Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings

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

CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings

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 cloth face covering 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.

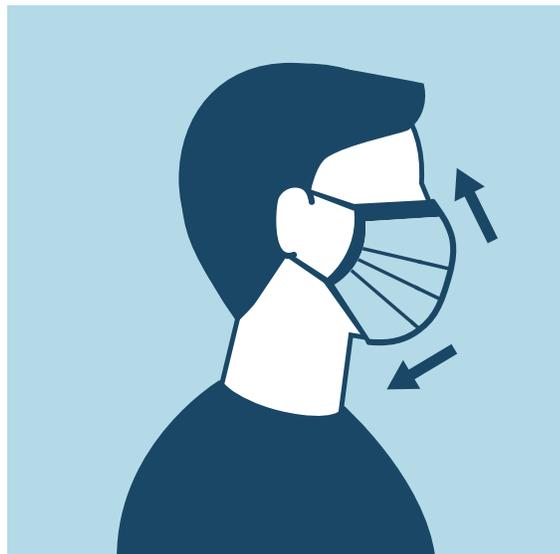## Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

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 cloth 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 cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.
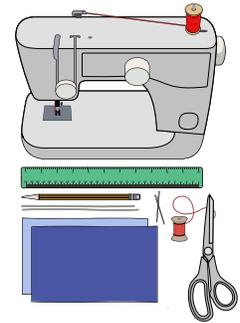
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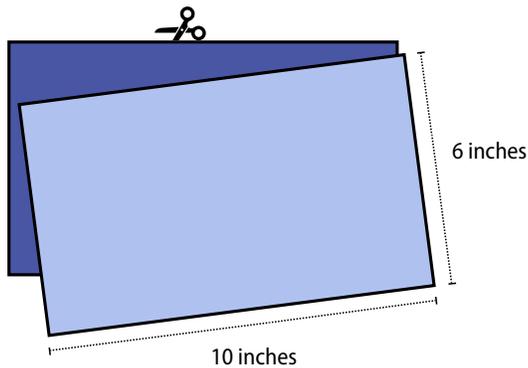
Sewn Cloth Face Covering

Materials

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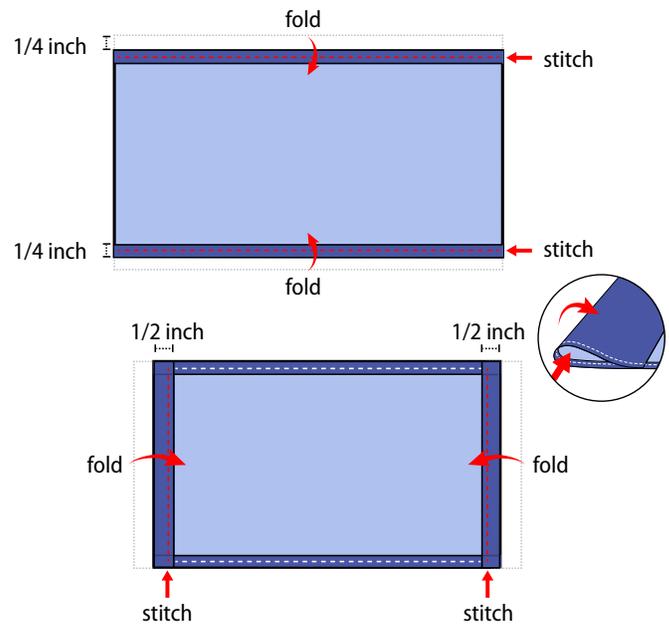- Needle and thread (or bobby pin)
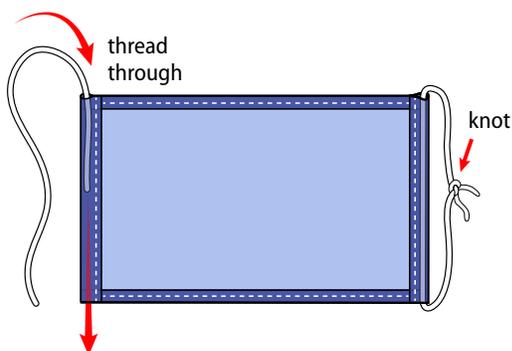- Scissors
- Sewing machine

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 cloth face covering as if it was a single piece of fabric.
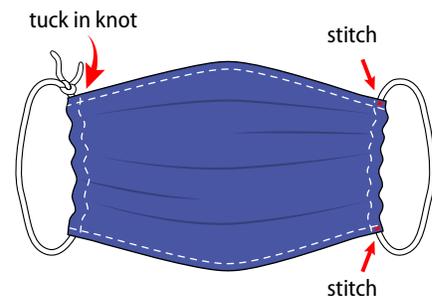
6 inches

10 inches

2. Fold over the long sides ¼ inch and hem. Then fold the double layer of fabric over ½ inch along the short sides and stitch down.

fold

1/4 inch   stitch

1/4 inch   stitch

fold

1/2 inch   1/2 inch

fold   fold

stitch   stitch

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3. Run a 6-inch length of 1/8-inch wide elastic through the wider hem on each side of the cloth face covering. 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 cloth face covering behind your head.

thread through

knot

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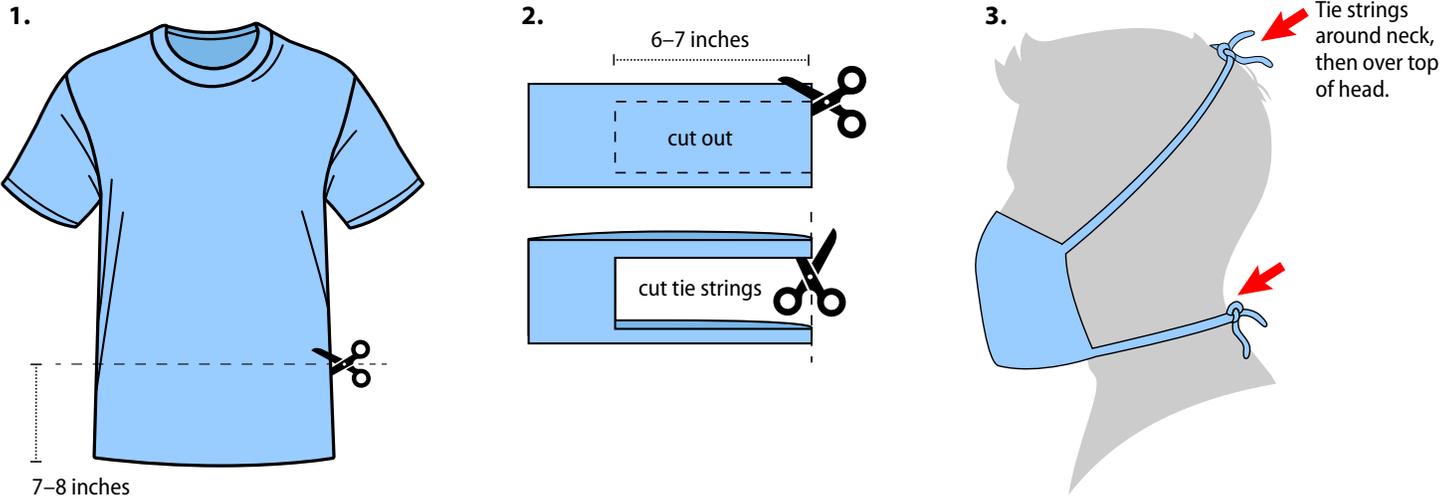
tuck in knot   stitch

stitch

Quick Cut T-shirt Cloth Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials

- T-shirt
- Scissors

Tutorial

1.

7–8 inches

2.

6–7 inches

cut out

cut tie strings

3.

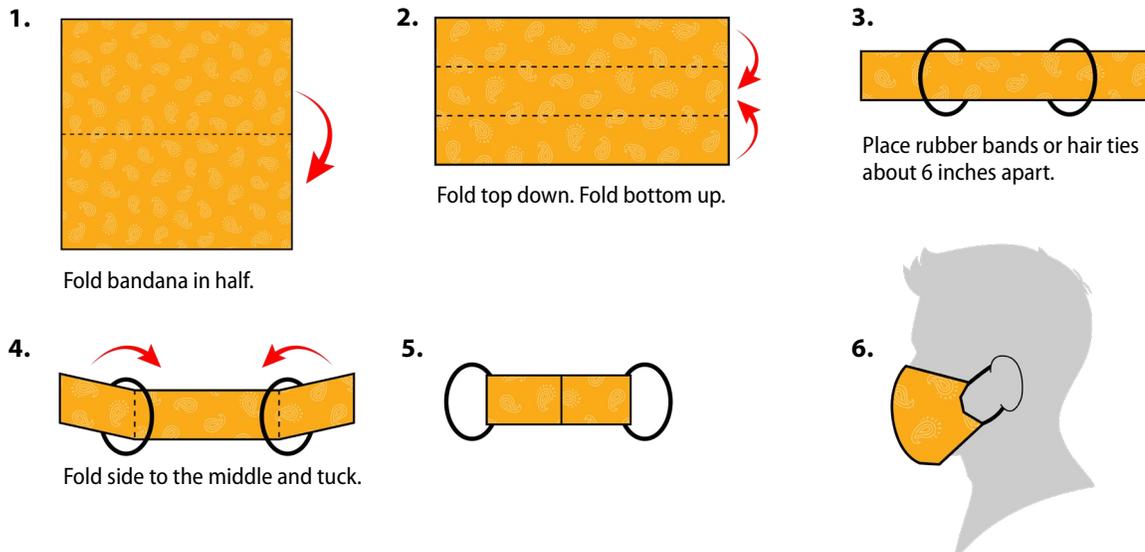Tie strings around neck, then over top of head.

Bandana Cloth Face Covering (no sew method)

Materials

- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 20"x20")
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)

- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

Tutorial

1.

Fold bandana in half.

2.

Fold top down. Fold bottom up.

3.

Place rubber bands or hair ties about 6 inches apart.

4.

Fold side to the middle and tuck.

5.

6.

Missouri Interim Guidance on Homemade and Alternative Face Coverings for COVID-19

Missouri DHSS
Department of Health and Senior Services

What is being recommended?
In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, all individuals in the State of Missouri may choose to wear a cloth face covering when in a public setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission. Due to a nationwide shortage of facemasks (also known as surgical masks) and N-95 respirators, these should be reserved for healthcare workers and others in direct contact with known or suspected COVID-19 patients.

Why is this being recommended now?
Studies are beginning to show that individuals in close proximity to others may transmit the virus that causes COVID-19 without having developed symptoms themselves. Homemade cloth face coverings offer some degree of protection against large infectious droplets, such as mucus or saliva, when speaking, sneezing, or coughing. This particularly protects those around the person wearing the face covering and helps people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Face coverings may also limit the wearer from touching their own mouth and nose.
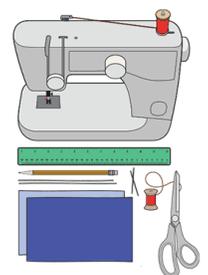
How should I wear a cloth face covering?
A cloth face covering should fit snugly but comfortably over the mouth and nose and against the side of the face, and be secured with ties or ear loops.

How do I make a cloth face covering?
A cloth face covering should include multiple layers of fabric but still allow for breathing without restriction (generally 3-4 or fewer layers). It should also be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape. The CDC has a good resource for making a cloth face covering here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/DIY-cloth-face-covering-instructions.pdf. Numerous other sources are available on the internet. Various materials have been tested to see how well they filter particles and typical materials around the house, like a pillow case or cotton t-shirt, have been shown to block some particles and provide some protection.

How do I take off and clean my face covering?
Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, or mouth when removing their cloth face covering. Remove when hand washing or hand sanitizer is available to immediately perform hand hygiene after removing. Routine laundering of the face covering is recommended.

What else should I be doing to limit the spread of COVID-19?

Individuals should avoid leaving their homes or places of residence except as needed. If you must be in public settings, face coverings should be used in conjunction with the other health recommendations already in place, such as maintaining 6 feet distance from other people, using proper cough/sneeze etiquette, frequent hand-washing, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Individuals who are sick, or have close contact with someone who is sick, should stay home.

What precautions should I know about?

Even simple cloth face coverings can make it harder to breathe. Individuals should take care not to use materials or excessive layers that restrict breathing ability. All individuals should take care to monitor their own health while wearing a mask or face covering, and consult a doctor with any concerns.

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. If you are a caregiver for an individual with the virus, every attempt should be made to get a surgical facemask or N-95 respirator.

How should an employer use this guidance?

Identifying and mitigating exposures to the virus that causes COVID-19 before work begins should be an initial step taken in any facility. Engineering and administrative controls that prevent or reduce exposures should be used with any policy that considers use of face coverings by employees. Face covering use does not replace good business practices to maintain a healthy work environment, including encouraging sick employees to stay home, supporting good respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene, and performing routine environmental cleaning and disinfection. Employee policies should include considerations for good contamination control as well as employee's medical conditions that may preclude use of face coverings. Consult with infection control, industrial hygiene, or a public health agency for guidance or facility-specific recommendations.

For more information: www.health.mo.gov/coronavirus

Updated 4/7/2020