

Sewing Face Masks for the 2020 Pandemic

We all want to help with the current COVID-19 crisis. Many of you may be wondering how you can help. Sewing face masks could be one way. At my son's suggestion, I have collected some information about making face masks to share with my sewing friends.

Do-it-yourself face masks are NOT the TOTAL answer, as they are not as safe as manufactured surgical masks.

However, some protection is better than none, right? Here is an interesting article on the best fabrics to use.

<https://smartairfilters.com/en/blog/best-materials-make-diy-face-mask-virus/>

My takeaway is to use fine quality quilting cotton. The closer the weave, the better. Use natural fibers only. While this article says two layers of fabric make it harder to breathe, all the sewing instructions I found include a lining.

Where to send masks

- Health care providers and nursing homes.
- Friends who are at risk or have any respiratory illness.
- The Sewing & Craft Alliance is setting up a website for mask distribution to be active around 3-23-20.
<https://www.weneedmasks.org/>

Here are some other tutorials and patterns I found on making two types of face masks. I selected those I thought were clear and concise.

- The American Sewing Guild is starting an effort to make and distribute masks. They referenced this website <https://www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-Face-Mask?fbclid=IwAR1H25JhviFlqeBjj-LEwCUCGNf-Pbjcst4fHxc-nXOThUqoTk6CVQ8cuyRM> includes a video and printable instructions of an easy to make pleated mask
- <https://www.craftpassion.com/face-mask-sewing-pattern/> Shaped face mask, instructions, includes 4 sizes but I think they seem small
- <https://buttoncounter.com/2018/01/14/facemask-a-picture-tutorial/> Pleated face Mask with bound edges
- <https://www.instructables.com/id/AB-Mask-for-a-Nurse-by-a-Nurse/?fbclid=IwAR3AEAQ2HJCJOmMvnO50r0f8kMlvi4TgQcgPpWERPubl7iKD7fq-IQkzYjHA> Pleated face mask designed by a nurse
- <https://www.instructables.com/id/DIY-Cloth-Face-Mask/> Many informative links at the end

In addition, my favorite patternmaking software company has given me permission to share their patterns and instructions, or you can download their program to make many medical garments and accessories for charity.
<http://www.wildginger.com/icare/default.htm>

Please note that all of these patterns are shareware and not to be used for selling masks. I would also suggest you include a note that the hand-made masks are not made to medical standards, such as

"I make no claims to the effectiveness of this face mask, but only wish to help someone in need. Nothing home-made will ever compare to medical grade surgical mask. This face mask is for last resort."



C. Michael Gibson MD
@CMichaelGibson

Wow ...

CDC now officially recommends use of homemade masks in the event that healthcare facilities run out of masks.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus/20...](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html) via @CDCgov

HCP use of homemade masks:

In settings where facemasks are not available, HCP might use homemade masks (e.g., bandana, scarf) for care of patients with COVID-19 as a last resort. However, homemade masks are not considered PPE, since their capability to protect HCP is unknown. Caution should be exercised when considering this option. Homemade masks should ideally be used in combination with a face shield that covers the entire front (that extends to the chin or below) and sides of the face.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html>

Note: this link refuses to work. Please type it if you wish to see CDC information.

Pleated Face Mask

Pattern Pieces:

- Mask: Cut 2 in fashion fabric or disposable non-woven fabric
- Bias binding
- Purchased or self made ties or narrow elastic

Assemble the Face Mask

1. With RIGHT sides together, stitch the two face mask pieces together along the two long sides.
2. Trim the seams and turn right side out and press.
3. Match the markings for the three pleats on each short side and baste pressing the pleats down.
4. Stitch bias binding along each short end securing the pleats and turning in the ends of the bias binding.
5. Attach ties to the top and bottom of each short end or attach an elastic loop to the top and bottom of each short end.

For more information or other methods, see the videos mentioned in the handout. My favorite method was from Deaconess Hospital as referred by ASG.

Pattern: Pleated Face Mask

Shaped Face Mask

Pattern Pieces:

- Mask: Cut 2 in fashion fabric, two of lining
- Two pieces of thin elastic, about 7" long

Assembling the Face Mask:

1. With RIGHT sides together, pin the face mask pieces together matching the circle markings and stitch along the outward curved seam. Repeat for the lining.
2. Cut two pieces of thin elastic to the desired length.
3. Attach one end of the elastic to the top rectangle and the other end to the bottom end at the rectangle. Repeat for other side of the mask.
4. With RIGHT sides together, pin the lining to the face mask and stitch around the entire perimeter leaving an opening at the bottom for turning.
5. Trim the seam allowances, turn right side out and press.
6. Stitch all edges to close opening and reinforce elastic

For more information, see the videos mentioned in the handout.

