

Resources for Mask Makers

April 15, 2020

Nearly three weeks ago, we [began asking for homemade face masks](#) to be donated to area hospitals. Since that time, I've developed a list of resources to address questions about the sewing process and the uses for these masks.

Two Main Types/Uses of Masks

1. **The disposable “pleated-style” mask** ([pattern here](#)) is meant to **keep a person’s germs from being coughed OUT** (i.e., to prevent a patient spewing germs all over the facility, or keep a worker from infecting a patient, etc). This is not an impermeable mask that offers protection to health care workers. But many hospitals are asking for this simple type of mask for a *patient* to put on when they come in the door. This kind of mask is considered “disposable.” (Not that a person could not take it home and launder it, but it will not be reused on another patient.)
 - Helpful video tutorials [here](#) and [here](#) and [a video on how to make a pleated-style face mask with filter pocket and adjustable nose wire](#).
2. **[A mask for the protection of medical personnel](#) (to keep the germs from coming IN)**. The “upgrade” for health care workers is to use a pattern that is more closely fitted to the face and made with a layer of [non-woven interfacing](#) between the layers of cotton. This increases the effective filtration level significantly. The tighter the weave of cotton, the better.
 - Here is one of the best [patterns](#) I have found and a [video](#) tutorial. (This pattern has a “pocket”—with the assumption that there will be a filter material, like a piece of a Hepa vacuum bag or “Filtrete” air filter cut to fit and inserted inside.) It is a bit more complicated than the pleated-style mask.
 - For donating to nursing homes, consider sewing in a nose clip, which helps seal off the nose. Use a 12" pipe cleaner folded in thirds and basted into the seam allowance at the nose (centered on the center seam). You could also use 16-gauge wire (or floral wire), folding sharp edges in.

Either kind of mask can be used by health care workers to place *over* an N95 mask to extend the use of that mask, which is in such short supply.

Additional Resources

[This site](#) has lots of patterns and videos with great explanations from a retired nurse who is a quilter. I found them especially helpful in explaining the [differences in the various masks](#) that can be sewn and their purposes.