

# Homemade Cloth Masks

## About Homemade Cloth Masks

There is a shortage of masks in the United States to protect against the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Medical-grade masks must be saved for health care workers, first responders, and caregivers of patients with the virus.

Volunteers in our area have stepped up to make homemade cloth masks for people who might need them. Use any cloth mask as recommended and at your own risk.

## Who May Need a Mask?

Anyone can catch this virus. Wearing a mask may protect you and others. But you may really need a mask if...

- **You live with or are caring for a high-risk person who:**
  - Is a senior or has a chronic illness or is frail
  - Has tested positive for coronavirus
  - Has been told to self-quarantine
  - Has coughing or fever or is short of breath
- **You have symptoms that could be due to coronavirus.** It is wise for both you and those caring for you to wear masks while you wait for medical advice.
- **You have coronavirus or you are waiting for test results.** You should self-quarantine and wear your mask. Anyone you live with should wear a mask too.
- **You are working face to face with the public.** Wearing a mask at work may be wise. Two examples are grocery store checkers and pharmacy staff.

## Some Questions and Answers:

### Are these official medical masks?

No. These are not official medical masks. No one knows how well they compare to medical masks in protecting you from getting or spreading the coronavirus. But recently the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) stated that they are likely better than no protection at all.

### If I wear my mask, do I still have to practice physical distancing?

Yes. Even if you wear your mask you still need to practice physical distancing. Aim to stay 6 or more feet away from anyone you do not live with. If you live with or are caring for someone who is at high risk, be sure to wear your mask when you are in the same room.

### Can I wear my mask by itself? Or do I need something else?

You can wear your mask by itself. To protect yourself more, you can use a filter that you insert into the mask's sleeve. You can cut your own filters from unused vacuum cleaner bags, unused furnace filters, or clean fabric.

## **Wear and Care of Your Cloth Mask**

### **How to Put on Your Clean Mask:**

- First, wash your hands very well with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Gently fit the mask over the bridge of your nose. Be sure it covers your mouth and as much of your cheeks and chin as possible.
- Fasten the ties around your ears and the back of your head.

### **How to Take Off Your Mask After Wearing It:**

- Take your mask off by the ties. Do not touch the front part that covers your nose and mouth.
- Set the mask aside where others cannot touch it.
- Wash your hands very well with soap and water for 20 seconds.

### **How to Clean Your Mask After Each Day You Use It:**

By hand:

- Wash your mask in a sink with soap in hot water.
- If you are using a filter, wash it separately in the same way.
- Rinse well with hot water.
- Air dry the mask and filter out of reach of others.
- Clean the sink with hot water and soap.
- Wash your hands again with soap and water for 20 seconds.

By washing machine:

- If you are using a *filter*, remove it. Wash it by hand and air-dry it.
- Wash your *mask* with other laundry using laundry detergent.
- After washing, air dry it or use the dryer on hot.
- Always wash your hands well after handling laundry.

NEVER let others touch your mask or filter - whether clean or used!

### **Cloth Mask Questions and Answers:**

#### **Is it safe to touch my mask when I am wearing it?**

No. DO NOT touch your mask when you are wearing it. It is just like your face. Keep your fingers away.

#### **Can I share my mask with others?**

No. DO NOT share your mask with others or let others touch it. It is not safe.

These instructions were written by GORGE MAKERS COLLECTIVE which can be found on Facebook and Instagram. For more information you may e-mail [gorgemakerscollective@gmail.com](mailto:gorgemakerscollective@gmail.com). If you can't access the internet you may call and leave a message at (541) 362-4183.