

Fabric Surgical Masks Information

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Thank you for your interest in sewing fabric surgical masks for healthcare personnel caring for COVID-19 patients. Our supply of manufactured surgical masks are at critical low levels throughout the nation and locally.

Your time and talent can greatly impact our ability to care for our community members and help ensure our safety as we do. Fabric masks offer the benefit of being able to be washed and re-used. Still a large supply is needed, as each healthcare worker will need to change their mask several times during their shifts, as the mask becomes soiled or damp – for maximum protection.

We aren't worried about looking stylish -- but we are concerned about functionality. Non-matching fabrics, thread, binding strips are just fine – but a well sewn mask with no frayed edges or missed seams or “holes” is important.

In order to make sure the masks are as safe and as effective as possible. We ask that you consider the following points.

- It is most helpful to use a standard pattern to ensure proper fit and function.
- **Please use either of the following patterns. They are most similar to our current products. (Either mask style is fine. Mask 2 is easier to sew and no pattern to download.)**
 - **Mask 1:**
Properfit Clothing Co ® PM 2.5 face mask. This company has a paper [pattern that is available for download for \\$2.99](#). You can then print the pattern on your home printer. The company has a Youtube video and facebook page that have a link to the download and an instruction how-to-video. Search “[How to make a PM 2.5 face mask](#)” by Properfit Clothing.
 - **Mask 2:**
Easy to Sew ® Face mask with filter pocket. There is a [how-to Youtube video available that includes pattern information](#). Search “How to make face masks with pocket and adjustable wire sewing tutorials”.

Recommendations:

- Recommended fabric for the outer portion of the mask includes heavier, non-stretch fabric – such as denim, duck cloth, canvas, twill, or other tight woven fabric.
- Recommended fabric for the inner lining and filter pocket can be other cotton, cotton-blend non-stretch fabric. It can be thinner and softer, but again recommend minimal or non-stretch.

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- Polyester or other less breathable fabric will not work as well, due to moisture produced with breathing.
- If using denim or other fabric that is being "recycled", please be sure it is clean and in good shape. Worn or dirty fabric will not be protective
- Elastic should be in good shape, with plenty of stretch and of an appropriate size to fit over the ears. 1/16 in round cord or 1/8 inch braided work best. 1/4 inch is less comfortable but can suffice as well.
- If elastic is not available, fabric ties can be sewn on the mask by extending the bias tape and stitching it closed on the open side. There will need to be 4 ties (one tie on each of the 4 corners). Ties should be long enough to tie at the top of the head for the mask top ties and at the back of the head for the bottom mask ties.
- The flexible metal across the top of the mask is important to allow the user to bend the metal to create a close fit over the nose. Two 4-inch plastic coated twist ties work well. Amazon has packs of 200+ for a reasonable price if you or a group are making a large number. Paper twist ties will not hold up well for washing.
- Bias tape is easy to make if you have a limited supply. Instructions on how to you're your own bias tape are included in the written pattern instructions and there are instructions and videos on line as well! (For these masks, your bias tape does not need to be cut "on the bias" – making it even easier!)

Completed Masks

Enclose completed masks in a closed plastic bag or closed plastic box.

RMC will launder them prior to use so you do not need to wash them.

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