



## Steps You Can Take to Get Used to Wearing a Mask

Some people have a hard time wearing a cloth mask or face covering at first, especially those with breathing issues already. You may feel like they look foolish or be anxious about having a hard time adjusting to breathing through several layers of cloth. Below are some suggestions we recommend to help you get used to wearing the latest COVID-19 fashion.

1. **Think positive.** It's true that breathing through a mask will feel different. See if you can begin with a "I'm going to make this work" mindset vs. thinking "I'm never going to be able to wear this."
2. **Practice at home.** Don't jump into the deep end. First, ease into wearing your mask at home while watching your favorite tv show. Then try taking it for a walk around the house, perhaps preparing for dinner. Take a step outside to get the mail and eventually a short walk around the neighborhood with your cloth mask. Level up slowly and be kind to yourself as your body adjusts to wearing the cloth covering, before you show up at a store where your anxiety might already be high due to fear of exposure.
3. **Be creative.** If your current face covering just isn't comfortable for you, consider your options. Consider wearing a wearing a scarf, balaclava/ski mask, handkerchief tied around your head, or other option.



Just remember that the CDC has made the following guidelines that all cloth masks should:

- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
  - be secured with ties or ear loops,
  - include multiple layers of fabric,
  - allow for breathing without restriction, and
  - be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape.
4. **Talk to your doctor.** If the above strategies haven't worked for you, speak with your healthcare provider about your concerns and challenges to come up with the best plan that works for you.

The best thing to do is stay home as much as possible and practice social distancing – at least six feet away from people who don't live in your home – until we can all breathe a little easier.

Remember the reason for the cloth face covering as motivation. Cloth face coverings protect both the wearer and the people around the wearer. I wear a face covering for you and you wear a face covering for me, and together we keep each other safe.