

Tips for Mask Use and Cleaning

With face masks used and required throughout various areas of the United States, it is important to know how to use and maintain your face masks.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made recommendations for the proper use and maintenance of face masks.

Use of Face Masks

Proper use of face masks starts with when to use them. The CDC recommends that all people 2 years and older wear a face mask when in a public setting and when around people who don't live in your household.

The exception to using a face mask is:

- children younger than 2 years of age.
- anyone who has trouble breathing.
- anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove a mask without assistance.
- people engaged in activities where the masks may get wet. A wet mask can be difficult to breath through.
- anyone engaged in high-intensity activities such as running.
- people working in a setting in which wearing a mask may increase the risk of a heat related illness or cause safety concerns such as mask straps getting caught in machinery.



Along with using face masks, it is also important to wear them correctly.

- Wash your hands before putting your face mask on.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and under your chin. Many people uncover their nose and this makes the face mask useless.
- If you touch your mask, make sure to wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.



Cleaning and Maintaining Your Face Mask

The CDC has guidelines on how to clean and maintain your face masks.

- Your face mask should be washed after every use.
- You can wash your face mask with regular laundry, using regular laundry detergent at the hottest temperature possible for the material used to make the mask.
- If washing your mask by hand, prepare a bleach solution by mixing 1/3 cup household bleach per gallon of room temperature water or 4 teaspoons of household bleach per quarter of room temperature water. Soak the mask for 5 minutes in the bleach solution and rinse thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.
- Dry your mask at the highest temperature possible and leave in the dryer until completely dry. If air drying, lay the mask flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, lay the mask in direct sunlight.

While there are some other methods of cleaning face masks posted on the internet such as placing the mask in the microwave, oven, or a pot of boiling water, these methods are not as effective as laundering the masks.