



Step-by-step guide to making your own face mask

Current advice from a host of countries is that wearing of facemasks is mandatory in a variety of situations. Below is advice on how to make some simple facemasks at home.

People across the country now have to wear face coverings in certain circumstances when out of the house, to help limit the spread of coronavirus. In England it is compulsory to wear one on public transport and in shops.

While medical face masks and respirators are prioritised for health and care workers, you might want to try making your own face covering, wherever you live.

Here's our guide to different types and step-by-step instructions on how to make them.

Whether you're handy with a sewing machine, like cutting up old t-shirts or just want a quick fix, the principles are the same: the more layers of material the better, and the mask needs to fit snugly around the face, and you should be able to breathe comfortably.

One study has shown that the best materials to use are tightly woven cottons or twill, natural silk or quilted cotton material. But you can also make do with what you have around your home.

1. No sewing necessary

The one with the bandana: Folding cloth and elastic bands

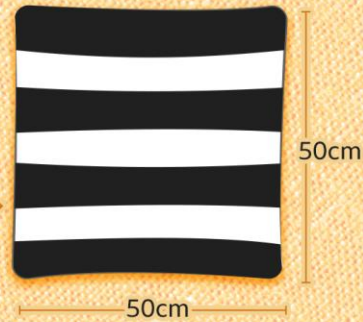


Materials

2.5cm = 1 inch

Elastic bands
(or hair ties)

Bandana, handkerchief

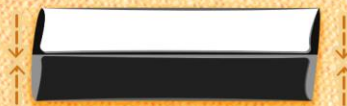


Start

Lay the cloth out flat



Fold in half



Fold top third down, fold
bottom up to meet it



12cm

Thread through two elastic bands,
12 cm apart



Fold each side to the middle
and tuck into the folds



2. Our next example uses an old t-shirt, preferably thick cotton or a cotton and polyester mix. And still nothing to sew.

The one with the t-shirt:

Cut up t-shirt* and pin together



Materials

T-shirt Scissors Kitchen towel Pins

Start

Draw pattern across arms and body of t-shirt

Cut along pattern so you have two layers from front and back of t-shirt

Pin one side

Insert non-woven fabric material, coffee filter, paper towel

Pin other side

Tie at back so it is tight across nose and tight under chin

*Always ask the t-shirt owner's permission


Source: New York Times

BBC

3. The sewing challenge

Our third example needs a few stitches, but they can be as simple or as complicated as you like - as long as it all holds in place and survives a few washes.

The one that needs sewing
Hand sew or machine sew hems



Materials

- Cloth
- Needle and thread
- Scissors
- Elastic (15cm)
- Kitchen towel

Start

Cut two cloth rectangles 25cmx15cm

Place on top of each other, lengthways

Fold over the top of the fabric 0.6cm and stitch all the way across


Fold the bottom up and stitch 2.5cm inwards from the edge on either side - this will create a filter pocket

Fold the shorter sides in about 1cm and stitch - leaving a gap to thread elastic

Thread a 15cm piece of elastic through the hem on one side and tie the ends. Repeat on the other side

Put kitchen paper inside pocket as filter

Gather the side of the mask on the elastic and adjust so the mask fits your face. Then, stitch the elastic in place.



Source: CDC

BBC

How to wear your mask

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth at all times
- Store used face coverings in a plastic bag until you have an opportunity to wash them
- Wash a face covering regularly - it can go in with other laundry, using your normal detergent
- [VIDEO: How to wear a face covering safely](#)
- [Foggy glasses, recycling, kids: Your guide to wearing a mask](#)

Homemade masks are not necessarily intended to help the wearer, the government says, but they could help stop you inadvertently passing on the disease to others if you have it but are not showing symptoms.

The government advises washing your hands or using hand sanitiser before putting on and after taking off face coverings.

If you do have coronavirus symptoms - such as a high temperature or continuous cough, you should stay indoors and isolate at home.

Whichever face covering you use, they are not a substitute for other lockdown rules. Hand hygiene especially is just as important as before - so washing your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds when you get home.

There are plenty of other ways to make a face covering - and many examples on social media from professional, designer logo'd masks to cut-up sports socks.

[UK government: How to make a face covering](#)

Have fun giving them a go. Remember you might need more than one, so you have something to use while the other is being washed. Face coverings should not be used for children under the age of two years or people who might not be able to fit them correctly.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52609777>