

A BUYER'S GUIDE **TO FACE COVERS** **AND MASKS**

From proper mask care to safety benefits,
learn what you need to know about the
face covers and masks you're wearing.

A close-up, side-profile photograph of a man with short brown hair and a beard, wearing a black Honeywell face mask. The mask has a red stripe on the top edge and the Honeywell logo on the side. He is looking slightly to the left. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a warehouse or industrial setting with shelves.

Honeywell



Whether or not you have knowingly been exposed to respiratory illness, employing the use of a mask is an essential part of slowing the spread of disease and keeping yourself and your family safe. In conjunction with physical distancing, hand washing and other personal protective equipment and safety precautions, wearing a face cover may help reduce the spread of potentially infectious droplets within the community.

According to [the CDC](#), it's important when selecting a face cover or mask that it completely covers the nose and mouth, has two or more layers of material and fits snugly against the sides of your face to prevent gapping.

Explore the different types of masks available and how each one works to help slow the spread of respiratory disease.

CLOTH MASKS

Cloth masks are usually made of multi-layered fabrics and elastic or cloth ties that are fitted to the face and fully cover the nose and mouth. In addition to purchased or homemade cloth masks, other cloth materials can be fashioned into a makeshift face covering, such as scarves or bandanas. With these options, a tight-weave fabric, such as 100% polyester or cotton, may work better at preventing droplets from escaping than a looser-knit fabric.



The Benefits of Cloth Masks

Wearing a cloth mask benefits those around you, as it can help prevent droplets from escaping and potentially infecting others – however, it will not filter out airborne particles from others. Cloth masks are reusable and typically machine washable and dryable.

When to Wear a Cloth Mask

Many states have mandated the use of some form of mask or face covering, so keeping a cloth mask on hand at all times is a good idea. Cloth masks are recommended for use by the general public when in public spaces, in most indoor situations and outdoors when physical distancing can't be maintained.

Proper Use and Care of Cloth Masks

For people in professions with frequent non-distanced contact with others, it may be necessary to change out masks one or more times during the workday. Keeping several cloth masks handy is a good idea to ensure that you always have one available.

Cloth face coverings should be washed frequently, ideally daily or after each use, with laundry detergent and hot water. Be sure your mask is completely dry after wearing, as a wet mask may make it harder to breathe and can promote the growth of microorganisms. If your mask becomes loose after wear or washing, it may need to be replaced.





SURGICAL MASKS

Surgical masks are disposable face coverings worn more loosely around the face than cloth masks or respirators. They are often employed in hospitals, as medical staff are likely to see a number of patients within the day and are required to change their PPE regularly. There are a variety of medical purposes for surgical masks and may be labeled for surgical, procedure, dental or medical use.

The Benefits of Surgical Masks

If worn properly, a surgical mask can help block large-particle droplets, splashes or sprays that may contain germs (viruses and bacteria) and prevent them from reaching your mouth and nose. A surgical mask can also reduce exposure of your respiratory droplets to others. Surgical masks are typically tested for fluid resistance, filtration efficiency, flammability and biocompatibility prior to being made available for use.

When to Wear a Surgical Mask

When visiting or working in a hospital, doctor's office or other medical office, you may be required to wear a surgical mask or other face cover, as instructed. Surgical masks can also be worn by the general public.

Proper Use and Care of Surgical Masks

Surgical masks should not be worn more than once. Ensure that the mask is being worn correctly – typically the inside layer

of the mask is white or lighter in color than the outside. Avoid touching the mask while you're wearing it.

To safely discard of a surgical mask after it's been worn, place it in a plastic bag and put it in the trash, and always wash your hands after handling a used mask.

RESPIRATORS

Respirators are tightly fitting masks made of high-filtration materials, estimated to filter out about 95% of airborne particles that may pose a threat to an individual's health. The edges of respirators are fitted and designed to form a seal around the nose and mouth.

The Benefits of Respirators

Respirators, such as N95 and KN95 respirators, typically offer the highest filtration properties of the masks available, and are highly effective when properly fitted to the wearer's face.

When to Wear a Respirator

Respirators are used most commonly by those who need a higher level of protection daily. For this reason, [the CDC](#) does not recommend the use of respirators for the general public in order to preserve these specialized face covers

for medical professionals. Respirators are also not designed for people with facial hair or children.

Proper Use and Care of Respirators

Depending on the materials used, respirators may or may not be considered reusable – look into [the CDC and FDA guidance](#) on extended use and reuse of respirators. In the current climate, however, OSHA is permitting reuse of several types of respirators to ensure enough supply for medical professionals.

Masks are able to protect the wearer best when additional safety precautions are taken.

Be sure to wash or dispose of masks regularly, wash your hands before putting on and taking off your mask, and avoid touching the mask throughout the day.









WANT TO PROPERLY EQUIP YOUR WORKPLACE TO HELP PROTECT YOUR EMPLOYEES?

Explore Honeywell's family of personal protective equipment that can help keep you and your community safe.

[VIEW PRODUCTS](#)

RESPIRATOR & FACE MASK SELECTION GUIDE

Not all face masks and face covers are created equally. Selecting the appropriate face mask or face cover and knowing how to wear it properly is important in helping to keep you and others around you covered. Use this guide to learn more about the best face cover option suited for you and your workers' environment.

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	REGULATORY STANDARD	EFFICIENCY	INTENDED ENVIRONMENT FOR USE
N95 RESPIRATORS				
 Surgical N95 Respirator	Respiratory protection designed to achieve an optimal face seal with 95% filtration efficiency of airborne particles. Surgical N95s offer fluid-resistance in addition to particulate filtration. These are approved by NIOSH.	NIOSH 42 CFR 84, ASTM F1862	≥ 95%	Healthcare settings; not intended for general public use
 N95 Respirator	Respiratory protection designed to achieve an optimal face seal with 95% filtration efficiency of airborne particles. Available without and with a valve to direct the exhaled breathe out quickly, perfect for Industrial settings. The CDC recommends non-valve masks. These are approved by NIOSH.	NIOSH 42 CFR 84	≥ 95%	Limited Healthcare settings under the emergency use act (EUA) and industrial use
SURGICAL & PROCEDURE MASKS				
 Surgical Mask	Loose-fitting, disposable device that acts as a barrier between the wearer and potential contaminants in the environment. This type of face mask typically has ties or a headband, and may be used in the Operating Room.	ASTM F2100, FDA 510(k)	95-98%	Healthcare settings
 Procedure Mask	A type of surgical mask that generally has earloops or a headband and is designed for short procedures or for source control (for patients and visitors). Generally not used in the Operating Room. Like other medical masks, it is available in a range of performance levels (ASTM 1, 2 and 3), dependent on the risk that is present.	ASTM F2100, FDA 510(k)	95-98%	Healthcare settings, with some industrial and consumer uses
FACE COVERS*				
 Dual-Layer Face Cover with Inserts	A dual-layer barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice.	N/A	Varies by mask layers and type of insert**	For general public and employees in non-healthcare environments
 Cloth Face Cover	A simple cloth barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice.	N/A	4-15%*** dependent on the material	For general public and employees in non-healthcare environments
 Face Cover with Valve or Vent	While the valve or vent is intended to reduce exhalation resistance, which makes it easier to breathe (exhale), studies show that it also allows particles to escape.	N/A	4-15%*** dependent on the material	CDC recommends against using this type of cover because it does not protect others
 Bandana, Scarf, or Gaiter	While typically considered a household item or cold-weather accessory, in the absence of any other kind of face cover or mask, people have used bandanas and gaiters as a last resort to cover their nose and mouth while in public.	N/A	4-15%*** dependent on the material	Use as a last resort

*Face covers are not tested to any standards. They are not considered PPE.

**The insert has been shown by a third-party testing facility to block up to 97% of 3-micron-sized non-viable particles and 0.1-micron-sized aerosolized particles.

***Honeywell tested product comparison.

Face Covers, Surgical Masks, and N95 may be subject to an FDA Emergency Use Authorization. **Source(s): CDC, FDA**

WARNING: The [dual layer face cover] product has not been FDA cleared or approved. The product has been authorized by FDA under an EUA for use as source control by the general public as well as by HCP in healthcare settings as to help prevent the spread of infection or illness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Source control refers to the use of a face mask over the mouth and nose to contain that individual's respiratory secretions to help prevent transmission from infected individuals who may or may not have symptoms of COVID-19. This product is authorized only for the duration of the declaration that circumstances exist justifying the authorization of the emergency use of medical devices, including alternative products used as medical devices, during the COVID-19 outbreak, under section 564(b)(1) of the Act, 21 U.S.C. § 360bbb-3(b)(1) unless the authorization is terminated or revoked sooner. The face mask is intended to be used with single-use inserts. There has not been testing of the effectiveness of the disposable insert when placed in the mask. Accordingly, this product is not a respiratory protective device, nor a substitute for filtering face piece respirators or for surgical face masks. This product is not for medical use or for use in a high infection risk clinical setting. It is not intended to be used to provide liquid barrier protection or for high-risk aerosol generating procedures.