

# Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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## How to Wash Masks Storing and Washing Masks

Updated May 22, 2020

Masks are an additional step to help slow the spread of COVID-19 when combined with [every day preventive actions](#) and [social distancing](#) in public settings.

Masks should be washed regularly. It is important to always [remove masks correctly](#) and [wash your hands](#) after handling or touching a used mask.

### How to clean

#### Washing machine

- You can include your mask with your regular laundry.
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask.



#### Washing by hand

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection.
  - Use bleach containing 5.25%–8.25% sodium hypochlorite. Do not use a bleach product if the percentage is not in this range or is not specified.
  - Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
  - Ensure adequate ventilation.
- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
  - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
  - 4 teaspoons of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Soak the mask in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
- Discard the bleach solution down the drain and rinse the mask thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.
- **Make sure to completely dry the mask after washing.**



### Using bleach safely:

- Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.
- Be aware that bleach can damage cloth fabric over time.
- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards.
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label).
- Store and use bleach out of the reach of children and pets.
- Special considerations should be made for people with asthma and they should not be present when cleaning and disinfecting is happening as this can trigger asthma exacerbations. Learn more about [reducing asthma triggers](#).
- See [EPA's 6 steps for Safe and Effective Disinfectant Use](#) [↗](#) .

## How to dry

### Dryer

- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry.



### Air dry

- Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the mask in direct sunlight.



## More Information

[Considerations for Wearing Masks](#)

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[How to Wear Your Mask](#)

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[How to Wash Your Mask](#)

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[How to Make Your Own Mask Video](#)

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[ASL Video Series: Easy DIY Mask](#)

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[How to Make Your Own Mask Video \(Spanish\)](#)

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