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# HOMEMADE FACEMASK GUIDE

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Curtesy of Mat-Su Services for Children and Adults



MARCH 4, 2020

MSSCA

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## **SEWING COMMUNITY UNITE!**



Do you have sewing skills? Need a reason to learn some sewing skills? Stuck at home looking for a project to help your community? Can't find a mask to help protect yourself and others from spreading communicable germs? For these reasons and many more we have put together this resource guide for making homemade face masks. MSSCA needs your help to support our staff, consumers, and community.

These masks are washable in hot water so they can be reused and sterilized many times. Make them for yourself, family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. You can also donate masks to local businesses, medical clinics, hospitals, and so many more that are in desperate need due to the shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Remember you can have so much fun picking out patterned cloth to make the masks fun and cheerful in this stressful time. Involve those bored kiddos and have them help make masks for themselves and other kids. Thank you in advance to everyone who makes even just one mask!

So gather those materials, ready the needles, and start your sewing machines!



## Preface:

This guide contains tips and tricks for a homemade solution to the need or desire of wearing a facemask. As of the writing of this guide the CDC has recommended that the general public should wear a facemask when out in public due to the fact that people who are pre-symptomatic as well as those who are asymptomatic (those who have the virus but lack the symptoms) can innocently spread the virus to others. The following excerpt was pulled directly from the CDC website article concerning their recommendation to wear cloth facemasks:

"[CDC recommends](#) wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), **especially** in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance."

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>



**Disclaimer:** Wearing a facemask will **NOT** protect you from contracting the COVID-19 virus. However, it will **help you protect others** by reducing the risk of spreading the virus if you happen to be a possible carrier.

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# What You Need To Know About Facemasks

## How to Wear Them:

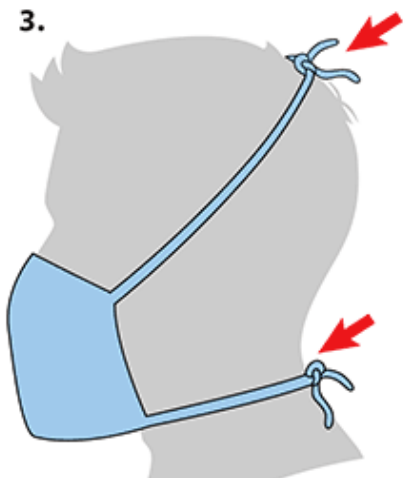
There is a wide variety of type of facemasks that can be made at home and just as many ways to wear and improve those masks. This guide is not a comprehensive collection of the different mask available. Our main purpose is to give you options and information so you can pick a mask that works best for you and anyone you are helping make masks for.

There are to different ways of securing a face mask to your head and it differs based on the type of mask you have selected to make.

Many masks that use elastic are looped on each end and designed to use your ears as a method of securing the mask to your face (Figure 1).



Figure 1



Other masks are made to tie behind your head. Figure 2 shows a common way of wearing that type securely. These types of masks are usually preferred as they can easily be adjusted for a secure fit on the user. The ties on this type of mask can also be tied so that you can secure behind the ear as in Figure 1.

Figure 2

## Different Types & Styles:

Below are some different homemade versions of the two different mask types. Figures 3, 4 & 5 show masks that are designed to be secured behind the ear of the wearer. The masks in Figures 3 & 4 are made with cotton fabric and a sewing machine. Figure 5 is a no-sew option made from a bandana and elastic hair ties.



Figure 4



Figure 3



Figure 5

The next style of masks are the tie behind types. Figure 6 was made using a sewing machine and bias tape. Figure 7 is just a cut out from a T-Shirt.



Figure 7



Figure 6

There are few things to keep in mind when selecting the type of mask you want:

- **The Fit:** you want to be sure it's comfortable to wear for the amount of time you will be needing to use it for and that it can fit snugly enough to keep your germs to yourself
- **Layers:** the more layers your mask has the better it's filtering properties. Some styles of masks have pockets for inserting filters to make a better barrier to trap germs.
- **Materials:** Look to see what you have on hand at your house. The type of cloth that works best is 100% cotton. If you have sewing materials dig them out and take inventory of the stuff you have before trying to get all new materials. Filters can be made out of coffee filters, tissues, or even extra material
- **Breathability:** Remember before you go too heavy duty on the materials that the wearer needs to be able to breathe through the mask. If they can't get air then they won't wear the mask and it does no go then.

### **How to Clean Masks:**

Because the masks are made of cotton material they are very easy to sterilize. Just toss it in the washing machine on the hottest water setting you have. If you have laundry sanitizing detergent that also helps provide that extra level of cleanliness. Just keep in mind if you use any laundry soap that there are people sensitive to scents and chemicals, so if you plan on donating any mask make sure to avoid using products with scents and stick to hypo-allergenic cleaners.

After the masks are washed you can line dry or better yet stick them into a hot dryer, and while they are still warm put them into plastic baggies to keep them sanitized until they are ready for use. Make sure when you handle the sanitized masks you have clean hands and are wearing gloves so you don't contaminate them unless you are the one wearing it.

### **Donating:**

There are many places seeking donated masks to give to people in need and there are programs from businesses seeking help in assembling masks. Give a call to the local craft stores such as Joann's, and any small business craft store that normally stocks materials

that masks are made out of to see how you can help as they will give you details on how many masks they need and how to donate them once you complete them, and the national chains are creating kits you can volunteer to pick up and make masks out of if you have the skills.

Check out these websites for more information:

[www.joann.com/make-to-give-response/](http://www.joann.com/make-to-give-response/)

[www.matsugov.us/news/donations-needed-ppe-home-made-masks](http://www.matsugov.us/news/donations-needed-ppe-home-made-masks)



## Where to Find or Buy Resources:

### Materials List:

The following is a list of materials you can buy or may have lying around the house that can be used to construct a homemade facemask.

- 100% cotton cloth- this can come from bed sheets, t-shirts, etc,
- Elastic bands-Rubber bands, hair ties, sewing elastic
- Bandanas and handkerchiefs



- Coffee filters (for filtering air instead of water)
- Bias Tape
- Sewing Machine
- Thread
- Bendable wire (can be wire cloths hanger or similar metal, this is used to shape the nose part of the mask so you get a better fit over the face)
- Scissors

### **Stores with Materials:**

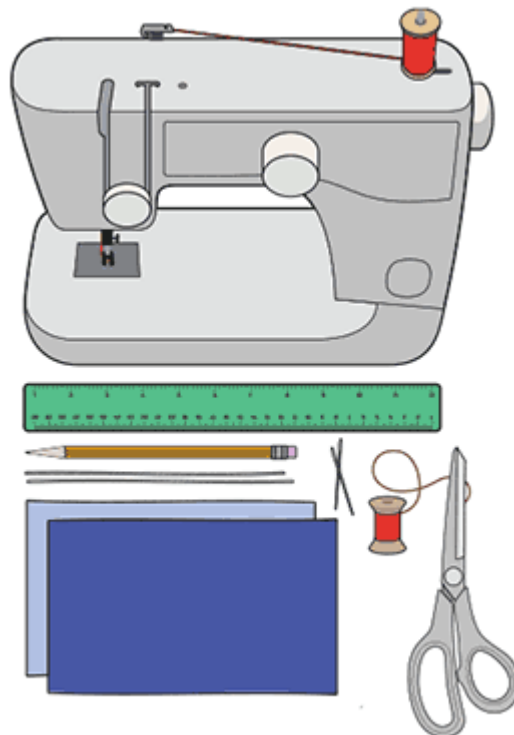
- Walmart-craft section
- Joann's-Place an online order or call ahead
- Michael's-Place an online order
- Amazon-Shipping and stock levels may vary

## **Sewing A Mask**

You have the type of mask you want to make in mind, you've gathered the materials and you have chosen to sew the mask. So then the next and first step in any sewing project is to have a pattern. We have gathered a few recommended patterns for making some of the types of masks mentioned in this guide. The following patterns were provided online via the CDC and Joann's Fabrics. Pick your favorite and follow the steps below.

### **CDC Pattern:**

#### **Sewn Cloth Face Covering**



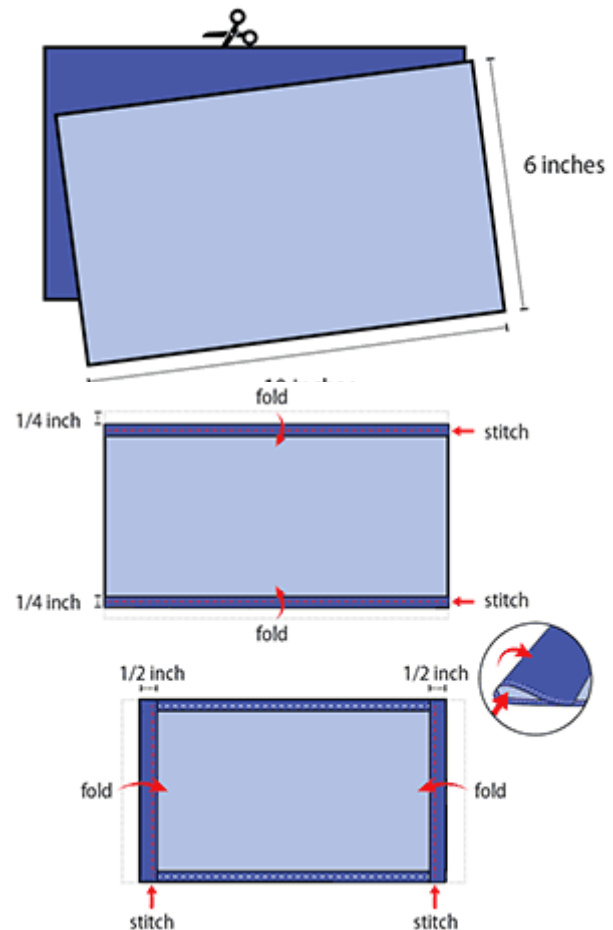
## Materials

- Two 10"x6" rectangles of cotton fabric
- Two 6" pieces of elastic (or rubber bands, string, cloth strips, or hair ties)
- Needle and thread (or bobby pin)
- Scissors
- Sewing machine

## Tutorial

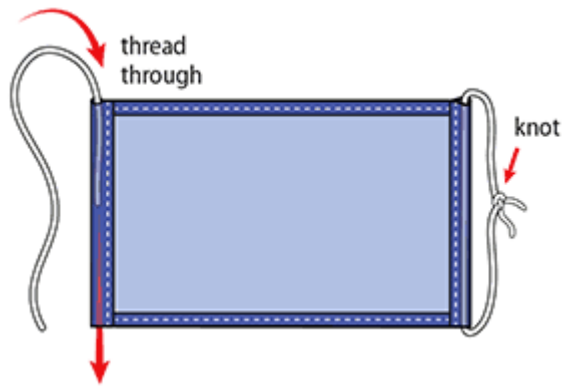
**1.** Cut out two 10-by-6-inch rectangles of cotton fabric. Use tightly woven cotton, such as quilting fabric or cotton sheets. T-shirt fabric will work in a pinch. Stack the two rectangles; you will sew the mask as if it was a single piece of fabric.

**2.** Fold over the long sides  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch and hem. Then fold the double layer of fabric over  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch along the short sides and stitch down.

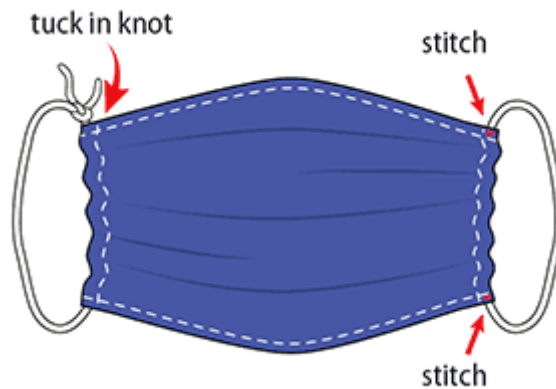


**3.** Run a 6-inch length of  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch wide elastic through the wider hem on each side of the mask. These will be the ear loops. Use a large needle or a bobby pin to thread it through. Tie the ends tight.

Don't have elastic? Use hair ties or elastic head bands. If you only have string, you can make the ties longer and tie the mask behind your head.



**4.** Gently pull on the elastic so that the knots are tucked inside the hem. Gather the sides of the mask on the elastic and adjust so the mask fits your face. Then securely stitch the elastic in place to keep it from slipping.



# DIY FACE MASK TUTORIAL

## MATERIALS:

You will need:

1. 2 pieces of 100% cotton fabric 7" x 9"
2. 2 pieces of 100% cotton fabric 1 ½" x 6"
3. 2 pieces of 100% cotton fabric 1 ½" x 40"
4. Ruler
5. Pins
6. Scissors
7. Sewing machine & thread

Masks should be constructed from tightly woven, high thread count cotton fabrics. The fabric should not have any stretch, and should not be knit (i.e. t-shirt material).



Recommended fabrics include: Poplin, Shirting, Sateen, and Percale in 100% cotton. A possible source of fabric is high thread count sheets and pillow cases.

Wondering if your fabric will work? A simple way to check is to fold it into two layers. You shouldn't be able to see through the fabric, but you should still be able to breathe if you hold it over your mouth.

Before you start, fabrics should be washed and dried on Hot in order to pre-shrink them.

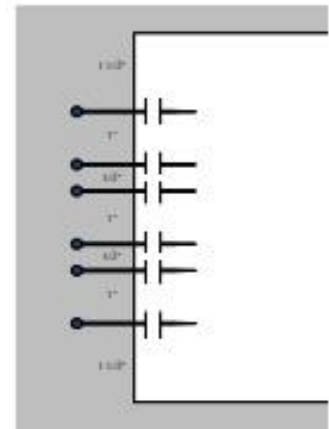
## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Lay main mask pieces wrong sides together. Sew around edges at 1/4" to secure





2. To create pleats: place pins along 7" edges as illustrated
3. Bring first needle to second to create pleat. Repeat with third & forth, fifth & sixth
4. Sew along previous stitching to secure pleats



5. Press up 1/4" on both 1 1/2" x 6" binding pieces

6. Lay unfolded side along pleated edge of mask, stitch at 1/4"





7. Fold binding around seam allowance & pin on opposite side, encasing raw edge. Topstitch in place.

8. Repeat for opposite side. Trim binding to match mask



9. On both 1 1/2" x 40" strap pieces, fold & press long edges to center

10. Fold the mask in half along the long edge & mark the center with a pin. Do the same with the strap

11. Matching centers, pin the strap in place. Stitch to mask body at 1/4"

12. Wrap strap around seam allowance as on binding & pin





13. Unfold strap ends. Fold in 1/4", then re-fold pressed creases. Pin to secure



14. Top stitch along entire strap, including mask. To finish, stitch across strap ends to secure, and press pleats flat



# No Sew Solutions

For those of you who may be less handy with a needle or want something with less time, effort, and material commitment there are some creative solutions below.

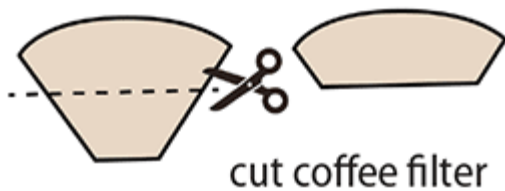
## The Bandana Folding Method

### Materials

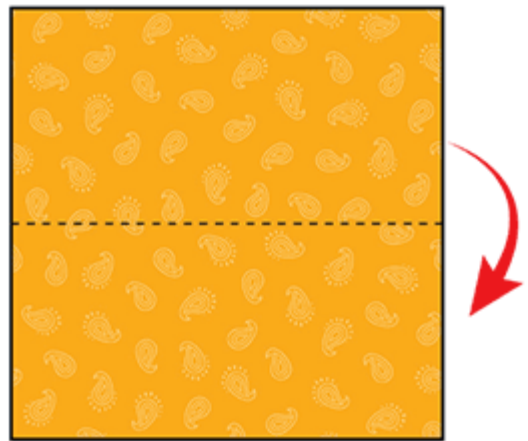
- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20")
- Coffee filter
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

### Tutorial

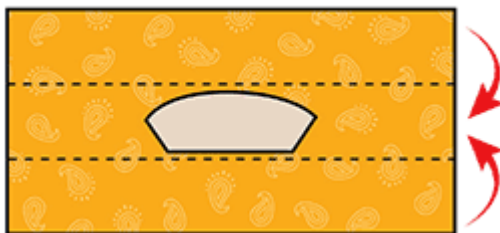
1.



2.



3.



Fold filter in center  
of folded bandanna.

Fold top down. Fold bottom up.

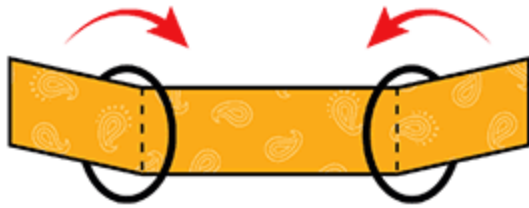
4.



Place rubber bands or hair ties  
about 6 inches apart.



5.



Fold side to the middle and tuck.

6.



7.



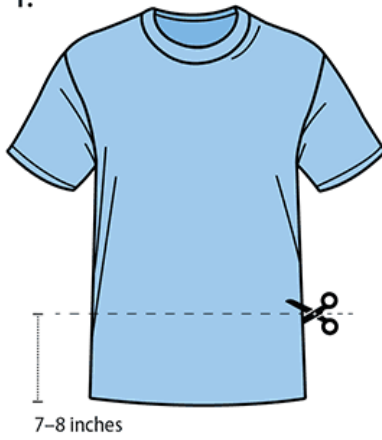
### **Quick Cut T-Shirt Method:**

#### **Materials**

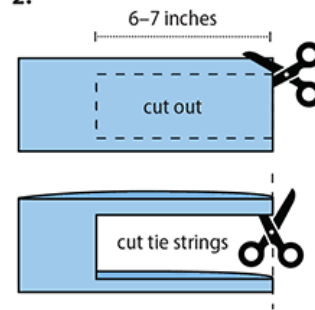
- T-shirt
- Scissors

## Tutorial

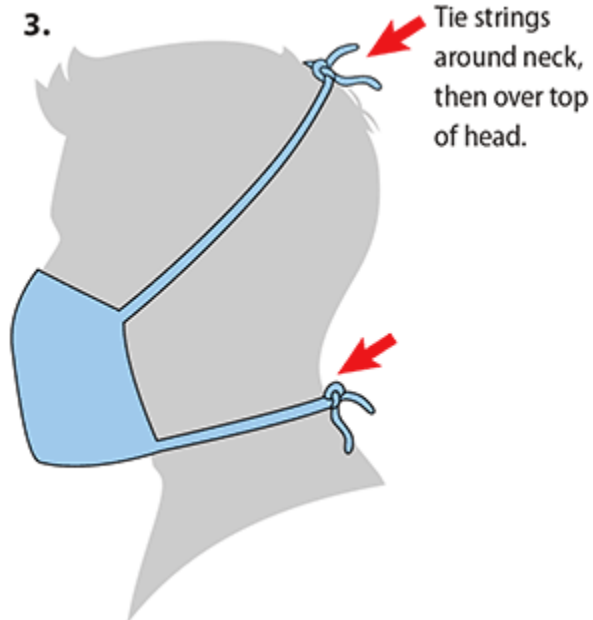
1.



2.



3.



## **References, Links and Other Info**

The instructions on how to make masks as well as the pictures were generously available on the internet via Joann's Fabric and the CDC. We thank them for their hard work in putting that information together so we could use it in this guide.

### **Here are is some more information available from the CDC regarding Facemasks:**

Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

- Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?

- A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a face covering.

How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

- Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.

### **How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering**

Cloth face coverings should—

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
- be secured with ties or ear loops
- include multiple layers of fabric
- allow for breathing without restriction
- be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape

**Note:**

When using facemasks follow proper PPE procedure just as you would for any other PPE equipment. When you finish using your mask have a designated receptacle set aside for any reusable PPE that will be washed. After you empty the receptacle for cleaning be sure to wipe it down with sanitizer as well.

**Helpful Links:**

- CDC COVID-19 site  
[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
- State of AK COVID-19 site  
<http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/default.aspx>