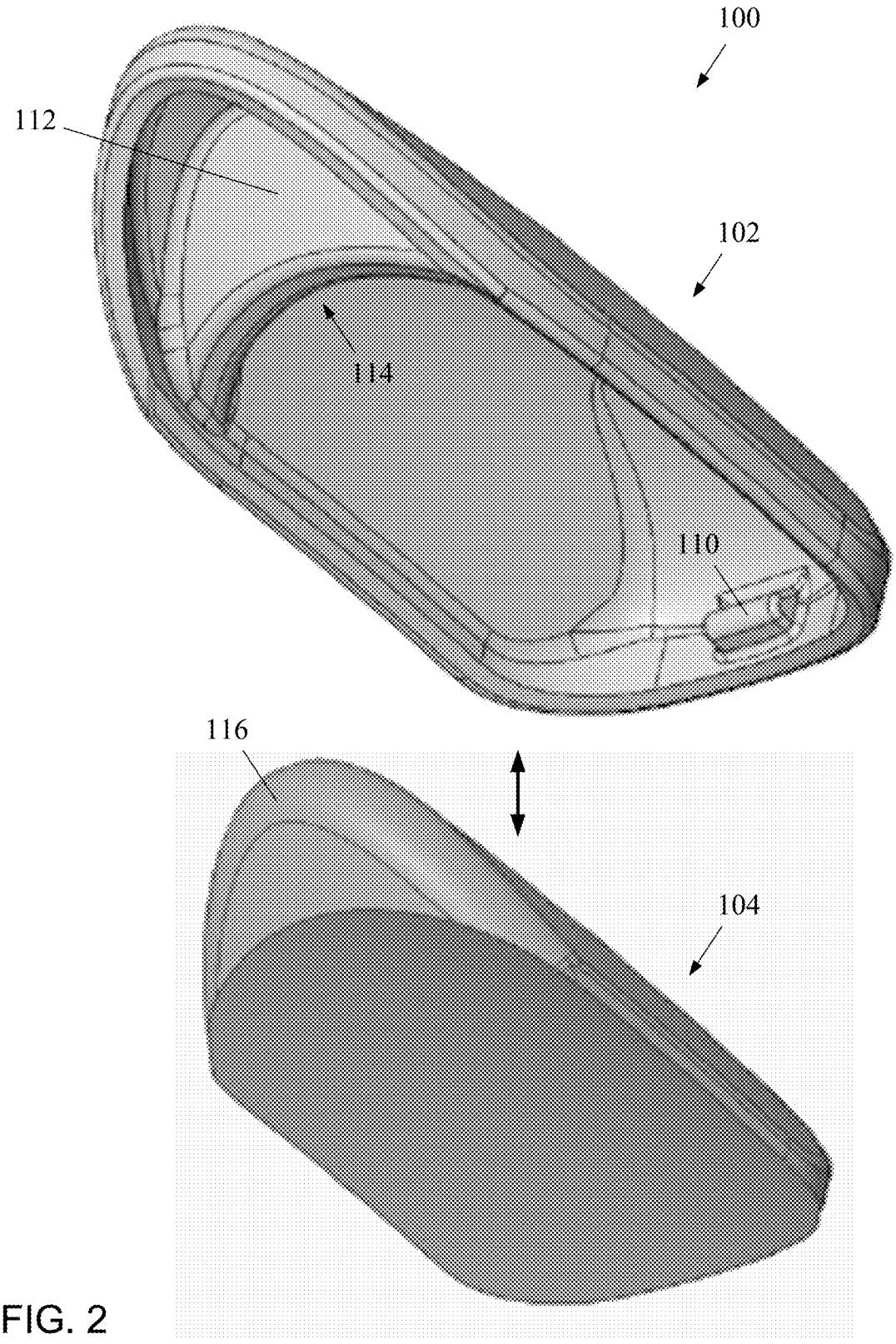
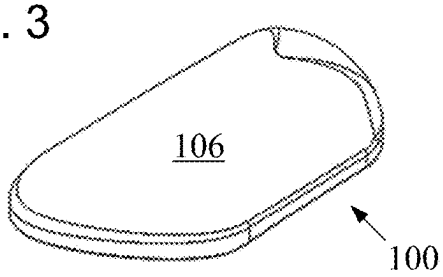


FIG. 2

FIG. 3



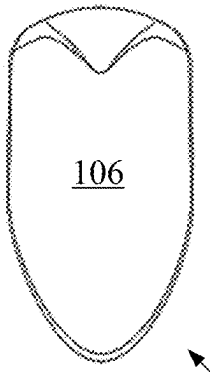


FIG. 4

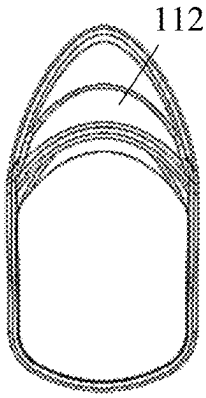


FIG. 5

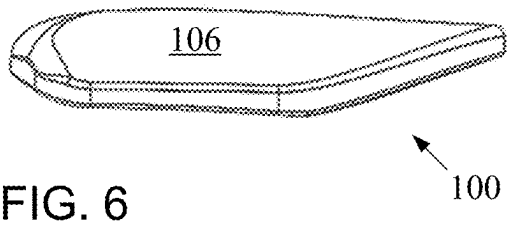


FIG. 6

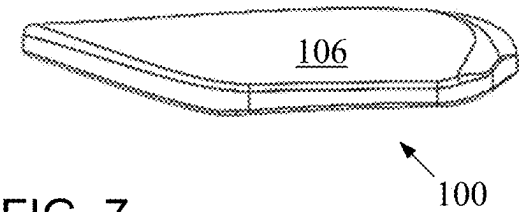


FIG. 7

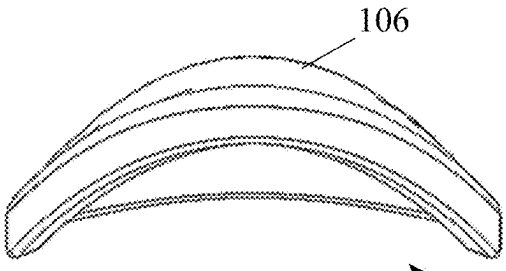


FIG. 8

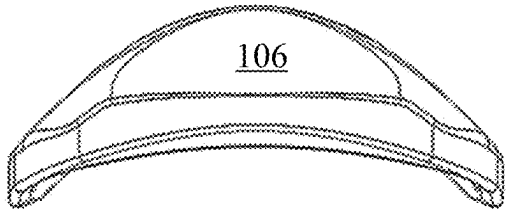


FIG. 9

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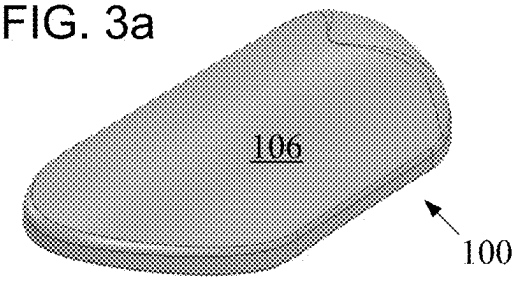
FIG. 3a



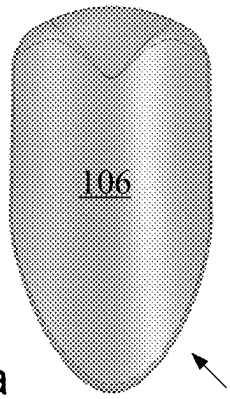
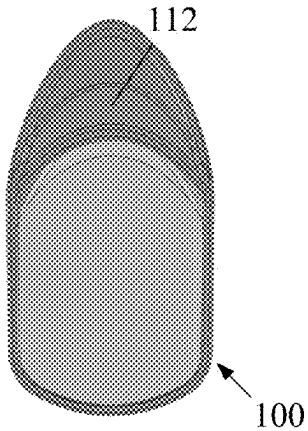


FIG. 4a



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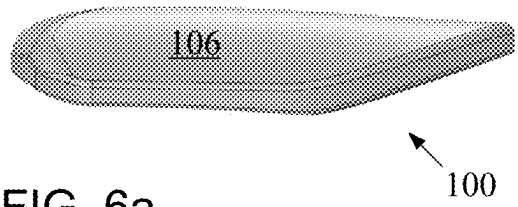

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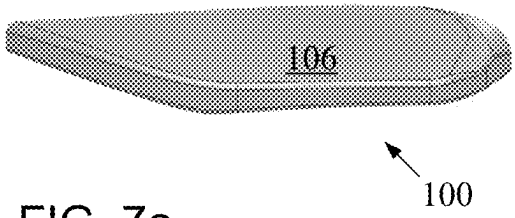

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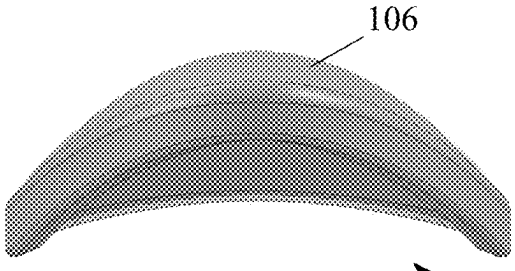

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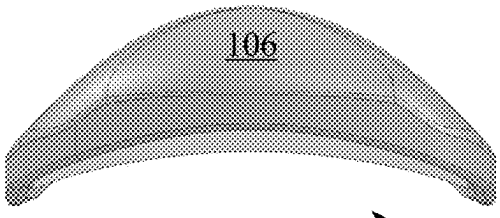
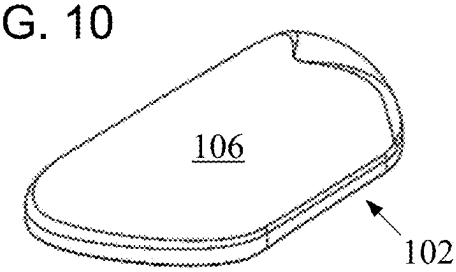


FIG. 9a

FIG. 10



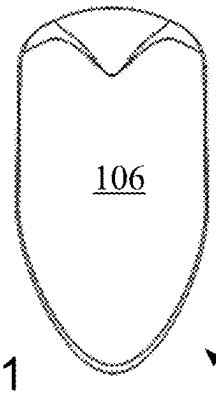


FIG. 11

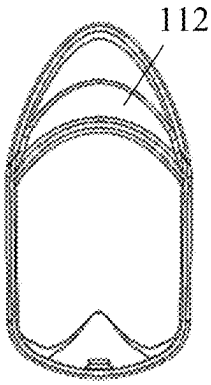


FIG. 12

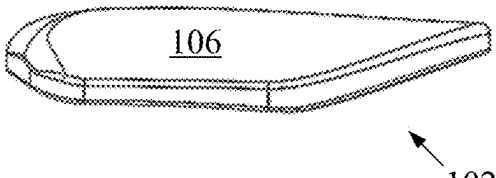
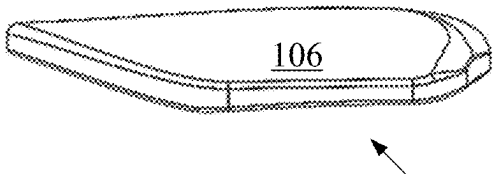


FIG. 13



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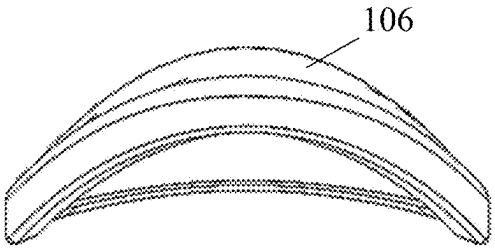

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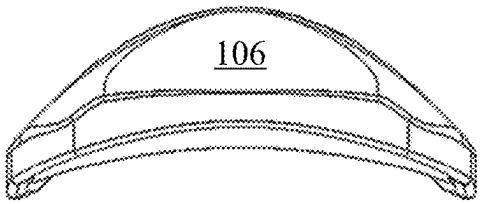

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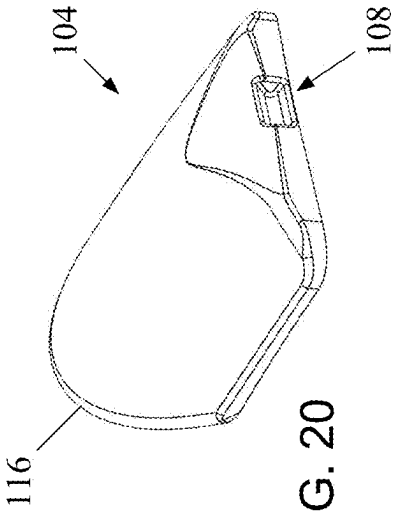


FIG. 20

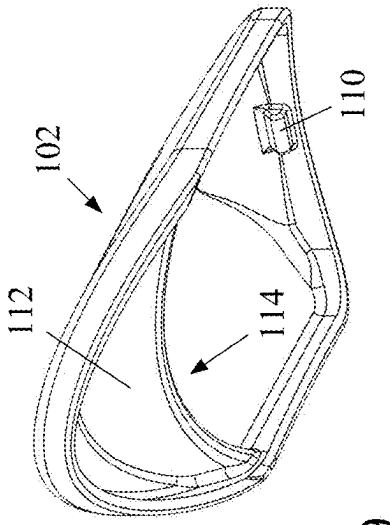


FIG. 19

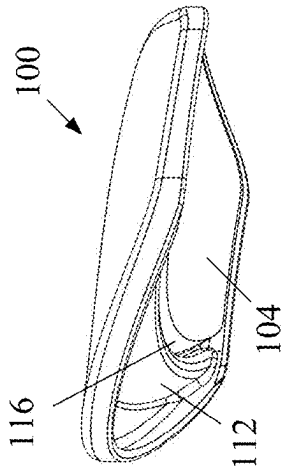
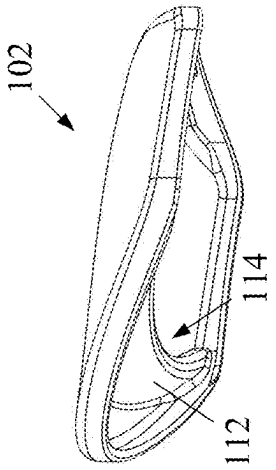


FIG. 17



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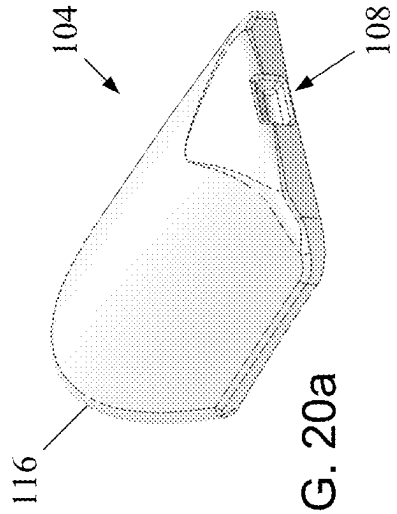


FIG. 20a

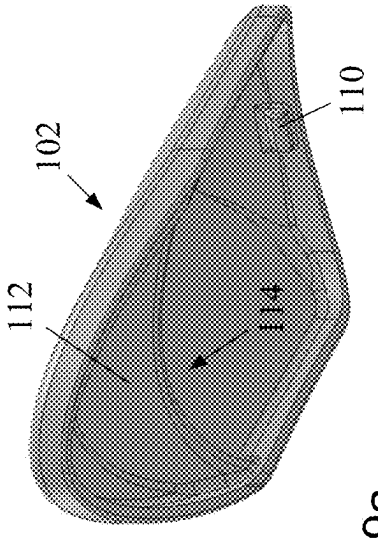
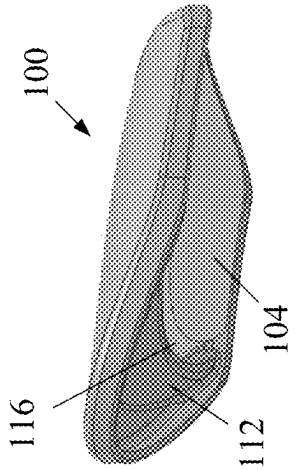


FIG. 19a



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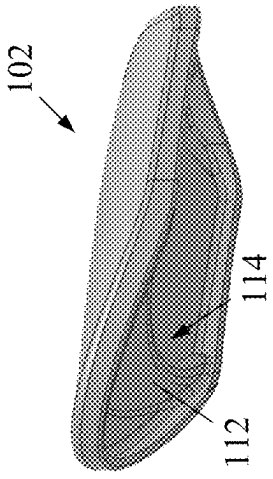
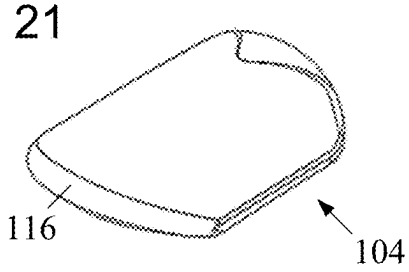


FIG. 18a

FIG. 21



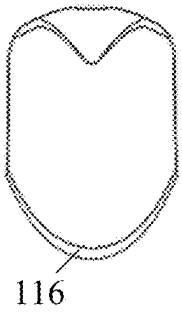


FIG. 22

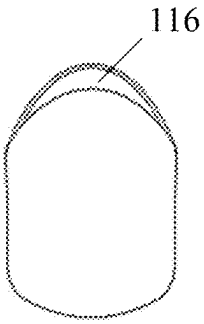


FIG. 23

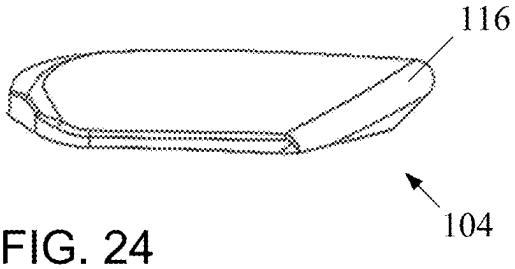


FIG. 24

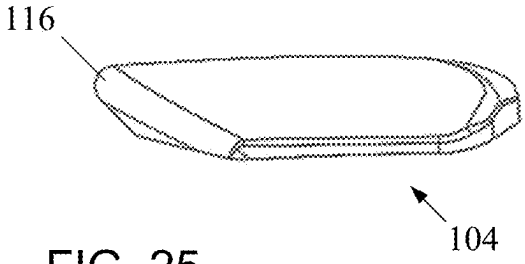


FIG. 25

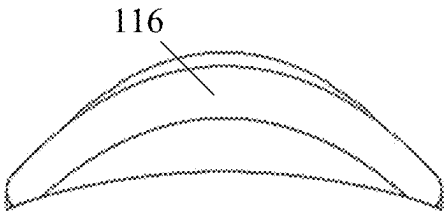


FIG. 26

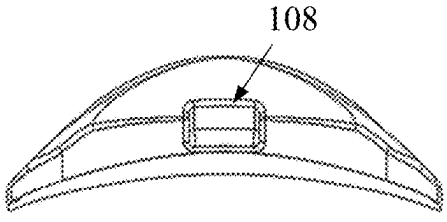


FIG. 27

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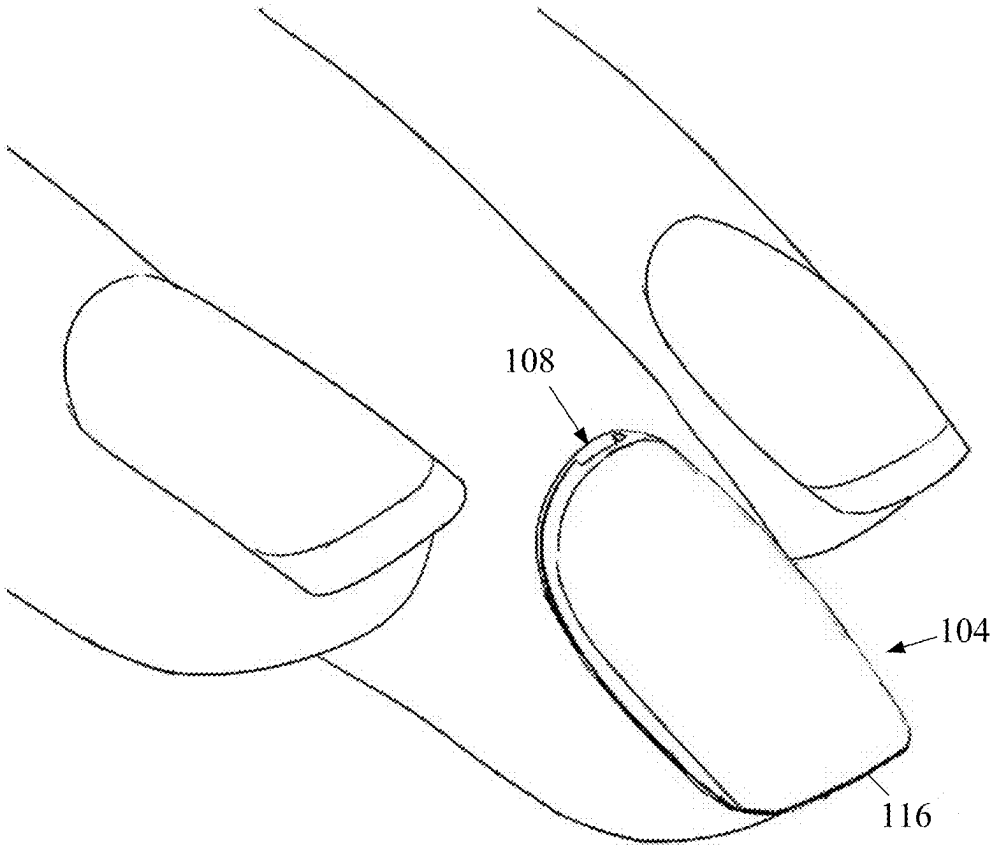


FIG. 28

APPENDIX - Provisional Disclosure 10/65

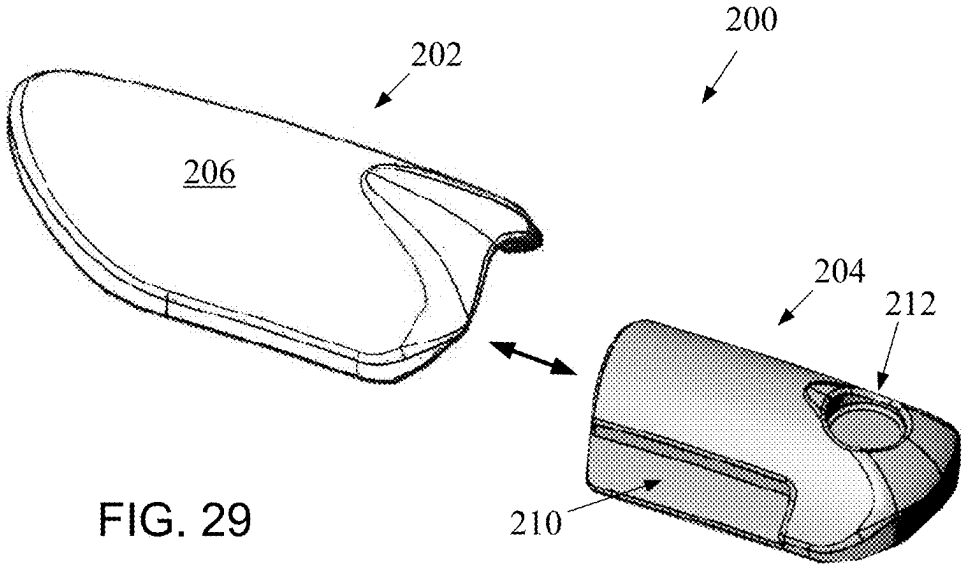


FIG. 29

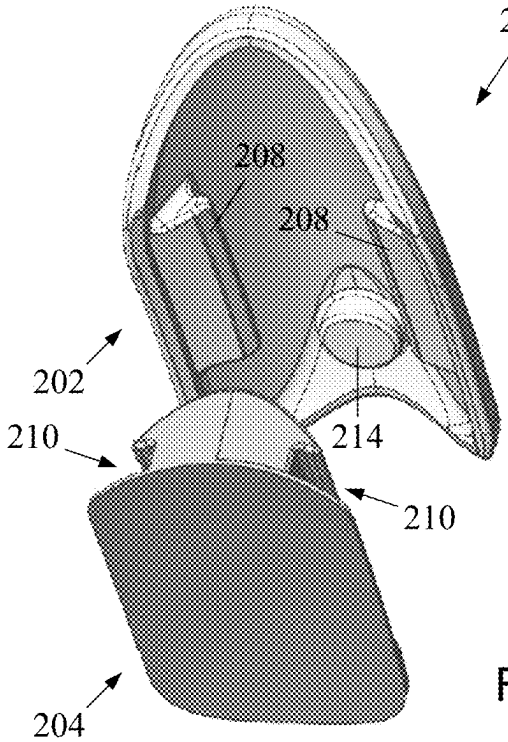


FIG. 30

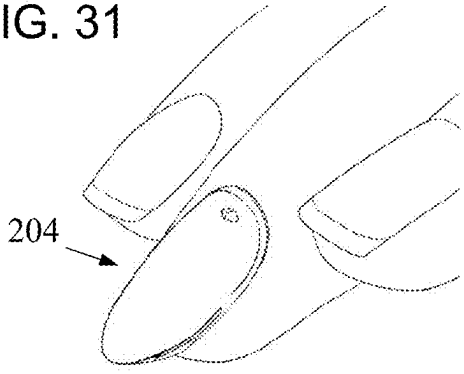
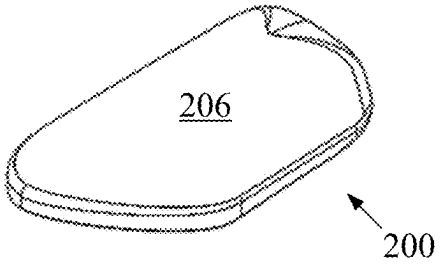


FIG. 31

FIG. 32



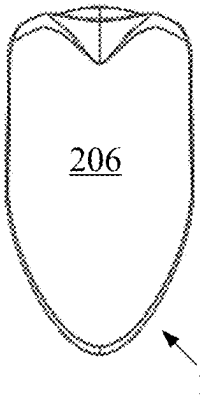


FIG. 33

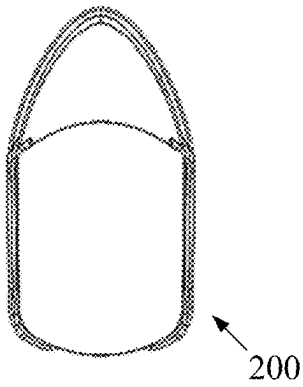


FIG. 34

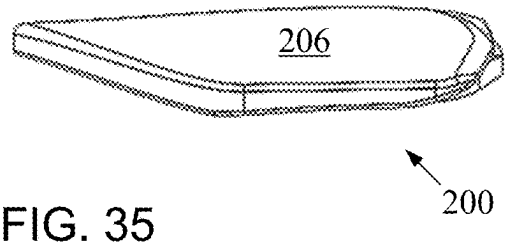


FIG. 35

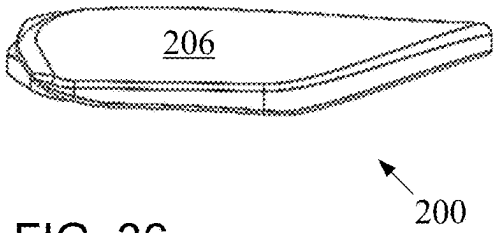


FIG. 36

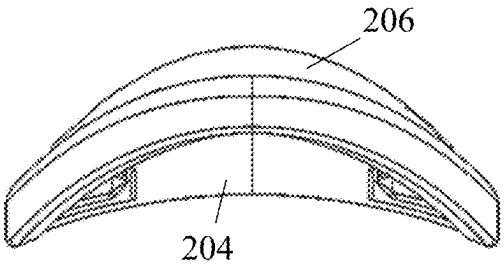


FIG. 37

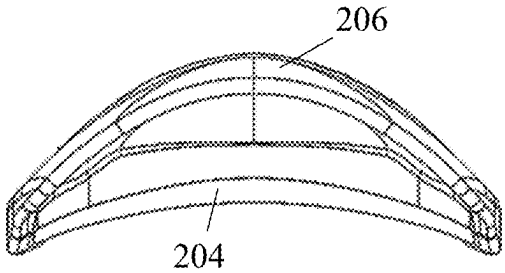
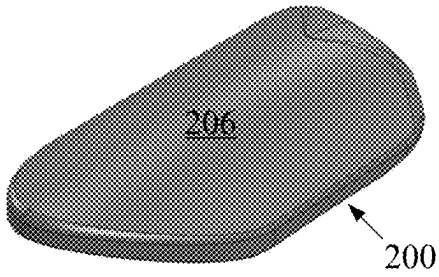


FIG. 38

APPENDIX - Provisional Disclosure 12/65

FIG. 32a



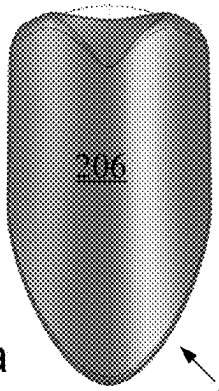


FIG. 33a

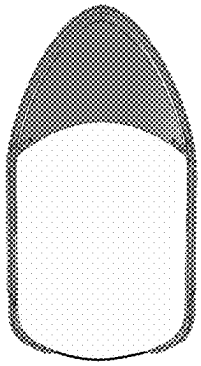


FIG. 34a

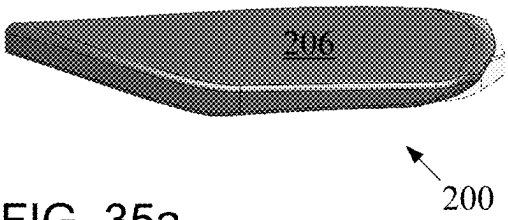


FIG. 35a

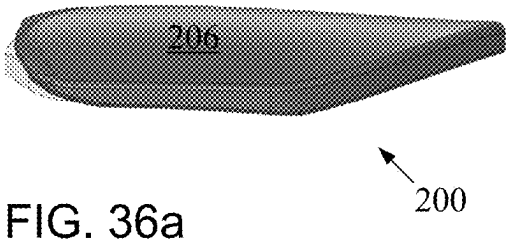


FIG. 36a

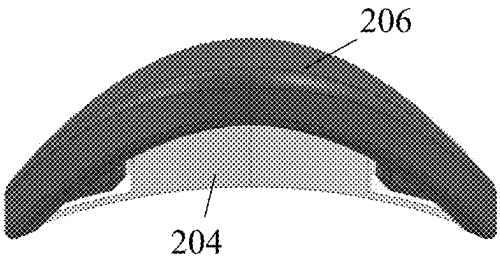


FIG. 37a

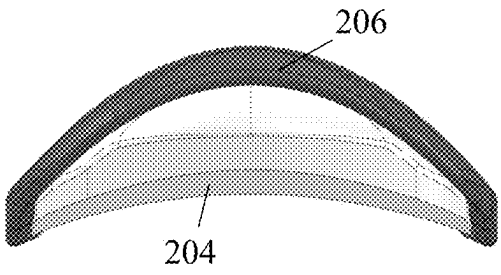
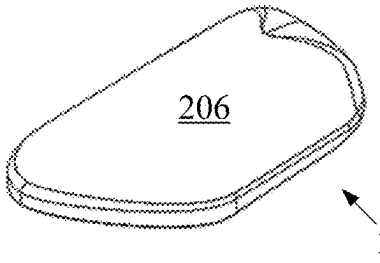


FIG. 38a

FIG. 39



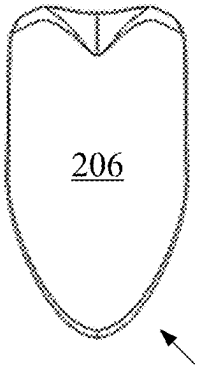


FIG. 40

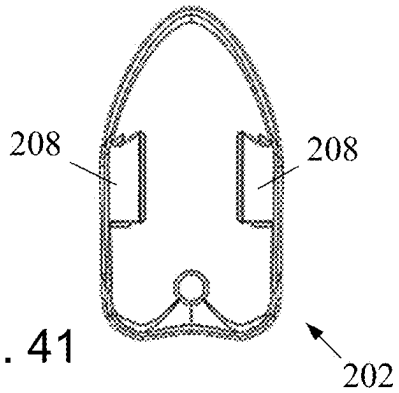


FIG. 41

202

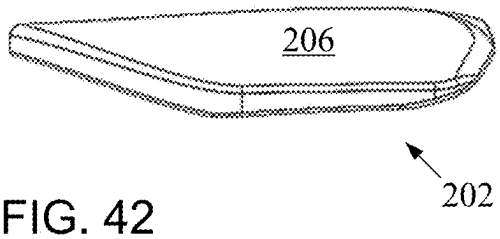


FIG. 42

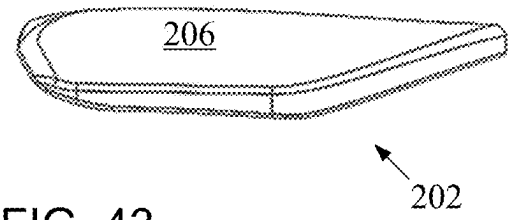


FIG. 43

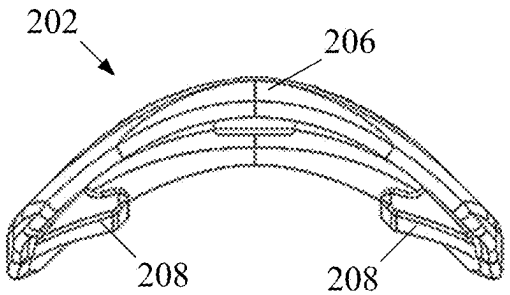


FIG. 44

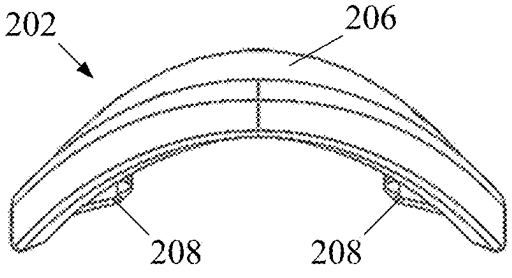
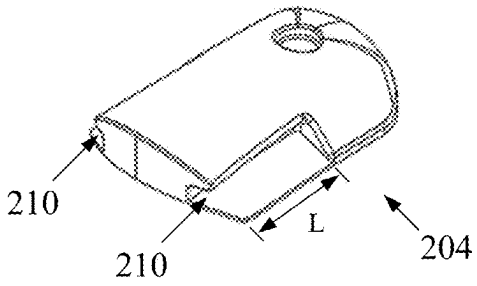


FIG. 45

FIG. 46



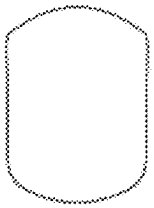


FIG. 47

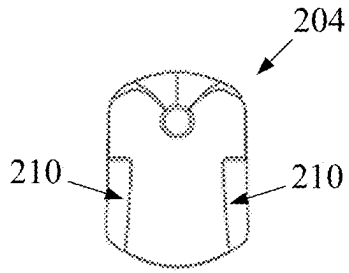


FIG. 48

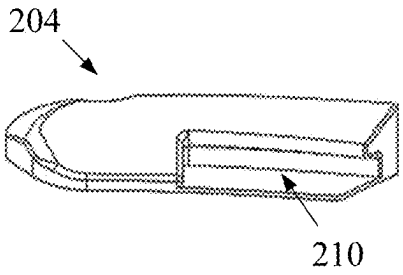


FIG. 49

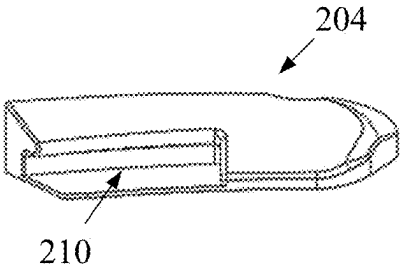


FIG. 50

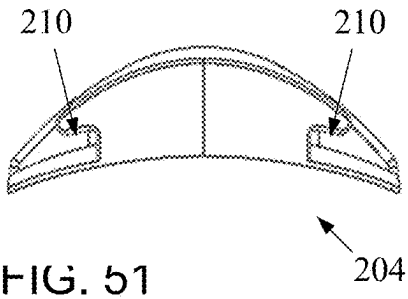


FIG. 51

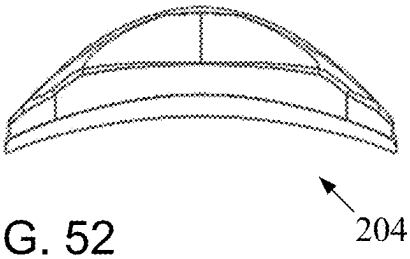


FIG. 52

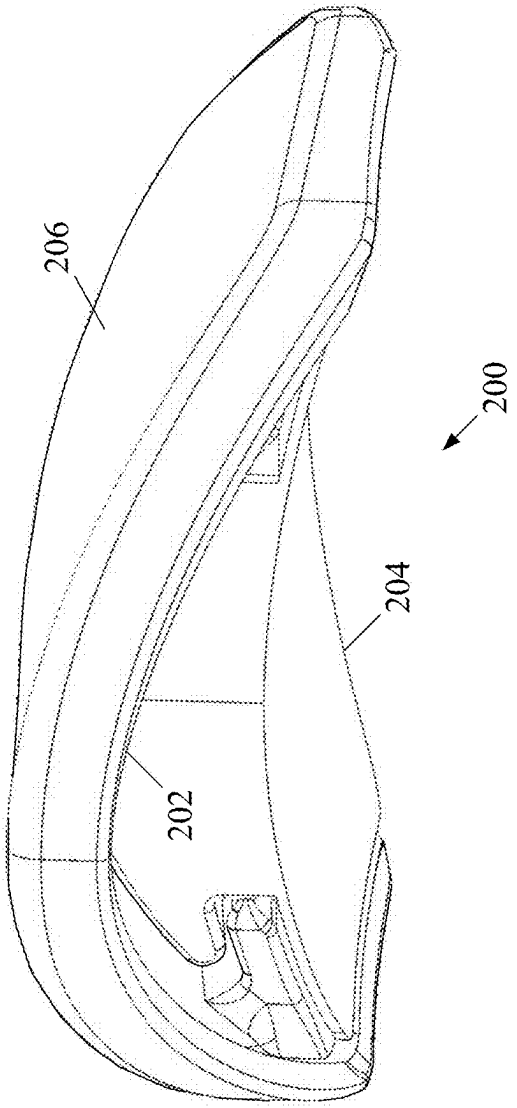


FIG. 53

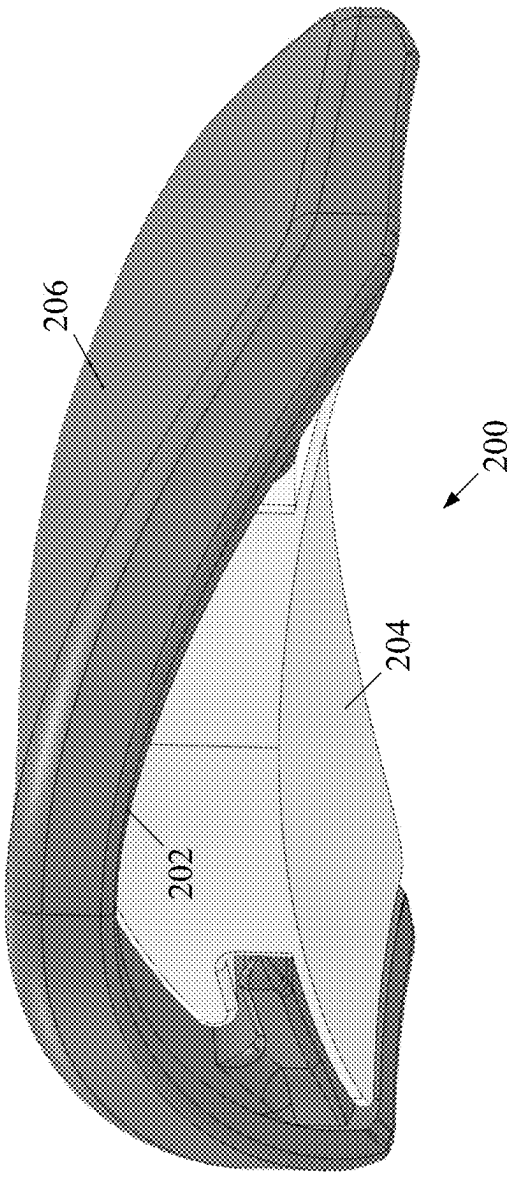


FIG. 53a

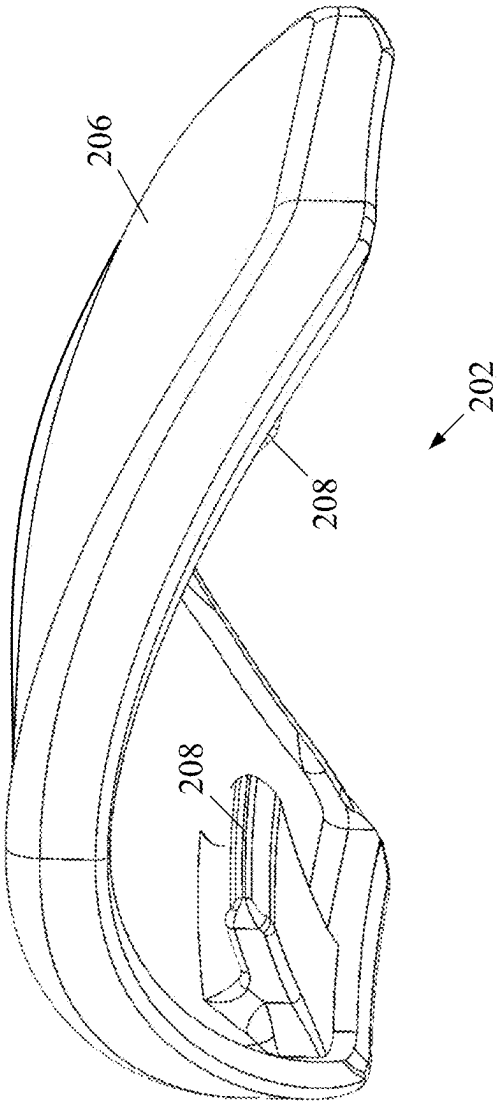


FIG. 54

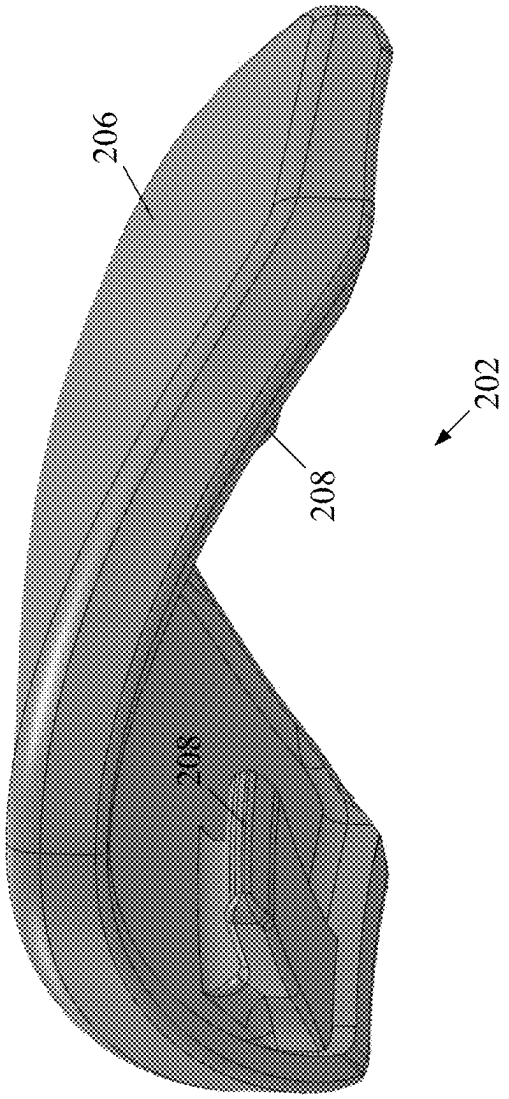


FIG. 54a

FIG. 55

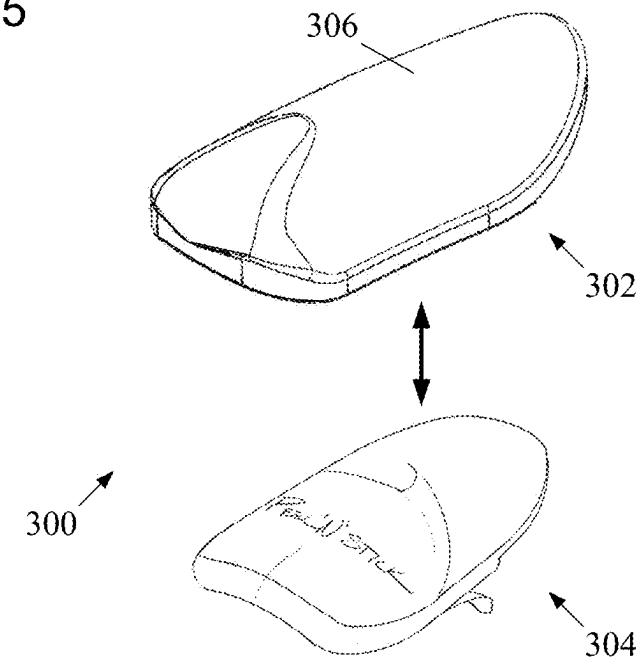


FIG. 56

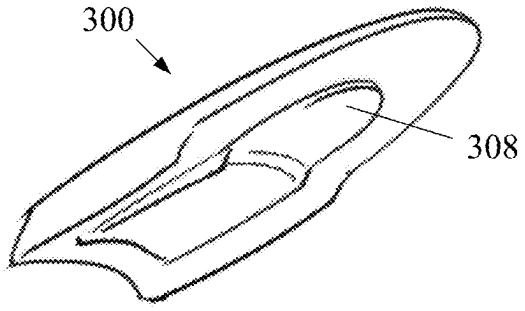


FIG. 57

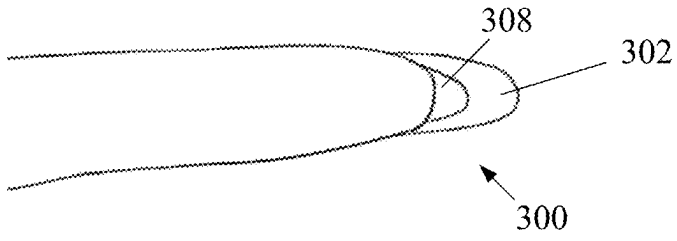
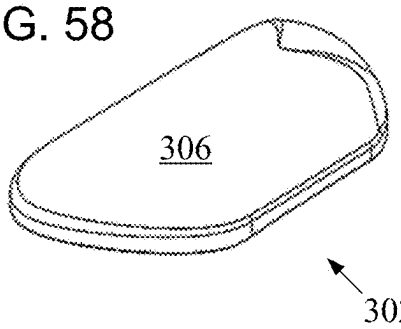


FIG. 58



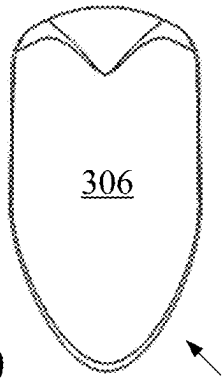


FIG. 59

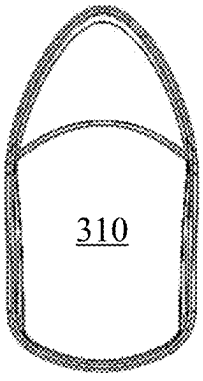


FIG. 60

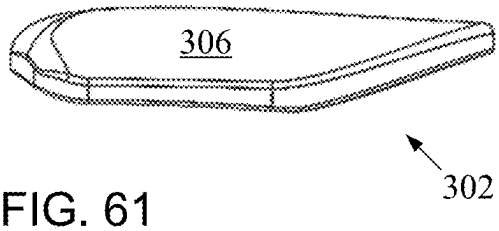


FIG. 61

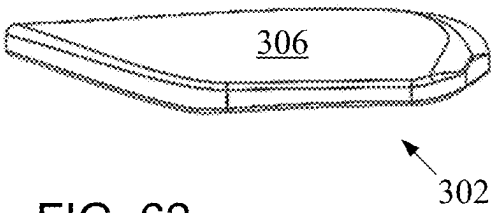


FIG. 62

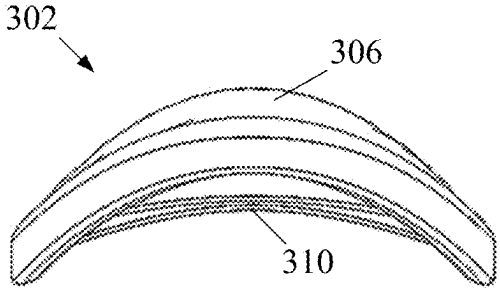


FIG. 63

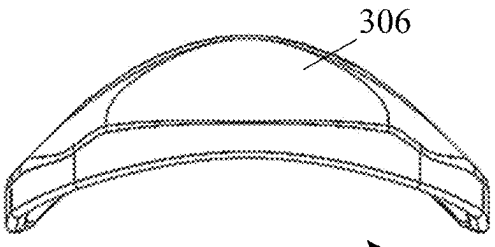


FIG. 64

INTERCHANGEABLE NAIL SYSTEM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] For purposes of the United States, the present application incorporates herein by reference provisional U.S. patent application 63/624,126, filed Jan. 23, 2024, the disclosure of which provisional patent application is found in the appendix attached hereto, which is incorporated herein by reference.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

INCORPORATION OF COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING APPENDIX

[0003] Submitted concurrently herewith via the USPTO's electronic filing system, and hereby incorporated herein by reference, is a computer program listing appendix representing computer program files including instructions, routines, and/or other contents of several computer programs. A table setting forth the name and size of files included in the computer program listing appendix is included below.

File Name	Creation Date	File Size (bytes)
ascify.txt	12/09/2024 14:09	37,473
readme.txt	12/09/2024 14:10	2,890
concepts.txt	12/09/2024 14:10	823,642
cad.txt	01/13/2025 17:25	3,309,024

[0004] One of these files, "readme.txt", contains instructions for utilizing "ascify.txt" to convert the other ASCII file in this computer program listing into compressed ".zip" files. The compressed ".zip" file resulting from "concepts.txt" comprises three separate eDrawing files illustrating three-dimensional renderings of different preferred embodiments that disclose various aspects and features of the invention. The compressed ".zip" file resulting from "cad.txt" comprises thirteen separate eDrawing files illustrating three-dimensional renderings of different preferred embodiments that disclose various aspects and features of the invention, as well as thirteen PDF files corresponding to the eDrawing files. The eDrawing files can be viewed using a free viewer available online from Dassault Systémes under the SOLIDWORKS brand. The disclosure of these files is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The invention generally relates to nail technologies used in cosmetology relating to the aesthetic appearances of nails, and more particularly, to artificial nails.

[0006] Conventionally, nail technologies used in cosmetology relating to the aesthetic appearance of nails include acrylic nails, which are applied over natural nails to enhance their appearance and provide a canvas for nail art; and nail extensions, which are used to add length to the natural nails using various materials, including gels and acrylics.

[0007] Unfortunately, these solutions result in an aesthetic appearance that can last weeks without a means for a person to readily alter the appearance in favor of something different. Sometimes press-on nails can be used, which are easier to remove and replace than acrylic nails and nail extensions, but even press-on nails still require some time and are not very convenient to change out. They also often do not endure as long as artificial nails and nail extensions.

[0008] It thus is believed that a need exists for improvements in such technologies, and that embodiments of the invention in accordance with one or more aspects and features provide such improvement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention includes many aspects and features. Moreover, while many aspects and features relate to, and are described in, the context of nail technologies used in cosmetology relating to the aesthetic appearances of nails, the invention is not limited to use only in such context.

[0010] In an aspect of the invention, a nail system comprises a nail component; and a base component; wherein the nail component is configured to attach to the base component, and the base component is configured to attach to a nail plate of a person's digit; and wherein the nail component comprises an upper, outer nail surface that is configured to cover a nail plate and the base component for providing a desired aesthetic presentation of the digit when the nail component is attached to the base component and the base component is attached to the nail plate.

[0011] In a feature, the nail component is configured to detach from the base component for use of the nail component with another base component.

[0012] In a feature, the nail component is configured to detach from the base component for use of the base component with another nail component while the base component remains attached to a nail plate.

[0013] In a feature, the nail component is configured to detach from the base component while the base component remains attached to a nail plate for interchanging the nail component with another nail component having a different aesthetic appearance. The different aesthetic appearance may comprise a difference in one or more of length, contour, color, or material.

[0014] In a feature, the nail component interlocks in its attachment with the base component.

[0015] In a feature, the nail component is placed on top of and latches in tension onto the base component.

[0016] In a feature, the base component comprises a recess within which a protuberance of the nail component is received. When positioning the protuberance within the recess, the nail component preferably requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component, which tension is maintained when the protuberance is received within the recess for attachment of the nail component in a fixed disposition on top of the base component.

[0017] In a feature, the nail component defines a recess within which a front of the base component is received for retaining the nail component in a fixed position relative to the base component.

[0018] In a feature, the nail system further comprises an adhesive for attaching the base component to a nail plate. The adhesive includes nail glue or an ultraviolet reactive gel polymer.

[0019] In a feature, the nail component is mechanically latched or locked to the base component.

[0020] In a feature, the nail component is attached to the base component through a friction joint.

[0021] In a feature, the nail component fits over and snaps onto the base component.

[0022] In a feature, one of the nail component and base component comprises one or more channels or slots and the other of the nail component and base component comprises a corresponding number of rails or ribs that are received within the one or more channels or slots for attachment of the two components together. Preferably, one of the nail component and the base component comprises channels or slots located on opposite lateral sides of an exterior of the component. The channels or slots preferably extend approximately half of a length of the component between distal ends thereof. Furthermore, one of the nail component and the base component comprises rails or ribs located on opposite lateral sides of an interior of the component.

[0023] In a feature, a back of the nail component slides onto a front of the base component and over the base component in covering relation thereto.

[0024] In a feature, a front of the nail component slides onto a back of the base component and over the base component in covering relation thereto.

[0025] In a feature, the nail component rotates or twists into engagement on the nail component.

[0026] In a feature, the nail component comprises three channels which receive in sliding engagement therein three rails of the base component when the nail component is slid onto the base component.

[0027] In a feature, the nail component comprises a singular, centrally located channel within which a rail or rib of the base component is received when the nail component is slid onto the base component.

[0028] In a feature, one of the nail component and base component comprises one or more recesses and the other of the nail component and the base components comprises one or more protuberances each being received in a said recess when the nail component has been positioned on top of and in covering relation to the base component for latching or locking engagement of the nail component in said position relative to the base component.

[0029] In a feature, in positioning a said protuberance within a said recess, the nail component requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component, of which tension at least some is maintained when the protuberance is received within the recess for retaining the nail component in fixed position on top of the base component. A snap or click preferably is generated upon the protuberance being received within the recess as a result of said tension. Additionally, a shallow groove may be provided to assist in guiding the protuberance toward the recess as the nail component is positioned on top of the base component into the fixed position.

[0030] In another aspect, a nail system comprises a nail component; and a base component; wherein the nail component is configured to attach to the base component, and the base component is configured to attach to a nail plate of a person's digit; wherein the nail component comprises an upper, outer nail surface that is configured to cover a nail plate and the base component for providing a desired aesthetic presentation of the digit when the nail component is attached to the base component and the base component is attached to the nail plate; wherein the base component comprises a double-sided adhesive such as a pad or strip that has oppositely facing adhesive surfaces with one adhesive surface for adhering to a nail plate and the oppositely facing adhesive surface for adhering to a surface of the nail component; and wherein the base component comprises a pull tab that is configured to release the attachment of the base component to the nail plate when pulled.

[0031] In a feature, the pull tab is configured to also release attachment of the base component to the nail component, whereby the same nail component may be interchanged with another nail component at a later time by simply using a new base component.

[0032] In a feature, the pull tab is configured to extend beyond a nail plate under the nail component when the nail system is in use, whereby the pull tab is accessible when the nail system is desired to be removed.

[0033] In an aspect, a method for interchanging a nail component for another nail component in a nail system comprises: attaching a base component of a nail system to a nail plate; attaching a nail component to the base component; and detaching the nail component from the base component while the base component is attached to the nail plate and, thereafter, attaching a different nail component to the base component while the base component is attached to the nail plate.

[0034] In a feature, the nail component extends over and covers the base component and the nail plate when the nail component is attached to the base component.

[0035] In a feature, the nail component and base component each comprises means for releasable interlocking engaged with the other component.

[0036] In a feature, the nail component and base component each comprises means for mechanical, interlocking engagement with the other component.

[0037] Additional aspects and features are disclosed in the incorporated disclosures as well as below in the detailed description and claims as filed.

[0038] In addition to the aforementioned aspects and features of the invention, it should be noted that the invention further encompasses the various logical combinations and subcombinations of such aspects and features. Thus, for example, claims in this or a divisional or continuing patent application or applications may be separately directed to any aspect, feature, or embodiment disclosed herein, or combination thereof, without requiring any other aspect, feature, or embodiment.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0039] One or more preferred embodiments of the invention now will be described in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein the same elements are referred to with the same reference numerals.

[0040] FIG. **1** is an exploded view of a preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention.

[0041] FIG. **2** is another exploded view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **1**.

[0042] FIG. **3** is a view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **1**.

[0043] FIG. **4** is a top plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0044] FIG. **5** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0045] FIG. **6** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0046] FIG. **7** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0047] FIG. **8** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0048] FIG. **9** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0049] FIG. **10** is a view of a nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0050] FIG. **11** is a top plan view of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0051] FIG. **12** is a bottom plan view of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0052] FIG. **13** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0053] FIG. **14** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0054] FIG. **15** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0055] FIG. **16** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component of FIG. **10**.

[0056] FIG. **17** is a view of a lower front side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0057] FIG. **18** is a view of the lower front side of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **17**.

[0058] FIG. **18**B is another view of the nail component like the view of FIG. **18**.

[0059] FIG. **19** is a view of an upper back side of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **17**.

[0060] FIG. **20** is a view of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **3**.

[0061] FIG. **21** is a top plan view of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0062] FIG. **22** is a bottom plan view of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0063] FIG. **23** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0064] FIG. **24** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0065] FIG. **25** is an elevational view of a front of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0066] FIG. **26** is an elevational view of a back of the base component of FIG. **20**.

[0067] FIG. **27** is another view of the interchangeable nail system like the view of FIG. **3**.

[0068] FIG. **27**A is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **27**.

[0069] FIG. **27**B is a widthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **27**.

[0070] FIG. **27**C is a horizontal cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **27**.

[0071] FIG. **27**D is another lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system like that of FIG. **27**A.

[0072] FIG. **27**E is a closeup of a front portion of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **27**D.

[0073] FIG. **27**F is a closeup of a back portion of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **27**D.

[0074] FIG. **28** is a view of the base component of FIG. **20** adhered to a fingernail of a person's hand and ready to receive the nail component of FIG. **10**

[0075] FIG. **29** is an isometric view of another preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention.

[0076] FIG. **30** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0077] FIG. **31** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0078] FIG. **32** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0079] FIG. **33** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0080] FIG. **34** is a top plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0081] FIG. **35** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0082] FIG. **36** is an isometric view of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0083] FIG. **37** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0084] FIG. **38** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0085] FIG. **39** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0086] FIG. **40** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0087] FIG. **41** is a top plan view of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0088] FIG. **42** is a bottom plan view of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0089] FIG. **43** is an isometric view of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0090] FIG. **44** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0091] FIG. **45** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0092] FIG. **46** is an elevational view of a front of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0093] FIG. **47** is an elevational view of a back of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0094] FIG. **48** is a top plan view of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0095] FIG. **49** is a bottom plan view of the base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **29**.

[0096] FIG. **50** is another view like the view of FIG. **29** of the interchangeable nail system.

[0097] FIG. **51** is another view like the view of FIG. **30** of the interchangeable nail system.

[0098] FIG. **52** is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **50**.

[0099] FIG. **53** is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **51**.

[0100] FIG. **54** is a horizontal cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system as shown in FIG. **50**.

[0101] FIG. **55** is an exploded view of another preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention.

[0102] FIG. **56** is another exploded view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **55**.

[0103] FIG. **57** is a view of the base component of FIG. **55** adhered to a fingernail of a person's hand and ready to receive the nail component of FIG. **55**.

[0104] FIG. **58** is a view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **55**.

[0105] FIG. **59** is a top plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0106] FIG. **60** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0107] FIG. **61** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0108] FIG. **62** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0109] FIG. **63** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0110] FIG. **64** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0111] FIG. **65** is a view of a nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0112] FIG. **66** is a top plan view of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0113] FIG. **67** is a bottom plan view of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0114] FIG. **68** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0115] FIG. **69** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0116] FIG. **70** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0117] FIG. **71** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component of FIG. **65**.

[0118] FIG. **72** is a view of a base component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **58**.

[0119] FIG. **73** is a top plan view of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0120] FIG. **74** is a bottom plan view of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0121] FIG. **75** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0122] FIG. **76** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0123] FIG. **77** is an elevational view of a front of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0124] FIG. **78** is an elevational view of a back of the base component of FIG. **72**.

[0125] FIG. **74** is a view of a lower front side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **53**.

[0126] FIG. **75** is a view of a lower front side of the nail component of FIG. **74**.

[0127] FIG. **76** is an exploded view of another preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention.

[0128] FIG. **77** is a view of a bottom of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **76**.

[0129] FIG. **78** is a bottom plan view of a person's finger to which the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **76**.

[0130] FIG. **79** is another view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **55-56**.

[0131] FIG. **80** is another view of the nail component of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **55-56**.

[0132] FIG. **81** is an exploded perspective view of another preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention.

[0133] FIG. **82** is a perspective view of a bottom of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **81**.

[0134] FIG. **83** is a bottom plan view of a person's finger to which the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **81**.

[0135] FIG. **84** is a view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **81**.

[0136] FIG. **85** is a top plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0137] FIG. **86** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0138] FIG. **87** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0139] FIG. **88** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0140] FIG. **89** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0141] FIG. **90** is an elevational view of a rear of the interchangeable nail system of FIG. **84**.

[0142] FIG. **91** is atop perspective view of a preferred prototype interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention, which has been reduced to practice.

[0143] FIG. **92** is a bottom perspective view of the preferred prototype interchangeable nail system of FIG. **91**.

[0144] FIG. **93** is another bottom perspective view of the preferred prototype interchangeable nail system of FIG. **91**, wherein the nail component is removably attached to the base component.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0145] As a preliminary matter, it will readily be understood by one having ordinary skill in the relevant art ("Ordinary Artisan") that the invention has broad utility and application. Furthermore, any embodiment discussed and identified as being "preferred" is considered to be part of a best mode contemplated for carrying out the invention. Other embodiments also may be discussed for additional illustrative purposes in providing a full and enabling disclosure of the invention. Moreover, an embodiment of the invention may incorporate only one or a plurality of the aspects of the invention disclosed herein; only one or a plurality of the features disclosed herein; or combination thereof. As such, many embodiments are implicitly disclosed herein and fall within the scope of what is regarded as the invention.

[0146] Accordingly, while the invention is described herein in detail in relation to one or more embodiments, it is to be understood that this disclosure is illustrative and exemplary of the invention and is made merely for the purposes of providing a full and enabling disclosure of the invention. The detailed disclosure herein of one or more embodiments is not intended, nor is to be construed, to limit the scope of patent protection afforded the invention in any claim of a patent issuing here from, which scope is to be defined by the claims and the equivalents thereof. It is not intended that the scope of patent protection afforded the

invention be defined by reading into any claim a limitation found herein that does not explicitly appear in the claim itself.

[0147] Thus, for example, any sequence(s) and/or temporal order of steps of various processes or methods that are described herein are illustrative and not restrictive. Accordingly, it should be understood that, although steps of various processes or methods may be shown and described as being in a sequence or temporal order, the steps of any such processes or methods are not limited to being carried out in any particular sequence or order, absent an indication otherwise. Indeed, the steps in such processes or methods generally may be carried out in various different sequences and orders while still falling within the scope of the invention. Accordingly, it is intended that the scope of patent protection afforded the invention be defined by the issued claim(s) rather than the description set forth herein.

[0148] Additionally, it is important to note that each term used herein refers to that which the Ordinary Artisan would understand such term to mean based on the contextual use of such term herein. To the extent that the meaning of a term used herein—as understood by the Ordinary Artisan based on the contextual use of such term-differs in any way from any particular dictionary definition of such term, it is intended that the meaning of the term as understood by the Ordinary Artisan should prevail.

[0149] With regard solely to construction of any claim with respect to the United States, no claim element is to be interpreted under 35 U.S.C. 112(f) unless the explicit phrase "means for" or "step for" is actually used in such claim element, whereupon this statutory provision is intended to and should apply in the interpretation of such claim element. With regard to any method claim including a condition precedent step, such method requires the condition precedent to be met and the step to be performed at least once but not necessarily every time during performance of the claimed method.

[0150] Furthermore, it is important to note that, as used herein, "comprising" is open-ended insofar as that which follows such term is not exclusive. Additionally, "a" and "an" each generally denotes "at least one" but does not exclude a plurality unless the contextual use dictates otherwise. Thus, reference to "a picnic basket having an apple" is the same as "a picnic basket comprising an apple" and "a picnic basket including an apple", each of which identically describes "a picnic basket having at least one apple" as well as "a picnic basket having apples"; the picnic basket further may contain one or more other items beside an apple. In contrast, reference to "a picnic basket having a single apple" describes "a picnic basket having only one apple"; the picnic basket further may contain one or more other items beside an apple. In contrast, "a picnic basket consisting of an apple" has only a single item contained therein, i.e., one apple; the picnic basket contains no other item.

[0151] When used herein to join a list of items, "or" denotes "at least one of the items" but does not exclude a plurality of items of the list. Thus, reference to "a picnic basket having cheese or crackers" describes "a picnic basket having cheese without crackers", "a picnic basket having crackers without cheese", and "a picnic basket having both cheese and crackers"; the picnic basket further may contain one or more other items beside cheese and crackers.

[0152] When used herein to join a list of items, "and" denotes "all of the items of the list". Thus, reference to "a picnic basket having cheese and crackers" describes "a picnic basket having cheese, wherein the picnic basket further has crackers", as well as describes "a picnic basket having crackers, wherein the picnic basket further has cheese"; the picnic basket further may contain one or more other items beside cheese and crackers.

[0153] The phrase "at least one" followed by a list of items joined by "and" denotes an item of the list but does not require every item of the list. Thus, "at least one of an apple and an orange" encompasses the following mutually exclusive scenarios: there is an apple but no orange; there is an orange but no apple; and there is both an apple and an orange. In these scenarios if there is an apple, there may be more than one apple, and if there is an orange, there may be more than one orange. Moreover, the phrase "one or more" followed by a list of items joined by "and" is the equivalent of "at least one" followed by the list of items joined by "and".

[0154] Referring now to the drawings, one or more preferred embodiments of the invention are next described. The following description of one or more preferred embodiments is merely exemplary in nature and is in no way intended to limit the invention, its implementations, or uses.

First Embodiment

[0155] FIG. **1** is an exploded view of a preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system **100** in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention. FIG. **2** is another exploded view of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **1**. The interchangeable nail system **100** comprises a nail component **102**, sometimes referred to herein as a nail cover; and a base component **104**, sometimes referred to herein as a nail base.

[0156] The nail component **102** is configured to attach to the base component **104**, and the base component **104** is configured to attach to a nail plate (fingernail) of a person's digit, such as a finger or thumb. In the nail system **100**, the nail component **102** comprises an upper, outer nail surface **106** that covers the nail plate and base component **104**. The nail component **102** provides an overall desired aesthetic presentation when the nail component **102** is attached to the base component **104** and the base component **104** is attached to a nail plate.

[0157] The nail component **102** preferably interlocks in its engagement with the base component **104** such that the nail component **102** does not inadvertently detach from the base component **104**.

[0158] Furthermore, the nail component **102** and base component **104** are configured to be detachable from each other for interchanging the nail component **102** with one of a plurality of other nail components while the base component **102** remains attached to a person's nail plate. The other nail components preferably have the same structure for removably attaching to the base component **104** and differ in the outer surface appearance, whether in one or more of length, contour, color, or other aesthetic design feature.

[0159] As will be apparent from the following disclosure and figures, the interchangeable nail system **100** that is illustrated includes a nail component **102** that is placed on top of and that latches in tension onto the base component **104**. The structure for accomplishing this includes a recess **108** formed in the base component **104** within which a protuberance **110** of the nail component **102** is received. In positioning the protuberance within the recess, the nail

component preferably requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component, which tension is maintained when the protuberance is received within the recess for attachment of the nail component in a fixed disposition on top of the base component **104**. The structure also includes a mechanism for retaining a front of the nail component **102** in a fixed position relative to the base component **104** when so tensioned. In the nail system **100**, this mechanism comprises a shoulder or wall **112** located on the underside of the nail component **102** that defines a recess **114** which a nose **116** of the base component **104** abuts or extends into and fits as the nail component **102** is positioned and flexed onto the top and in covering relation over of the base component **104**.

[0160] FIGS. **3-9** are additional views of the interchangeable nail system **100** wherein the nail component **102** is shown attached to the base component **104**. Specifically, FIG. **3** is a view of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **1**; FIG. **4** is a top plan view of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; FIG. **5** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; FIG. **6** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; FIG. **7** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; FIG. **8** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; and FIG. **9** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**.

[0161] Views of just the nail component **102** of the interchangeable nail system **100** are shown in FIGS. **10-16**. Specifically, FIG. **10** is a view of the nail component **102**; FIG. **11** is a top plan view of the nail component **102**; FIG. **12** is a bottom plan view of the nail component **102**; FIG. **13** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component **102**; FIG. **14** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component **102**; FIG. **15** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component of FIG. **10**; and FIG. **16** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component **102**.

[0162] Additionally, FIG. **17** is a view of a lower front side of the interchangeable nail system **100**; FIG. **18** is a view of the lower front side of the nail component **102** of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **17**; FIG. **18**B is another view of the nail component **102** like the view of FIG. **18**; and FIG. **19** is a view of an upper back side of the base component **104** of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **17**.

[0163] Views of just the base component **104** of the interchangeable nail system **100** are shown in FIGS. **20-26**. Specifically, FIG. **20** is a view of the base component **104** of the interchangeable nail system **100** of FIG. **3**; FIG. **21** is a top plan view of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**; FIG. **22** is a bottom plan view of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**; FIG. **23** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**; FIG. **24** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**; FIG. **25** is an elevational view of a front of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**; and FIG. **26** is an elevational view of a back of the base component **104** of FIG. **20**.

[0164] FIG. **27** is another view of the interchangeable nail system **100** like the view of FIG. **3**. Moreover, FIG. **27**A is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **100** as shown in FIG. **27**; FIG. **27**B is a widthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **100** as shown in FIG. **27**; FIG. **27**C is a horizontal cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **100** as shown in FIG. **27**; FIG. **27**D is another lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **100** like that of FIG. **27**A; FIG. **27**E is a closeup of a front portion of the interchangeable nail system **100** as shown in FIG. **27**D; and FIG. **27**F is a closeup of a back portion of the interchangeable nail system **100** as shown in FIG. **27**D.

[0165] FIG. **28** is a view of the base component **104** of FIG. **20** adhered to a fingernail of a person's hand and ready to receive the nail component **102** of FIG. **10**.

[0166] FIGS. **29-35** illustrate another example of the preferred embodiment of the interchangeable nail system **100** in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention. In particular, FIG. **29** is an isometric view of a preferred embodiment of a nail system **150**; FIG. **30** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system **150**; FIG. **31** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system **150**; FIG. **32** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system **150**; FIG. **33** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system **150**; FIG. **34** is a top plan view of the nail system **150**; and FIG. **35** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system **150**.

[0167] The interchangeable nail system **150** is like the interchangeable nail system **100** and comprises a nail component **152** and a base component **154**. The nail component **152** is configured to attach to the base component **154**, and the base component **154** is configured to attach to a nail plate (fingernail) of a person's digit, such as a finger or thumb. In the nail system **150**, the nail component **152** comprises an upper, outer nail surface **156** that covers the nail plate and base component **154**. The nail component **152** provides an overall desired aesthetic presentation when the nail component **152** is attached to the base component **154** and the base component **154** is attached to a nail plate.

[0168] The nail component **152** preferably interlocks in its engagement with the base component **154** such that the nail component **152** does not inadvertently detach from the base component **154**. Furthermore, the nail component **152** and base component **154** are configured to be detachable from each other for interchanging the nail component **152** with one of a plurality of other nail components while the base component **152** remains attached to a person's nail plate. The other nail components preferably have the same structure for removably attaching to the base component **154** and differ in the outer surface appearance, whether in one or more of length, contour, color, or other aesthetic design feature.

[0169] As will be apparent from the following disclosure and figures, the interchangeable nail system **150** that is illustrated includes a nail component **152** that is placed on top of and that latches in tension onto the base component **154**. The structure for accomplishing this includes a recess **158** formed in the base component **154** within which a protuberance **160** of the nail component **152** is received. In positioning the protuberance **160** within the recess **158**, the nail component **152** preferably requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component **152**, which tension is maintained when the protuberance **160** is received within the recess **158** for attachment of the nail component **152** in a fixed disposition on top of the base component **154**. The structure also includes a mechanism for retaining a front of the nail component **152** in a fixed

position relative to the base component **154** when so tensioned. In the nail system **150**, this mechanism comprises a shoulder or wall **162** located on the underside of the nail component **152** that defines a recess **164** which a nose **166** of the base component **154** abuts or extends into and fits as the nail component **152** is positioned and flexed onto the top and in covering relation over of the base component **154**.

[0170] Views of just the nail component **152** of the interchangeable nail system **150** are shown in FIGS. **36-42**. In particular, FIG. **36** is an isometric view of the nail component **152** of the interchangeable nail system **150** of FIG. **29**; FIG. **37** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**; FIG. **38** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**; FIG. **39** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**; FIG. **40** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**; FIG. **41** is a top plan view of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**; and FIG. **42** is a bottom plan view of the nail component **152** of FIG. **36**.

[0171] Views of just the base component **154** of the interchangeable nail system **150** are shown in FIGS. **43-49**. In particular, FIG. **43** is an isometric view of the base component **154** of the interchangeable nail system **150** of FIG. **29**; FIG. **44** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component **154** of FIG. **43**; FIG. **45** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base nail component **154** of FIG. **43**; FIG. **46** is an elevational view of a front of the base component **154** of FIG. **43**; FIG. **47** is an elevational view of a back of the base component **154** of FIG. **43**; FIG. **48** is a top plan view of the base component **154** of FIG. **43**; and FIG. **49** is a bottom plan view of the base component **154** of FIG. **43**.

[0172] FIG. **50** is another view of the interchangeable nail system **150** like the view of FIG. **29**; and FIG. **51** is another elevational view of the second side of the interchangeable nail system **150** like the view of FIG. **30**. In contrast to the views of FIGS. **50** and **51**, FIG. **52** is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **150** as shown in FIG. **50**, and FIG. **53** is a widthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **150** as shown in FIG. **51**. Additionally, FIG. **54** is a lengthwise cross-sectional view of the interchangeable nail system **150** as shown in FIG. **50**.

Second Embodiment

[0173] FIGS. **55** and **56** each is an exploded view of a second preferred embodiment of another interchangeable nail system **200** in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention. FIG. **57** is a view of a base component **204** of the interchangeable nail system **200** adhered to a nail plate of a fingernail of a person's hand and ready to receive a nail component **202** of the interchangeably system **200**.

[0174] Additional views of the interchangeable nail system **200** are shown in FIGS. **58-63**. Specifically, FIG. **58** is a view of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIGS. **55-56**; FIG. **59** is atop plan view of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **60** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **61** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **62** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **63** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **64**; and FIG. **64** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**.

[0175] Views of the nail component **202** of the interchangeable nail system **200** are shown in FIGS. **65-71**. FIG. **65** is a view of a nail component **202** of the interchangeable nail system **200**; FIG. **66** is a top plan view of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**; FIG. **67** is a bottom plan view of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**; FIG. **68** is an elevational view of a first side of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**; FIG. **69** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**; FIG. **70** is an elevational view of a front of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**; and FIG. **71** is an elevational view of a back of the nail component **202** of FIG. **65**.

[0176] Views of the base component **204** of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58** are shown in FIGS. **67-52**. Specifically, FIG. **72** is a view of the base component **204** of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; FIG. **73** is a top plan view of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**; FIG. **74** is a bottom plan view of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**; FIG. **75** is an elevational view of a first side of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**; FIG. **76** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**; FIG. **77** is an elevational view of a front of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**; and FIG. **78** is an elevational view of a back of the base component **204** of FIG. **72**.

[0177] FIG. **79** is a view of a lower front side of the interchangeable nail system **200** of FIG. **58**; and FIG. **80** is a view of a lower front side of the nail component **202** of FIG. **79**.

[0178] As shown in the drawings, and like the interchangeable nail systems **100**,**150** disclosed above, the interchangeable nail system **200** comprises a nail component **202** and a base component **204** to which the nail component **202** is configured to attach, with the base component **204** being configured to attach to a nail plate (fingernail) of a person's digit, such as a finger or a thumb. The nail component **202** comprises an upper, outer nail surface **206** that covers the nail plate and base component **204** and that provides an overall desired aesthetic presentation when the nail component **202** is attached to the base component **204**.

[0179] The nail component **202** also preferably interlocks in its engagement with the base component **204** such that the nail component **202** does not inadvertently detach from the base component **204**. Furthermore, the nail component **202** and base component **204** are configured to be detachable from each other for interchanging the nail component **202** with one of a plurality of other nail components while the base component **202** remains attached to a person's nail plate. The other nail components preferably have the same structure for removably attaching to the base component **204** and differ in the outer surface appearance, whether in one or more of length, contour, color, or other aesthetic design feature.

[0180] As will be apparent from the foregoing disclosure and drawings, and unlike the interchangeable nail systems **100**,**150** in which the nail component fits over and snaps onto the base component **104** in a state of tension, the illustrated interchangeable nail system **200** includes a nail component **202** comprising rails or ribs **208** that are received within channels or slots **210** of the base component **204**. As illustrated in the drawings, the ribs **208** are located on opposite lateral sides of the nail component **202** and extend

from an interior surface thereof, and the slots **210** are located on opposite lateral sides of the base component **204** on an exterior of the base component **204**. The opposite lateral side slots **210** extend approximately half of the length L of the base component **204** from a front of the base component **204** toward a back of the base component **204**. Furthermore, a back of the nail component **202** slides onto a front of the base component **204** and over the base component **204** in covering relation thereto.

[0181] Alternatively, the nail component may include channels or slots, and the base component may include rails or ribs that are received within the channels or slots for sliding engagement of the nail component and the base component. The nail component also may slide onto the front of the base component toward the back of the base component, or the nail component may slide onto the back of the base component toward the front of the base component. In either scenario, the nail component still covers the base component with the outer surface of the nail component providing an overall desired aesthetic presentation when the nail component is attached to the base component. Still other alternatives include rotating or twisting the nail component into latching engagement with the base component.

[0182] Examples of such alternatives are disclosed in the appendices to the specification, incorporated herein by reference. In this regard, Appendix 1 discloses a nail component having three channels which receive in sliding engagement therein three rails of the base component when the nail component is slid onto the base component. This is also shown in Appendix 2, which includes photograms of a prototype that has been made. Appendix 2 further shows a nail component having a singular, centrally located channel within which a rail or rib of the base component is received when the nail component is slid onto the base component. Additional mechanisms for fastening or otherwise securing a nail component to a base component are disclosed in Appendix 3.

[0183] Returning to the interchangeable nail system **200** illustrated in the drawings, the base component **204** preferably includes a recess **212** in the top of the base component **204** that receives a downward extending protuberance **214** located on an underside of the nail component **202** that is received and seated within the recess **212** when the nail component **202** has been slid into a desired position on top of and in covering relation to the base component **204** for latching or locking engagement of the nail component **202** in said position relative to the base component **204**.

[0184] Moreover, in positioning the protuberance **214** within the recess **212**, the nail component **202** preferably requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component **204** as the protuberance **214** is slid in contact with and over a top surface of the base component **204** toward the desired position, of which tension at least some is maintained when the protuberance **214** is received within the recess **212** for fixing the nail component **202** on top of the base component **204**. The tension preferably results from a required flexion of the nail component **202** that is required in order for the ribs **208** to be received within the slots **210**. A snap or click may be heard or felt upon the protuberance **214** being received within the recess **212** as a result of such tension.

[0185] While not shown, a shallow groove may be provided along the top surface of the base component **204** for assisting in guiding of the protuberance **214** toward the recess **212** as the nail component **202** is slid on top of the base component **204** into the desired position.

Third Embodiment

[0186] A third preferred embodiment of an interchangeable nail system **300** in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention is represented in FIGS. **81-90**. Specifically, FIG. **81** is an exploded view showing a nail component **302** and a base component **304** of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **82** is a view of a bottom of the interchangeable nail system **300**; and FIG. **83** is a bottom plan view of a person's finger to which the interchangeable nail system **300** is adhered.

[0187] Additionally, FIG. **84** is a view of atop of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **85** is atop plan view of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **86** is a bottom plan view of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **87** is an elevational view of a first side of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **88** is an elevational view of a second, opposite side of the interchangeable nail system **300**; FIG. **89** is an elevational view of a front of the interchangeable nail system **300**; and FIG. **90** is an elevational view of a back of the interchangeable nail system **300**.

[0188] As shown in the drawings, the interchangeable nail system **300** comprises a nail component **302** having an upper, outer nail surface **306** and a base component **304**. The nail component **302** is configured to attach to the base component **304**, and the base component **304** is configured to attach to a nail plate of a person's digit, such as a finger. The nail component **302** comprises an upper, outer nail surface **306** that covers the nail plate and base component **304** and that provides an overall desired aesthetic presentation when the nail component **302** is attached to the base component **304**.

[0189] In accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention, the attachment of the nail component **302** to the base component **304**, and the attachment of the base component **304** to a nail plate, each is accomplished by providing the base component **104** with a double-sided adhesive such as a pad or strip that has oppositely facing adhesive surfaces.

[0190] In attaching the base component **304** to a nail plate, one adhesive surface of a pad or strip **386** (FIG. **82**) is adhered to a bottom surface **310** of the base component **304**. The oppositely facing adhesive side of the pad or strip is exposed by peeling away a cover **388** and adhered to the surface of the nail plate as indicated at **392** in FIG. **81**. In attaching the nail component **302** to the base component **304**, one adhesive surface of a pad or strip is adhered to a top surface of the base component **304**. When a nail component **302** is to be attached, a covering is peeled away from the oppositely facing adhesive surface as indicated at **394** in FIG. **81** and an underside of the nail component **302** is adhered thereto.

[0191] Additionally, the base component **304** comprises a pull tab **308** extending from and forming part of or being attached to the pad or strip on the bottom surface of the base component **304**. The pull tab **308** is configured to release attachment of the base component **304** to the nail plate. This occurs in response to the application of shear forces thereto resulting from the pulling of tab **308**. The pull tab **308** preferably extends beyond the nail plate, under the nail component **302**, when the nail system **300** is used as shown

in FIG. **83**, whereby the pull tab **308** is accessible when the nail system **300** is desired to be removed.

[0192] While it is acknowledged that the nail system **300** does not lend itself to the interchanging of a nail component with the same base component, the nail system nevertheless provides a convenient way to interchange nail components in use for altering a nail's aesthetic appearance by simply pulling the tab, removing the nail system, and installing a new nail system on the nail.

[0193] Additionally, or alternatively, a pull tab preferably is similarly configured to release the attachment of the base component to the nail component. It is also contemplated that, in situations in which a pad or strip is first attached to the underside of the nail component, the nail system **300** would indeed provide interchangeability, wherein the nail component could be interchanged with another nail component without changing the base component.

[0194] Exemplary such pull tabs used with adhesive pads or strips are similar to or the same as the structure and composition of those sold by the 3M Company under the registered trademark COMMAND. Moreover, it is believed that such nail systems provide a more enduring installation than conventional "press-on" nails.

Additional Embodiments

[0195] Additional preferred embodiments in accordance with aspects and features of the invention are disclosed in each of Appendix 1, Appendix 2, and Appendix 3, all the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. This disclosure includes, inter alia, embodiments in which a nail component is attached to a base component using one or more friction joints.

[0196] A prototype representing a preferred embodiment is shown in FIGS. **91-93**. Specifically, FIG. **91** is a top perspective view of the preferred prototype of an interchangeable nail system in accordance with one or more aspects and features of the invention, which has been reduced to practice. FIG. **92** is a bottom perspective view of the preferred prototype interchangeable nail system of FIG. **91**; and FIG. **93** is another bottom perspective view of the preferred prototype interchangeable nail system of FIG. **91**, wherein the nail component is removably attached to the base component.

[0197] Based on the foregoing description, it will be readily understood by those persons skilled in the art that the invention has broad utility and application. Many embodiments and adaptations of the invention other than those specifically described herein, as well as many variations, modifications, and equivalent arrangements, will be apparent from or reasonably suggested by the invention and the foregoing descriptions thereof, without departing from the substance or scope of the invention.

[0198] Thus, for example, a kit is contemplated within the scope of the invention in which a plurality of nail components with different aesthetic appearances are provided, and in which a plurality of base members for attachment of the nail components are provided, the number of nail components exceeding the number of base components by two, three, four, or five times (the additional base components being unnecessary since the nail components are interchangeable with each other).

[0199] Accordingly, while the invention has been described herein in detail in relation to one or more preferred embodiments, it is to be understood that this disclosure is only illustrative and exemplary of the invention and is made merely for the purpose of providing a full and enabling disclosure of the invention. The foregoing disclosure is not intended to be construed to limit the invention or otherwise exclude any such other embodiments, adaptations, variations, modifications or equivalent arrangements, the invention being limited only by the claims appended hereto and the equivalents thereof.

1. A nail system comprising:
(a) a nail component; and
(b) a base component;
(c) wherein the nail component is configured to attach to the base component, and the base component is configured to attach to a nail plate of a person's digit; and
(d) wherein the nail component comprises an upper, outer nail surface that is configured to cover a nail plate and the base component for providing a desired aesthetic presentation of the digit when the nail component is attached to the base component and the base component is attached to the nail plate.

2. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the base component comprises a recess within which a protuberance of the nail component is received.

3. The nail system of claim **2**, wherein when positioning the protuberance within the recess, the nail component requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component, which tension is maintained when the protuberance is received within the recess for attachment of the nail component in a fixed disposition on top of the base component.

4. The nail system of claim **3**, wherein the nail component defines a recess within which a front of the base component is received for retaining the nail component in a fixed position relative to the base component.

5. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component is configured to detach from the base component for use of the nail component with another base component.

6. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component is configured to detach from the base component while the base component remains attached to a nail plate for interchanging the nail component with another nail component having a different aesthetic appearance.

7. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the different aesthetic appearance comprises a difference in one or more of length, contour, color, or material.

8. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component interlocks in its attachment with the base component.

9. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component is placed on top of and latches in tension onto the base component.

10. The nail system of claim **1**, further comprising an adhesive pad or strip for attaching the base component to a nail plate.

11. The nail system of claim **10**, wherein the adhesive pad or strip comprises a pull tab for releasing attachment of the adhesive pad or strip.

12. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component is mechanically latched or locked to the base component.

13. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component is attached to the base component through a friction joint.

14. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein the nail component fits over and snaps onto the base component.

15-25. (canceled)

26. The nail system of claim **1**, wherein one of the nail component and base component comprises one or more recesses and the other of the nail component and the base components comprises one or more protuberances each being received in a said recess when the nail component has been positioned on top of and in covering relation to the base component for latching or locking engagement of the nail component in said position relative to the base component.

27. The nail system of claim **26**, wherein, in positioning a said protuberance within a said recess, the nail component requires a degree of flexion or bending that creates tension in the nail component, of which tension at least some is maintained when the protuberance is received within the recess for retaining the nail component in fixed position on top of the base component.

28. The nail system of claim **26**, wherein a snap or click is generated upon the protuberance being received within the recess because of said tension.

29. The nail system of claim **26**, wherein a shallow groove assists in guiding of the protuberance toward the recess as the nail component is positioned on top of the base component into the fixed position.

30-50. (canceled)

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