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(54) **EASY SLIP SHOE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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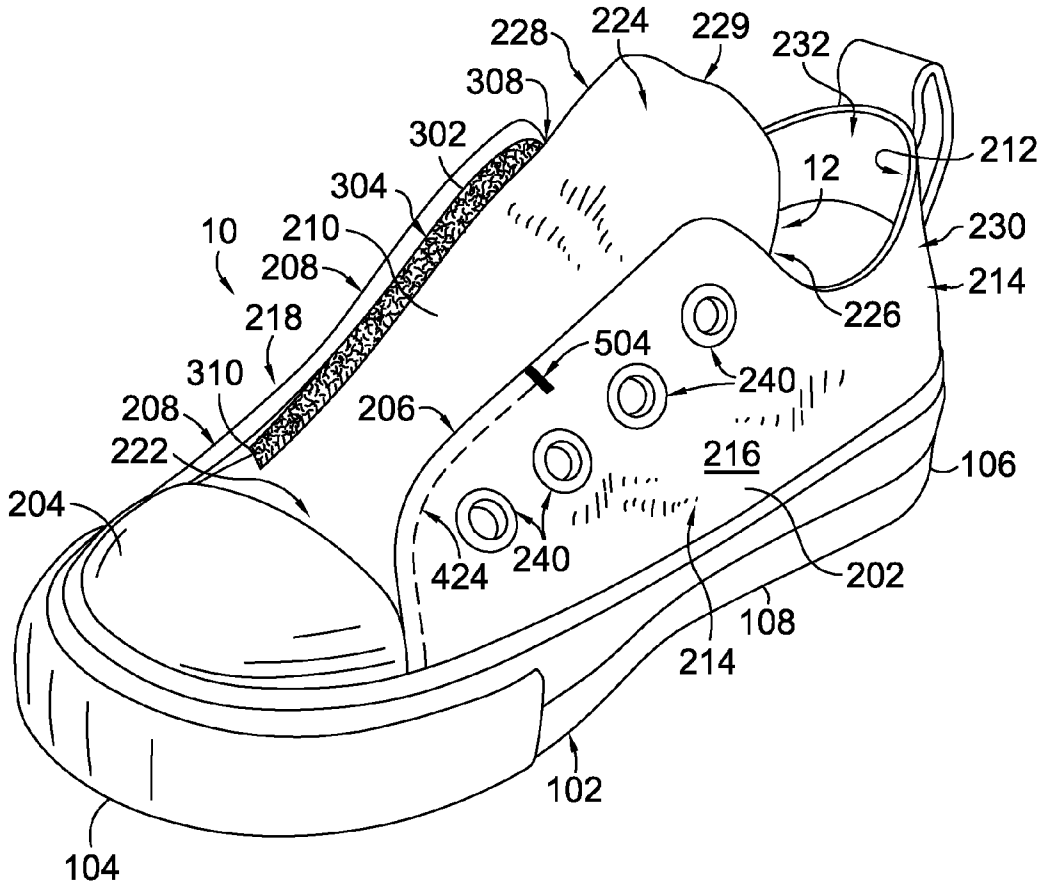
Embodiments of the present invention relate to a construction of a shoe that includes a tongue that has a first fastener attached along a portion of either a medial side or a lateral side of the tongue. Additionally, a stretchable member is attached near a portion of the medial side or the lateral side of the tongue that is opposite of the first fastener. The first fastener is attachable to the upper near the location of the first fastener on the tongue. Similarly, the stretchable member is attached to the upper near the location of the stretchable member on the tongue.

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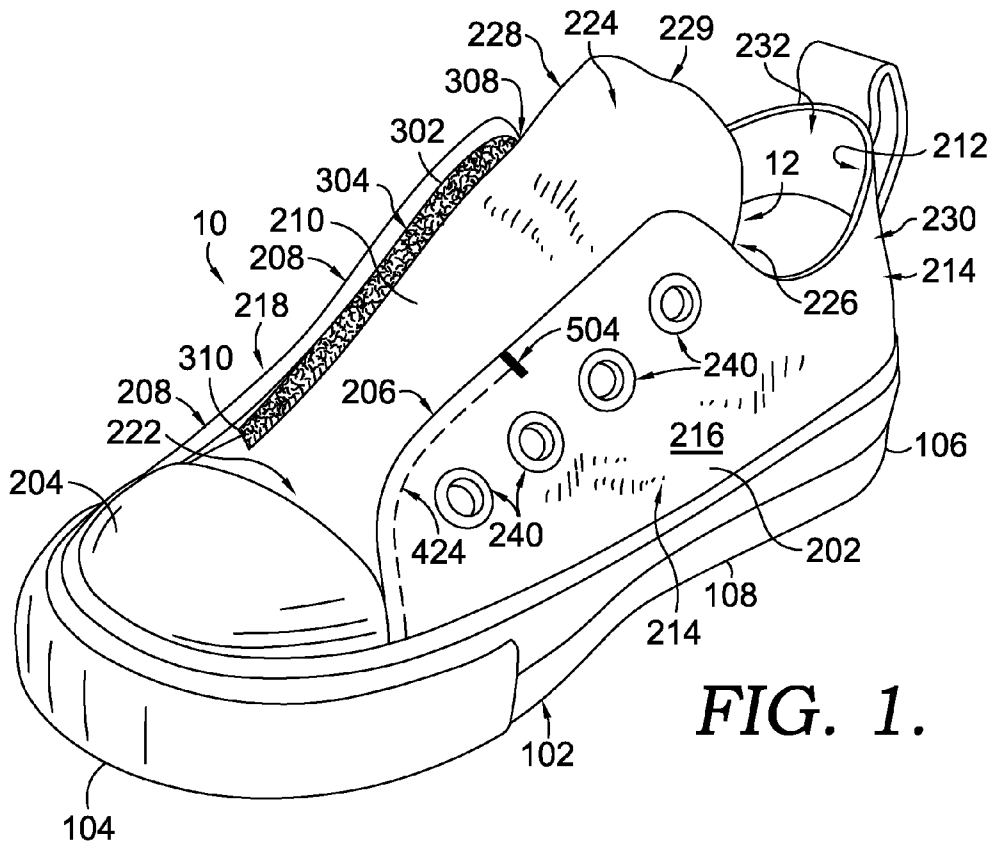


FIG. 1.

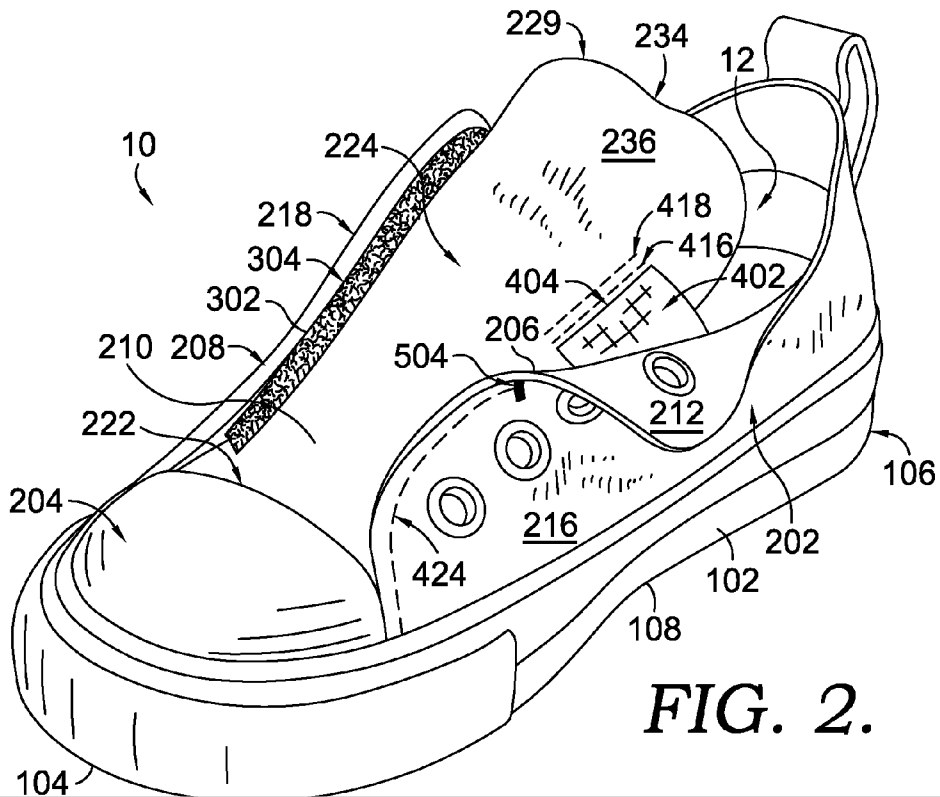


FIG. 2.

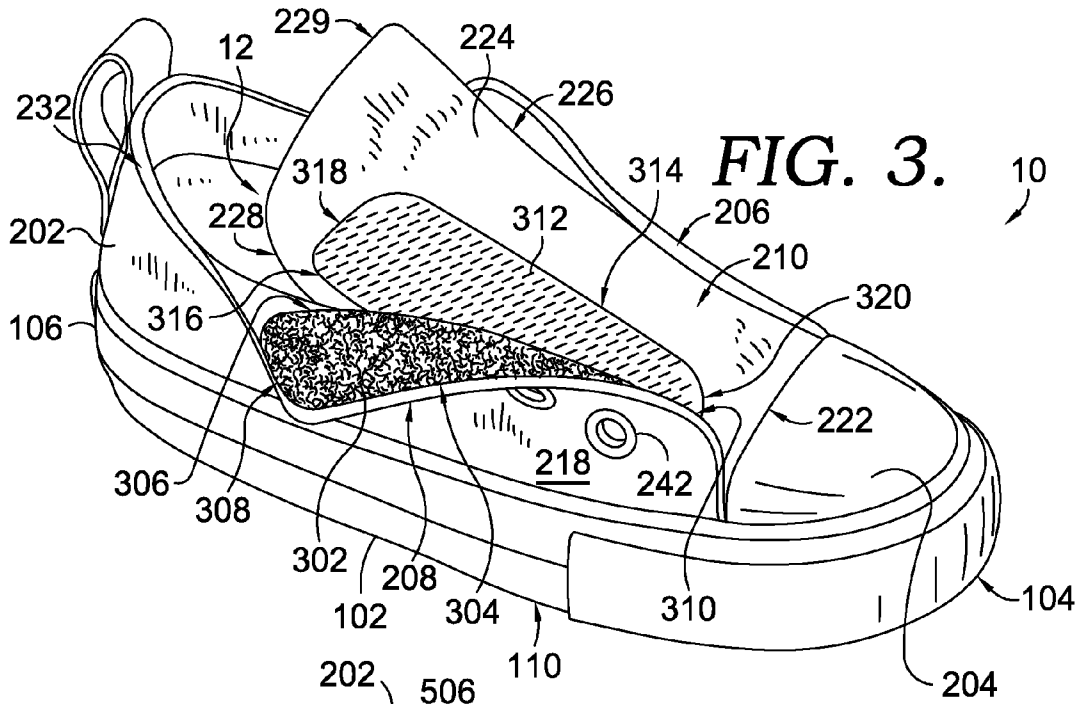


FIG. 3.

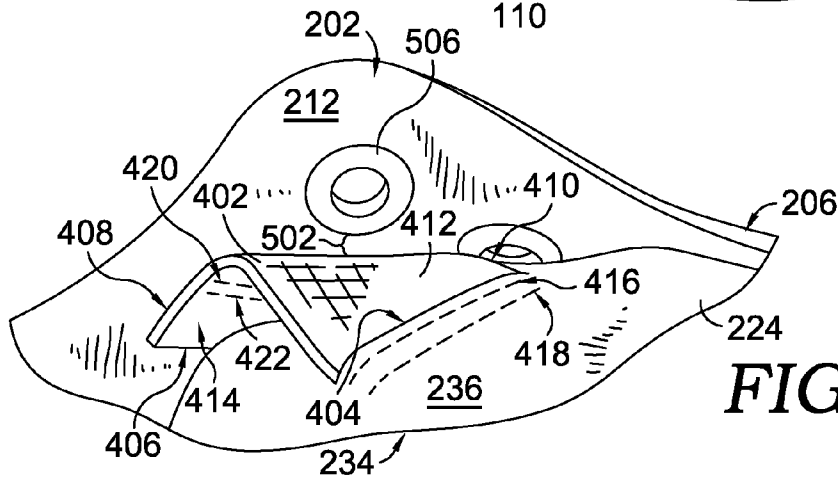


FIG. 4.

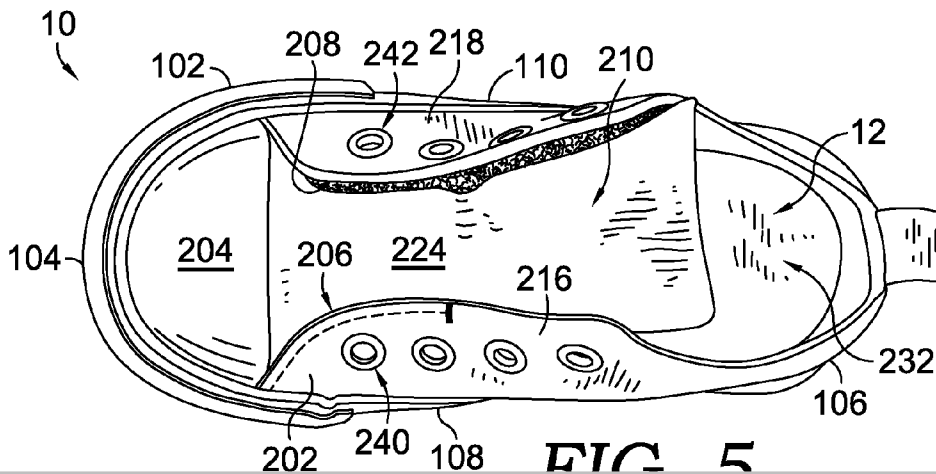


FIG. 5.

## EASY SLIP SHOE

### BACKGROUND

**[0001]** An athletic style shoe typically relies on a lacing structure to securely maintain the shoe to a wearer's foot. However, lacing materials may not be suitable or preferred by some wearers of the shoe. Consequently, a shoe may be designed to allow a wearer to slip into the shoe without adjusting laces. Unfortunately, traditional shoes may not securely fit to a wearer's foot if a forefoot opening and/or an ankle opening are maintained, in an as-worn position, large enough for a foot to be received. As a result, hook and loop materials may be utilized, in place of traditional lacing, to tighten a shoe to a wearer's foot. However, the hook and loop material may unintentionally detach from one another when a force is exerted by the foot within the shoe that exceeds the bonding force of the hook and loop material. This may also cause the shoe to not securely fit to the wearer's foot.

### SUMMARY

**[0002]** Embodiments of the present invention relate to a construction of a shoe that includes a tongue that has a first fastener attached along a portion of either a medial side or a lateral side. The shoe also includes a stretchable member that is attached near a portion of the medial side or the lateral side of the tongue. The stretchable member is attached to the side of the tongue that is opposite of the first fastener. The first fastener is attachable to the upper near the location of the first fastener on the tongue. Similarly, the stretchable member is attachable to the upper near the location of the stretchable member on the tongue.

**[0003]** This Summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description. This Summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

**[0004]** Illustrative embodiments of the present invention are described in detail below with reference to the attached drawing figures, which are incorporated by reference herein and wherein:

**[0005]** FIG. 1 depicts an exemplary shoe, in accordance with embodiments of the present invention;

**[0006]** FIG. 2 depicts a medial view of an exemplary shoe with a stretchable member attached to a tongue and an upper, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0007]** FIG. 3 depicts a lateral view of an exemplary shoe with a first fastener affixed to a tongue and a second fastener affixed to an upper, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0008]** FIG. 4 depicts a stretchable member affixed to both a tongue and an upper, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention; and

**[0009]** FIG. 5 depicts a top view of an exemplary shoe, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

**[0010]** The subject matter of embodiments of the present

intended to limit the scope of this patent. Rather, the inventors have contemplated that the claimed subject matter might also be embodied in other ways, to include different elements or combinations of elements similar to the ones described in this document, in conjunction with other present or future technologies.

**[0011]** Embodiments of the present invention relate to a construction of a shoe that includes a tongue that has a first fastener attached along a portion of either a medial side or a lateral side. The tongue also has a stretchable member that is attached near a portion of the medial side or the lateral side opposite of the first fastener. The first fastener is attachable to the upper proximate the location of the first fastener on the tongue. Similarly, the stretchable member is attachable to the upper proximate the location of the stretchable member on the tongue.

**[0012]** Accordingly, in one aspect, the present invention provides a shoe construction. The shoe construction has a sole with a toe end and an opposite heel end. The sole also has opposite medial and lateral sides extending between the toe end and the heel end. The shoe construction also includes an upper of flexible material that is attached to the sole. The upper extends upwardly from the sole to an upper top edge. The upper top edge defines a forefoot opening and an ankle opening into an interior of the shoe. Additionally, the shoe construction includes a tongue of flexible material. The tongue has opposite medial and lateral sides along a length that extends upwardly from the sole to a distal end of the tongue positioned at the ankle opening. Further, the tongue has a first fastener attached along a portion of either the medial side or the lateral side. The tongue also has a stretchable member attached proximate a portion of the other of the medial side or the lateral side. The first fastener and the stretchable member are attachable to the upper near their respective locations on the tongue.

**[0013]** In another aspect, the present invention provides another shoe construction. The shoe construction includes a sole having a toe end and an opposite heel end. The sole also has opposite medial and lateral sides that extend between the toe end and the heel end. Further, the shoe construction includes an upper of flexible material attached to the sole. The upper extends upwardly from the sole to an upper top edge. The upper top edge defines a forefoot opening and an ankle opening into an interior of the shoe. The shoe construction also includes apertures arranged in a line along a medial side of the forefoot opening as well as apertures arranged in a line along a lateral side of the forefoot opening. The shoe construction also includes a tongue of flexible material having opposite medial and lateral sides along a length that extends from the sole to a distal end of the tongue positioned at the ankle opening. The tongue has a hook or a loop material attached along a portion of either the medial side or the lateral side. The upper has the other of the hook or the loop material attached along a portion of the forefoot opening. The tongue and the upper are temporarily affixable together by the hook and the loop materials. The tongue also has a stretchable member attached near a portion of the medial side or the lateral side opposite to that which the hook or loop material is attached. The stretchable member is also attached to the upper.

**[0014]** A third aspect of the present invention provides an additional embodiment of a shoe construction. The shoe con-

lateral sides extending between the toe end and the heel end. The shoe construction also includes an upper of flexible material attached to the sole. The upper extends upwardly from the sole to an upper top edge. The upper top edge defines a forefoot opening and an ankle opening into an interior of the shoe. The upper also has an inner surface and an opposite outer surface. The shoe construction also includes a tongue of flexible material. The tongue has opposite medial and lateral sides along a length that extends from the sole to a distal end of the tongue positioned at the ankle opening. The tongue has an inner surface and an opposite outer surface. The tongue has a hook or a loop material attached along a portion of the outer surface near the lateral side. The upper includes the other of the hook or the loop material attached along the inner surface near a portion of the forefoot opening. The tongue and the upper are temporarily affixable together by the hook and the loop materials. The shoe construction also has a stretchable member with an end affixed to the inner surface of the tongue. The stretchable member extends through an opening of the tongue near the medial side of the tongue. The end of the stretchable member is attached closer to the distal end of the tongue than a location where the upper is affixed to the tongue along the medial side near the forefoot opening. Additionally, a second end of the stretchable member is affixed to the inner surface of the upper.

[0015] Having briefly described an overview of embodiments of the present invention, a more detailed description follows.

[0016] The construction of a slip athleisure shoe 10 of the present invention has the basic construction of a traditional basketball-type shoe. However, the slip athleisure shoe 10 is comprised of a first fastener 312 attached to the tongue and a second fastener 302 attached to the upper 202, as best seen in FIG. 3. The first fastener 312 and the second fastener 302 are capable of coupling together, which allows the tongue 224 to affix to the upper 202 along at least one side of the tongue 224. Additionally, the slip athleisure shoe 10 is comprised of a stretchable member 402, as best seen in FIG. 2. The stretchable member is attached to the tongue 224 and the upper 202. When used in combination, the first fastener 312/second fastener 302 and the stretchable member 402 provide an effective and convenient closure mechanism for securing the athleisure shoe 10 to a wearer, as will be discussed in more detail hereinafter.

[0017] In embodiments, the shoe 10 is a low-top basketball-style shoe. However, it should be understood that the novel concept of the invention could be employed on other types of shoes (e.g., high-top, infant, toddler, children, adult, cross-training, running, lifting, and the like). Because much of the construction of the shoe 10 is the same as that of a conventional shoe, the conventional features of the constructions will be described only generally herein.

[0018] The shoe 10 has a shoe sole 102 that is constructed of resilient materials that are typically employed in the construction of soles of athletic shoes. The sole 102 can be constructed with an outsole, a midsole, and an insert, as is conventional. The shoe sole 102 has a bottom surface that functions as the traction surface of the shoe, and an opposite top surface in the interior 12 of the shoe 10. The size of the shoe 10 has a length that extends from a rear sole heel end 106 to a front toe end 104 of the sole 102. As best seen in FIG. 5,

[0019] The shoe 10 also is constructed with the upper 202. The upper 202 is secured to the sole 102 and extends upwardly from the shoe sole, such as the sole top surface. The upper 202 is constructed of a flexible material, for example leather, polymer, or a fabric such as canvas. The upper 202 is constructed with a heel portion 230 that extends around the sole 102 at the sole heel end 106. The upper heel portion 230 extends upwardly from the shoe sole 102 to an ankle opening 232. The ankle opening 232 provides access to the shoe interior. The upper has an interior surface 212 and an exterior surface 214. The interior surface 212 is traditionally exposed to the wearer's foot or other garments (e.g., socks). The exterior surface 214 is traditionally exposed to the outside environment and may define a portion of the exterior of the shoe 10.

[0020] From the heel portion 230, the upper 202 has a medial side portion 216 and a lateral side portion 218 that extend along the respective sole medial side 108 and the sole lateral side 110. The upper medial side portion 216 extends upwardly from the sole medial side 108 to an upper medial side edge 206. The upper lateral side portion 218 extends upwardly from the sole lateral side 110 to an upper lateral side edge 208. As illustrated in the figures, the upper medial side edge 206 and the upper lateral side edge 208 extend rearwardly from opposite sides of the front toe end 104 of the sole 102. As best seen in FIG. 1, the length of the upper medial side edge 206 and the upper lateral side edge 208 define a forefoot opening 220 in the upper 202 that opens to the shoe interior 12.

[0021] The upper 202 is also constructed with a toe box 204 that extends around and across the sole top surface at the sole toe end 104. The toe box 204 is connected between the upper medial side portion 216 and the upper lateral side portion 218 and encloses a portion of the shoe interior 12 adjacent the sole toe end 104. The upper medial side edge 206 and the upper lateral side edge 208 extend rearwardly from the toe box 204.

[0022] A first plurality of apertures 240 are provided on the upper medial side portion 216 and a second plurality of apertures 242 are provided on the upper lateral side portion 218. The apertures 240 and 242 are lacing openings in an exemplary embodiment. A lacing opening is an opening that is typically occupied by a portion of a fastener, such as lacing that close the shoe upper over the forefoot opening of the shoe. The apertures 240 and 242 may provide any type of lacing openings on the shoe, for example, D-rings or speed lacing hooks. However, in an exemplary embodiment, the apertures 240 and 242 are an eyelet or grommet style aperture. The apertures 240 and 242 are arranged in lines along the upper medial side portion 216 and the upper lateral side portion 218, as is conventional. As illustrated in the figures, the apertures 240 and 242, in an exemplary embodiment, extend substantially the entire length of the upper medial side edge 206 and the upper lateral side edge 208. It is contemplated that a lacing material is not utilized with embodiments of the shoe; instead, the various other closure mechanism discussed herein may provide a desired method of securing the shoe to a wearer's foot.

[0023] The shoe upper 202 includes a vamp 222 or a throat positioned rearwardly of the toe box 204, and a tongue 224 that extends rearwardly from the vamp 222 through the forefoot opening 210. The tongue 224 extends along the lengths of the upper medial side portion 216 and the upper lateral side

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