

ABOUT FACE COVERINGS

UVA Facilities Management

Occupational Programs

ALL ABOUT FACE COVERINGS

Per UVA's [Policy SEC-045](#), Facilities Management is now requiring face coverings to be worn at all times, indoor and outdoor, unless working completely alone with no unscheduled visitors. [The CDC recommends](#) face coverings in any setting where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores, pharmacies, essential worksites) especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

The purpose of face coverings is to reduce the release of potentially infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes. **Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing, washing hands, and staying home when ill.**

Here are examples of the various types of face coverings that are being used to protect public health:



N95 RESPIRATORS

N95 masks are only to be used when required by your job and/or task. N95 users are required to go through special fit testing & training. Users are fit tested to their specific model of face covering. If you are unsure if your job requires an N95 OR you need training, contact your supervisor or FM-OHS@virginia.edu.

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NEOPRENE FACE COVERS

The material is thick and can prevent the spread of droplets from the mouth and nose, depending on mask design. Neoprene fabrics are washable and reusable. Masks should be washed before reuse.



DUST MASKS

These look like N95s but they may not have the proper certifications that N95s have (e.g. NIOSH certification).

Dust masks are okay for voluntary use. They are typically sold in hardware stores for people who need protection from sawdust and other construction work. Dust masks are disposable.



KN95

KN95 filtering facepiece respirators are certified under China's standards and are not cleared by the FDA or NIOSH. With worldwide supply shortages of N95s, more KN95 masks are starting to appear in this country. KN95 is not a substitute for an N95, but can be used to prevent spread of the virus.



SURGICAL MASKS & CLOTH FACE COVERS

These masks do not filter out particles to the extent that N95 and KN95 masks do. **They will contain droplets and spittle from the mouth and nose of the wearer, protecting those around the wearer.**



BANDANAS & NECK GAITERS

Cotton or synthetic materials are used to make these. **The material is often thin for improved breathability, which means a decreased ability to contain droplets.** Layering the fabric can help improve containment. Neck gaiters are made of stretchy synthetic fabric which makes them comfortable to wear. Cloth bandanas tied behind the head may be uncomfortable for extended wear. Bandanas and neck gaiters should be washed before reuse.

[More on neck gaiters >>>](#)

Source: <https://bit.ly/3cdBd5t>

NECK GAITERS: Guidelines for Safe Use of Stretchable Face/Neck Covers.

Stretchable face/neck covers, often called neck gaiters or buffs, are sometimes used as an alternative to typical fabric face coverings. While these cover the entire front of the face (nose, mouth, chin, and neck), **they are not recommended by the CDC to be used as face covers to prevent the spread of COVID-19.** The material they are made of is thin for improved breathability, which means a decreased ability for the covering to contain droplets. **Layering the fabric can help with this: Doubling or folding the neck gaiter several times to have multiple layers over the mouth and nose is a best practice.** The covering can be worn as illustrated, but users must also pull the bottom up and double or triple it across the nose and mouth.



FULL MASK



HALF MASK



BALACLAVA

How to safely remove a gaiter-style face cover:

1. **Wash your hands** before removing your face covering, as you will be bringing your hands near your face. Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing your gaiter-style face covering.
2. **Pinch the face covering layers tightly from the sides** (close to the back) and **pull it over your head from back to front.** This prevents your eyes from being contaminated during removal. **Avoid touching the front of the face covering and do not turn it inside out as you are removing. Consider the outside to be contaminated.** Be intentional with your actions to avoid potentially contaminating your face. Avoid excessive touching of the gaiter.
3. **If you are not re-donning the face covering,** all fabric face coverings can be put in the same bag as your **soiled PPE** and washed with your regular detergent. **If you must re-wear your gaiter-style face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on and avoid touching your face.**
4. **Wash hands immediately** after removing the face covering.

How to care for a gaiter-style face cover:

Gaiter-style face coverings must **be washed after each use or shift** and can be laundered with your regular laundry detergent and **your soiled PPE or work clothes.** See more on storage, care, and use of face coverings at UVA FM: <https://at.virginia.edu/2YH0p00>

Other key tips:

- **Resist the urge to remove it when you talk.** Face coverings are meant to remain in place while talking in order to stop moisture droplets from entering the air.
- If you pull the covering up on your head or wear it around your neck (IE: while eating, etc.), **be intentional with where and how you touch it when pulling it back over your mouth and nose,** paying particular attention to keeping the inside in and the outside out. **Wash your hands before and after touching your neck gaiter.**
- **Discard** any gaiter-style face coverings that:
 1. No longer cover the nose and mouth,
 2. Have stretched out and no longer stay on the face, or
 3. Have holes or tears in the fabric

[See how face coverings work to protect others >>>](#)

STOP THE SPREAD

The illustration at right by Avery Wagner shows how face coverings & social distancing can work to stop the spread of COVID-19. Coupled with frequent handwashing & physical distancing, you are able to protect you and your loved ones.

Why is it important to physically distance?

Limiting physical contact by increasing space between us and others is one of the **most important step we can take in protecting essential workers & slowing the spread of COVID-19.** Staying at home helps to protect those most vulnerable to severe illness: people over age 65 and those with health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, and heart disease.

How does staying home slow the spread of disease?

COVID-19 spreads between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet). Coronavirus becomes airborne when an infected person coughs, sneezes, speaks, or laughs. Infected people may not display symptoms for up to 14 days, meaning they may be unknowingly spreading the virus.

Who should stay home?

Everyone should stay home as much as possible to protect their own health and the health of others.

When is it ok to go out?

Travel to only seek medical attention, essential work, and to obtain supplies like groceries and prescriptions. When you must go out, be sure to wear a cloth face covering, practice physical distancing, and wash your hands thoroughly and frequently.

What steps should I take if I have to go out?

- **Wear** a cloth face covering.
- **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze.
- **Wash your hands** often, with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol based sanitizer if you can't wash.
- **Keep 6 feet** of distance between yourself and others.

PROBABILITY OF INFECTION:

