Fact Sheet

Yarra Ranges Council

Fact sheet: Reusable cloth face mask

What is a cloth mask?

Cloth masks are any nose and mouth covering made of washable fabric. A cloth mask should be made of three layers including a mix of breathable fabrics to ensure adequate protection

Why and when to wear a cloth mask?

The primary reason to wear a mask is to protect others. If you are unknowingly infected with coronavirus, a mask will help reduce the chance that you could spread the virus to others

In Metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire, masks are now mandatory whenever in public

How do I wear a mask correctly?

A cloth mask should fit securely around the face, specifically covering the nose and the mouth areas. The mask should be secured by ties at the back of your head or ear loops

Make sure that your mask does not have holes or a valve. This can result in breathing out the virus if you have coronavirus (COVID-19)

Before putting the mask on

Ensure that the mask is clean
Check for defects in the mask, such as tears, broken loops and the general integrity of the fabric

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol

When putting the mask on

Pick up the mask by touching ear loops or ties only Avoid touching the mask itself
Hold both ear loops and place a loop around each ear

Fit mask around nose, mouth and chin and ensure you can breathe easily

While wearing the mask

Don't put the face covering around your neck or up on your forehead

Don't touch the face covering, and, if you do, wash your hands or use hand sanitiser to disinfect

When Taking the mask off

Carefully remove your mask by grasping the ear loops or untying the ties

Fold the outside corners of the mask together and put it directly into the laundry or into a disposable or washable bag for laundering

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash or snaitise your hands immediately after removal

When should I wash my cloth mask?

A cloth mask should be washed each day after use. However, if during the day your mask is visibly dirty or wet, do not continue wearing your mask; the mask needs to be washed. It is a good idea to have a least 2 cloth masks to allow change over as required

Re-using a cloth mask without washing is risky because it can become contaminated or may not be as effective in protecting you

How do I wash my cloth mask?

Cloth masks can be washed in the washing machine with other clothes, or hand-washed using soap and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth

Your cloth mask should be dry before re-using it. You can use the heat setting on your dryer or lay out flat to air dry. If possible, place the cloth mask in direct sunlight. Wash your hands after handling used face masks

Is there anyone who should not wear the mask?

Anyone with a pre-existing heart or lung condition should seek medical advice before using a face mask. Mask use is currently not recommended for persons under 12 years old

Where can I get a cloth mask?

You can purchase cloth masks from retail outlets and online or you can follow DHHS VIC directions to make your own cloth mask make a cloth mask (PDF)
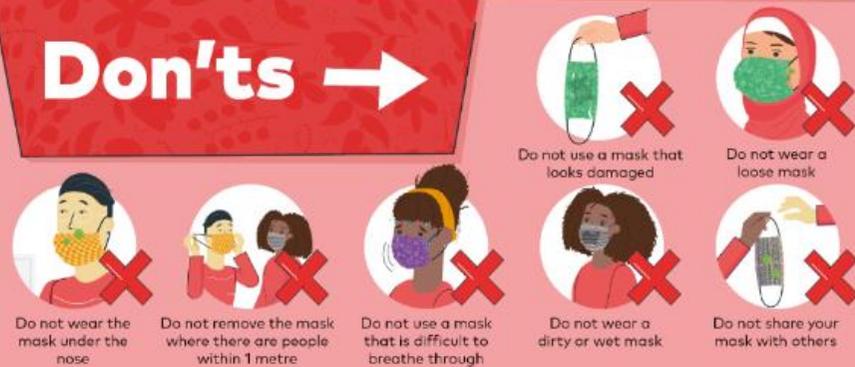
How to Wear a Non-Medical Fabric Mask Safely (who.int/epi-win)

Contact us: If you have any questions specifically relating to the coronavirus please contact 1300 368 333 and press 0 when prompted, or email healthalerts@yarraranges.vic.gov.au.
For any general enquiries, please contact 1300 368 333 or mail@yarraranges.vic.gov.au.