

Guidelines for Masks

What masks are best to wear?

- The Centers for Disease Control recommends wearing masks with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- A Duke University study published in August found masks made of polypropylene did well in protecting against the virus, as did various kinds of double-layer cotton masks.
- The CDC does not recommend the use of gaiters or face shields. [The Duke University study](#) found that gaiters made from a polyester and spandex blend were not effective in blocking coronavirus droplets; the study tested 14 different face masks or mask materials. Tests of face shields have shown that they are not effective at blocking aerosolized droplets due to the open sides and bottom. (An interesting [visualization video on Live Science](#) website)
- Do not wear masks intended for healthcare workers, for example, N95 respirators.
- Do not wear masks made of material that makes it difficult to breathe, for example vinyl.
- Do not wear masks that have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape.

Source: [CDC](#)

Wearing Your Mask Properly

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing.

Source: [CDC](#)

Caring for Your Mask

- It's important to clean your mask after each use, but there are different ways to do that.
- Wash in a washing machine, using regular detergent, or by hand, preparing a bleach solution.
- Dry in a dryer, using the highest heat setting, or air dry by lying flat, in direct sunlight if possible.

Source: [CDC](#)

Related Articles About Masks

[New York Times, Face Shields and Valved Masks Offer More Comfort but Less Protection, Sept. 1](#)

[News & Observer, Which masks best stop the spread of COVID-19? Duke researchers test, Aug. 10](#)

[New York Times, Does Wearing A Mask Protect Me? Growing Evidence Says Yes, July 27](#)

[Additional CDC Guidance](#)

[Johns Hopkins Medicine, How to Properly Wear a Face Mask](#)

[Mayo Clinic, COVID-19: How much protection do face masks offer, July 17](#)

[The Atlantic, Paging Dr. Hamblin: Is a Bandanna a Mask?, July 22](#)