

# COVID-19 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES DO-IT-YOURSELF CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

Cloth face coverings can be an effective way of preventing spread of infectious diseases. Cloth face coverings are used over the mouth and nose of a person who is or might be infected to catch particles from a cough or sneeze. Face coverings provide the best protection to the wearer if they are 1) the right type for the situation, 2) worn properly and 3) handled properly. Wearing a cloth face covering can decrease risk but does not provide complete protection. Other risk reduction measures should also be followed, like physical distancing, handwashing and hand sanitizer usage, and avoiding touching eyes, mouth and nose.

## CLOTH FACE COVER DESIGNS

- There are many designs and materials suggested for do-it-yourself (DIY) cloth face coverings. The best designs are 1) easy to make, 2) able to fit securely around the wearer's nose and mouth, 3) have appropriate elastic or ties to keep the face cover secured to the head, and 4) are able withstand repeated washing and drying.
- Fabrics for cloth face coverings must balance two opposing attributes. They must restrict the movement of virus particles during a cough or a sneeze while at the same time allowing the wearer to breathe easily.
- Cloth face coverings should ideally either be made of many layers, or have a pocket for replaceable filters.
  - Household air filters can be trimmed and used as replaceable filter inserts. Do not use air filters made with fiberglass. Filters may be found at department or home improvement stores.

## SELECTING FABRIC

- Research suggests that tightly woven cotton fabrics such as high thread count pillow cases or tight knits such as cotton t-shirts are the best fabrics for DIY face coverings.
- Fabrics should be new, unused and freshly laundered before use.

## CARING FOR A CLOTH FACE COVERING

- Cloth face coverings can trap moisture with use, so it is best to have several on hand to use throughout the day.
- **Masks and cloth face coverings should be handled assuming they are contaminated with the virus causing COVID-19.**
  - Face coverings should be removed without touching the inside. They should be immediately placed with dirty laundry, or stored in a plastic bag until they can be properly cleaned.
- Wash your hands after handling a used face covering or use hand sanitizer if hand washing is not an option. If possible, wash your face after removing a face covering.
- Cloth face coverings should be washed at the hottest setting for the fabric and dried thoroughly before the next wear.
  - Follow CDC guidance at [go.ncsu.edu/cdclaundry](https://go.ncsu.edu/cdclaundry).
- Washing is more effective than heat alone, so face coverings should not be heated in microwave or conventional ovens.

## ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS



## SEWING CLOTH FACE COVERINGS FOR DONATION

- The person sewing must follow all steps outlined by the agency requesting cloth face coverings.
- Follow CDC guidance on washing fabrics before sewing. Fabrics should not be washed with other laundry.
- Those sewing face coverings should be healthy and not have any symptoms of illness. Use good hygiene while handling cloth face coverings.
- Face coverings should be carefully packaged in a plastic bag and handled only by those who are not ill and have not been in contact with people who are displaying symptoms of COVID-19.

**No-sew cloth face coverings can be made from cut up t-shirts or folded bandanas. For step by step instructions on no-sew and sewn versions, visit [go.ncsu.edu/cdcfacecoverings](https://go.ncsu.edu/cdcfacecoverings) or scan here.**

