

Mask Recommendations

Folks,

Since March, I have been relatively isolated with contacts limited to a family/friend bubble in a rural area since March and have not had to wear a mask for more than 1/2 hour at a time. I've gotten by with commercial N95 and blue medical masks. I'm now back in the DC area and will have to be wearing masks more often and for longer periods. Plus, it's getting colder and I wear glasses, which fog up easily.

So I'm looking for recommendations about masks that people have found to be comfortable for long term wear and for masks that seal well so that glasses or goggles don't fog up.

Thanks in advance.

Cloth masks. Put your mask on. Then put your glasses on so the bottom edge is over the edge of the mask holding it to your face. Its the air escaping up that fogs your glasses.

If you need some cloth masks let me know. I can make "professional" ones and fun ones.

Elizabeth Pugliese, Maryland

Let me make a suggestion on the “comfortable for long term wear” portion of your question.

I was recently with someone who had a “thing” (that’s the technical word) under her mask, that kept the mask from “sucking in” to her mouth when she was breathing heavily. She said she found them on Amazon by searching “mask frame.” I searched that term, and found lots of options.

I bought some, and have been very pleased.

Without the frame, if I walked a long distance uphill, I would find that the mask impaired my breathing quite a bit. With the frame in place, I have many fewer problems, even when I would otherwise be breathing heavily.

They are not expensive, and seem to help me quite a bit.

Brian H. Cole, California

Thank you. I googled, there are many, many types. Do you know which you purchased?

Deborah Matthews, Virginia

I am also sewing masks, but I will make a plug for my son's business! Yoga Society (yoga-society.com) sells wonderful masks. I

Andrea Goldman, Massachusetts

KN95

Roger Rosen, California

I have purchased a number of masks from this site <https://shopspacemask.com/> I have been very pleased with the comfort and fit.

Walter D. James III, Texas

It looks like the one I purchased is no longer available, but this one is pretty close:

https://www.amazon.com/Mask-Bracket-Oceantree-Accessories-Large-Adult/dp/B08CK6W57M/ref=sr_1_7?crid=YI670T5HC3HN&dchild=1&keywords=mask+frames+silicon&qid=1603468357&srefix=mask+frames%2Caps%2C203&sr=8-7 <https://www.amazon.com/Mask-Bracket-Oceantree-Accessories-Large-Adult/dp/B08CK6W57M/ref=sr_1_7?crid=YI670T5HC3HN&dchild=1&keywords=mask+frames+silicon&qid=1603468357&srefix=mask+frames,aps,203&sr=8-7>

I'm not convinced there is a lot of difference between the various options, however. I think you'd be fine with any of them.

Brian H. Cole

A key factor, IMO, is that the mask needs to work well, even when you're talking. Many masks seem to fit fine, when you're just sitting, or walking. It's when people start talking (i.e., moving their jaw) that the mask will slip down. I have a basketful on the counter, that I've obtained from many places... so I can't really help on where to get them -- since I don't recall. When going for a walk -- I grab any mask. When going to the office, I grab one that is fairly long, coming below my chin.

As a side note.. I've tried several of the 'face scarves' (balaclavas)..

and -- at least for me, as soon as I turn my head from side to side, or begin talking, the scarf slips down.

Laurie Axinn Gienapp, Massachusetts

one more thing.. from those I've talked to (including medical people)..

N95s are extremely uncomfortable for long term wear...even for medical people who are more used to wearing them than a typical person. (and for those with asthma, COPD, even simple colds, or other respiratory issues..

An N95 can be impossible, even for a short time) A good, two layer... or two layer plus filter ... mask is what you need. I, too, wear glasses.

Tucking it up under my glasses is good... and the masks with a bit of bendable metal at the nose, so you can kind of 'seal' it over the bridge of your nose.. will help with 99% of the fogging.

Laurie Axinn Gienapp

Fitment to your face is an individual measure. My wife wears a cloth face mask every day. I bought from a few vendors, and so did she. The school she teaches at provided some. Fitment varied widely. The ones she likes the best are some I bought for me (I have a large head).

Personally, since I am a true solo, I don't have to wear a mask much beyond quick runs to the store or medical visits. In person client visits are minimized. I keep stashes of the blue medical masks around, and pull one when needed. If I had to wear one more often or for longer periods, I would buy more of the one that fit me best, but which my wife appropriated.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

It really depends on the size and shape of your face. If your face is narrow, many masks will be too wide, will gap at the sides and will slip down. If it's wide, the mask won't give enough coverage. I have one of those Hannibal Lecter things to keep the cloth away from nose and mouth, and while it seems a bit more comfortable, it is also more trouble than it's worth. If it's necessary to take off one side of the mask for any reason, the silicon device will fall out. I have 30 or 50 washable cotton masks. all of which are too wide, and the straps too long, if I twist them, they cause the cloth to really gap at the sides, so I have to try to tuck part of the side up into the loop. PITA. I also have 50 or so disposable masks, but I hate to create the waste, so I'm holding them in abeyance. I just ordered 5 black contoured washable masks, and am hoping that they are more comfortable and fit better. My entry area looks like a medical supply store, with grab and go bins of masks, clear glasses to put over them, those Lecter things, etc. So far, everything I've tried causes the glasses to fog.

Miriam N. Jacobson, Pennsylvania

Thanks to Miriam and all who recommended mask types or websites. Clearly, I'm going to have to experiment to see what works/fits best.

Mark Del Bianco

I, too, sew masks. I have 2 different patterns and have modified one. If you want the patterns, let me know. I don't think I can attach files to Solosez emails.

Fern Summer, New York

I bought a silicone "mask frame" a few months ago after having the experience at a long zoning hearing of being muffled when my mask was right up against my mouth and nose. I use a double layer cloth mask, that I can insert a filter in if necessary. I separately bought some small "hook and loop" (ie Velcro) circles with adhesive on the back. I adhere one to the top of the outside of the mask frame and its partner to the corresponding spot on the inside of the mask, and same for the bottom of the frame. It is not perfect, but it helps a lot, and the adhesive lasts through a number of uses. Since the package came with something like 300 of the "circles", I have enough for quite a few replacements. I also bought a pack of the metal strips with adhesive on the back that I add to the nose area to help with the glasses fogging. Again, its not perfect, but I feel much more comfortable when I have to be in the mask for long periods at zoning and land development hearings, and I feel the mask frame helps me to be less muffled.

Caroline A. Edwards, Pennsylvania

Brian, do you use this with a paper or cloth mask?

Trying to figure out best options for wearing a mask for a lengthy period of time and glasses too. ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Deborah Matthews

I mostly use them with cloth masks, but I have occasionally used them with paper masks.

They have some little “clips” that are supposed to fasten to the pleats of surgical masks, but I have never tried that.

Brian H. Cole