

# **Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Making a Cloth Face Mask**

A face mask can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus. Using your mask correctly and consistently in public is an important step to prevent spreading this disease. The CDC advises that people wear a cloth face mask with 2 or more layers of washable, breathable fabric while out in public. Or wear two masks: a disposable paper mask with a cloth mask over it.

The U.S. now requires masks to be worn on public transportation. This includes planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation while traveling into, within, or out of the U.S.

You can make a cloth face mask of your own. You can do this using a bandanna, T-shirt, or other tightly woven fabric.

## **How a cloth face mask helps prevent COVID-19**

A cloth face mask helps prevent spread of viruses. CDC advises wearing cloth face masks in public where social distancing is hard to maintain, such as at grocery stores or drugstores, especially in areas where the virus is spreading. Or when you are inside with people who don't live with you. A mask restricts droplets from your mouth and nose when you breathe. This means people who may have the virus but don't know it yet can help prevent giving it to others.

Don't put a cloth face mask on:

- A child under age 2
- A person who has trouble breathing
- A person who is unconscious or can't remove their own mask

## **Using your cloth face mask**

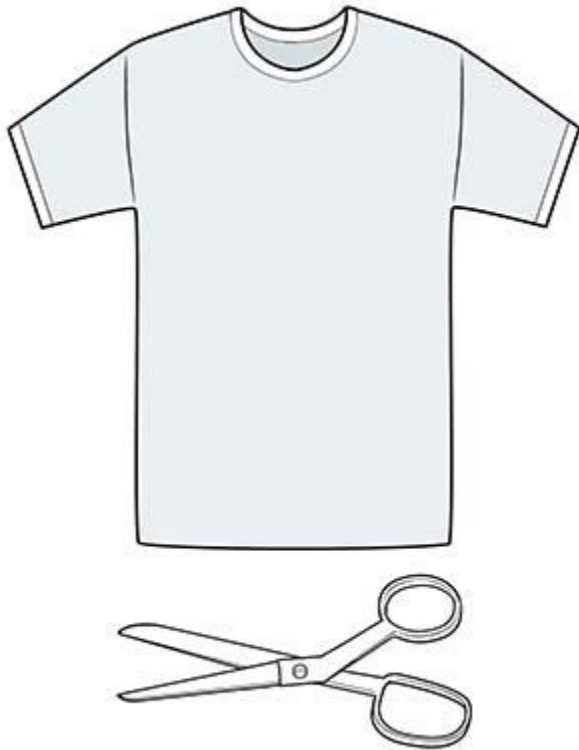
A cloth face mask should fit your face snugly, without gaps. It should have multiple layers of fabric and should stay in place with ties around your neck and head, or with ear loops. Wear the mask so it fully covers your nose and mouth. Ideally, the mask should have a nose wire to prevent air from leaking out of the top. It should let you breathe normally. Wear the mask when you go out in public or anytime you are indoors with people who don't live with you. Still stay 6 feet from other people and use hand sanitizer when out.

When you remove the mask, do it carefully. Don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Hang the mask on a hook or put it in an assigned place. Wash your hands after touching it.

Wash your mask after several short uses, 1 long use, or if it gets damp. Wash it more often if needed. You can wash it in a laundry washing machine. Or you can wash it by hand with soap and water. Make sure it's fully dry before you wear it.

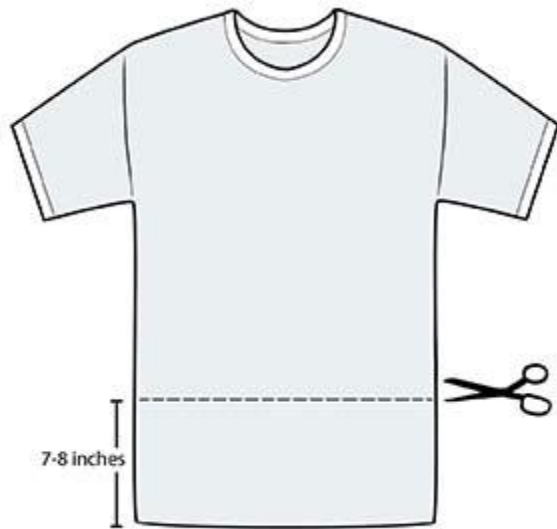
## How to make an easy T-shirt mask

The CDC advises wearing masks with 2 or more layers of washable, breathable fabric. This is a simple T-shirt mask with only 1 layer of fabric. This means it is less protective. Consider folding the fabric so you have extra layers. Or wear a paper disposable mask with your cloth mask over it.

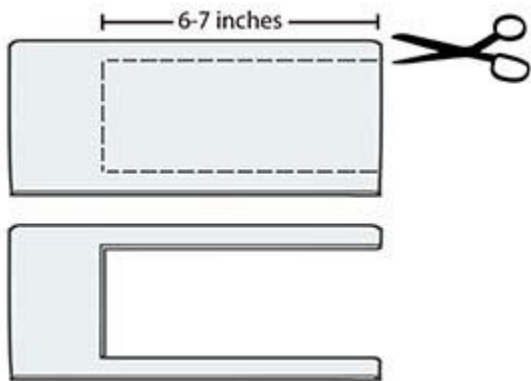


You'll need:

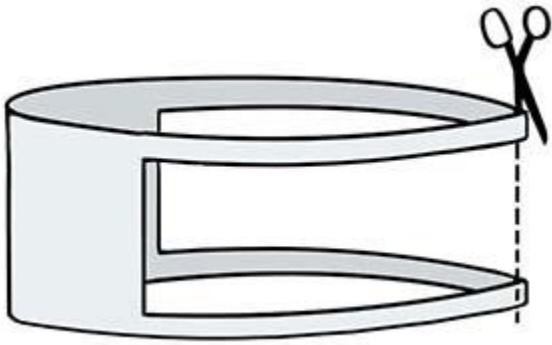
- A T-shirt you can cut up
- Scissors



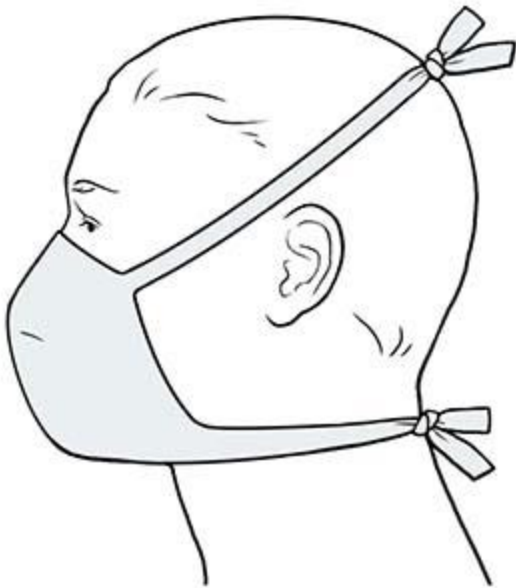
Step 1. Cut off the bottom 7 to 8 inches of the T-shirt.



Step 2. Hold that piece of fabric flat. Cut a rectangle out of it about 6 to 7 inches across, leaving thin strips of fabric above and below the rectangle. This will leave enough fabric to cover your face, plus give you 2 straps.



Step 3. Cut each of the 2 straps right in the middle. This is so you can tie the straps behind your neck and head. This is your mask.



Step 4. To put on the mask, tie 1 set of straps around your neck and the second up around the upper back of your head. Tie them at the length that works best for you. Make sure the mask fits closely, but you can still breathe comfortably.

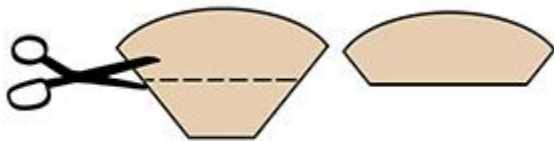
## **How to make a layered bandanna or scarf mask**

This mask has multiple layers of fabric. And it uses a paper filter to give more protection.

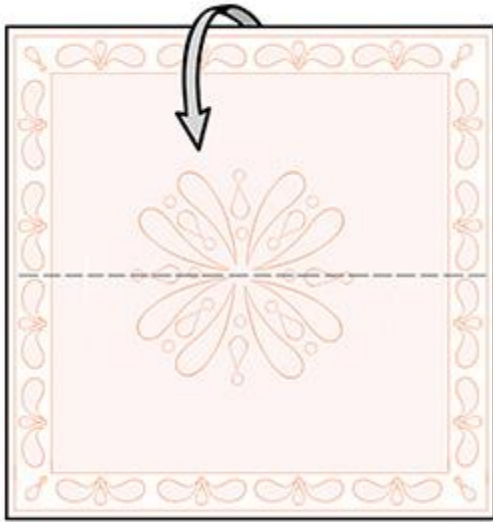


You'll need:

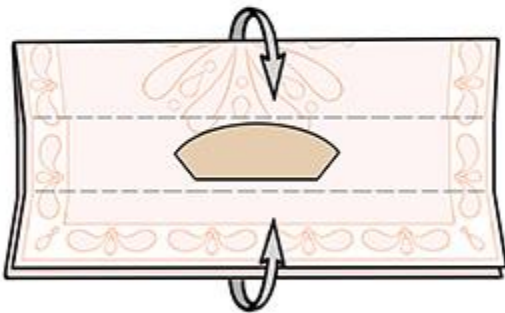
- 1 bandanna or other square cotton cloth (20 inches x 20 inches)
- 1 cone coffee filter
- 2 rubber bands or hair bands
- Scissors



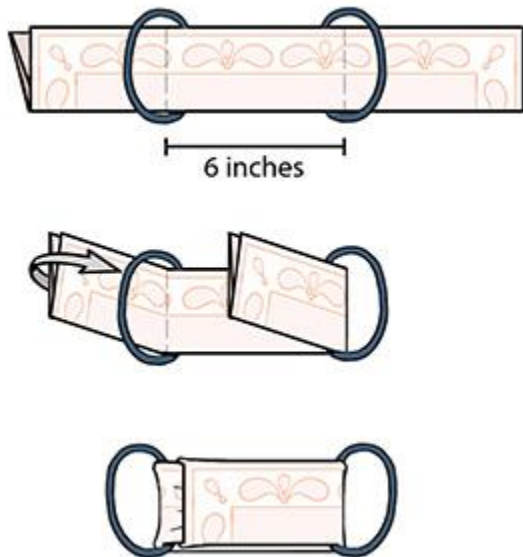
Step 1. Cut the cone coffee filter in half, side to side. You will be using the top half only.



Step 2. On a flat surface, fold the bandanna or other square cloth in half to make a rectangle.



Step 3. Place the top cut of the coffee filter in the middle of the cloth rectangle, lengthwise. Then fold the cloth evenly over the coffee filter. Fold the top down and bottom up, to form a long, thin rectangle.



Step 4. Take the 2 rubber bands or hair bands. Pull 1 end of the thin cloth rectangle through 1 band, and the other end through the second band. Then fold the ends of the cloth evenly to meet in the center. This is your mask.



Step 5. Now put the folded cloth across your lower face. Pull each rubber band over each of your ears. Adjust the mask so it covers your nose, mouth, and chin. The coffee filter should be over your mouth. Make sure the mask fits closely, but you can still breathe comfortably.



## **How to sew a layered cloth face mask**

To find out how to sew a layered cloth face mask, look at [instructions from the CDC](#).

*Date last modified: 2/11/2021*