

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

MENU >



## How to Select, Wear, and Clean Your Mask

Updated Oct. 29,  
2020

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CDC recommends that people wear masks in public settings, like on public and mass transportation, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people.

### Overview

- Wear masks with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19
- Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Masks should be worn by people two years and older
- Masks should NOT be worn by children younger than two, people who have trouble breathing, or people who cannot remove the mask without assistance
- Do **NOT** wear masks intended for healthcare workers, for example, N95 respirators
- CDC does not recommend the use of face shields alone. Evaluation of face shields is ongoing but effectiveness is unknown at this time.
- Evaluation of mask and gaiter materials and structure is ongoing.

## How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

### DO choose masks that



**Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric**



**Completely cover your nose and mouth**



**Fit snugly against the**

### DO NOT choose masks that



**Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl**



**Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape**



**Are intended for healthcare**



sides of your face and  
don't have gaps



workers, including N95  
respirators or surgical masks

## Gaiters & Face Shields



Wear a gaiter with two  
layers, or fold it to make  
two layers



Caution: Evaluation is  
ongoing but effectiveness  
is unknown at this time

## Special Situations: Glasses



If you wear glasses, find a  
mask that fits closely over  
your nose or one that has a  
nose wire to limit fogging

## Special Situations: Children



If you are able, find a mask  
that is made for children



If you can't find a mask  
made for children, check to  
be sure the mask fits snugly  
over the nose and mouth  
and under the chin



Do NOT put on children  
younger than 2 years old

## How to Wear

Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to wash your hands before putting on a mask
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it

### Do wear a mask that

- Covers your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Fits snugly against the sides of your face

For more information, visit our [How to Wear Masks](#) web page.



### How NOT to wear a mask

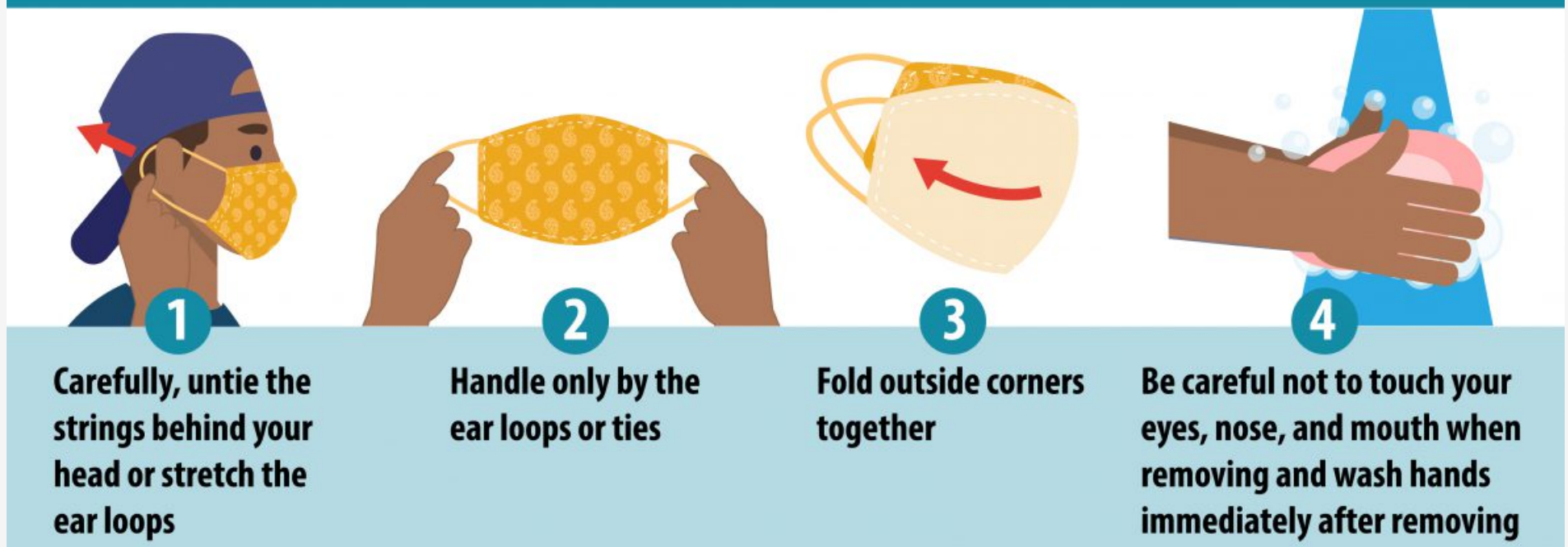


## How NOT to wear a mask



## How to take off a mask

### How to take off a mask



## How to Clean

Masks should be washed regularly. Always [remove masks correctly](#) and [wash your hands](#) after handling or touching a used mask.

- Include your mask with your regular laundry
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask
- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry

For more information, visit our [How to Wash Masks](#) web page.



For more information, see our [Masks](#) web site. For information on the sources for our mask guidance, see [Recent Studies](#).

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