

# How should I clean and store my face mask?

May 21 2020, by How Should I Clean and Store My Face Mask?

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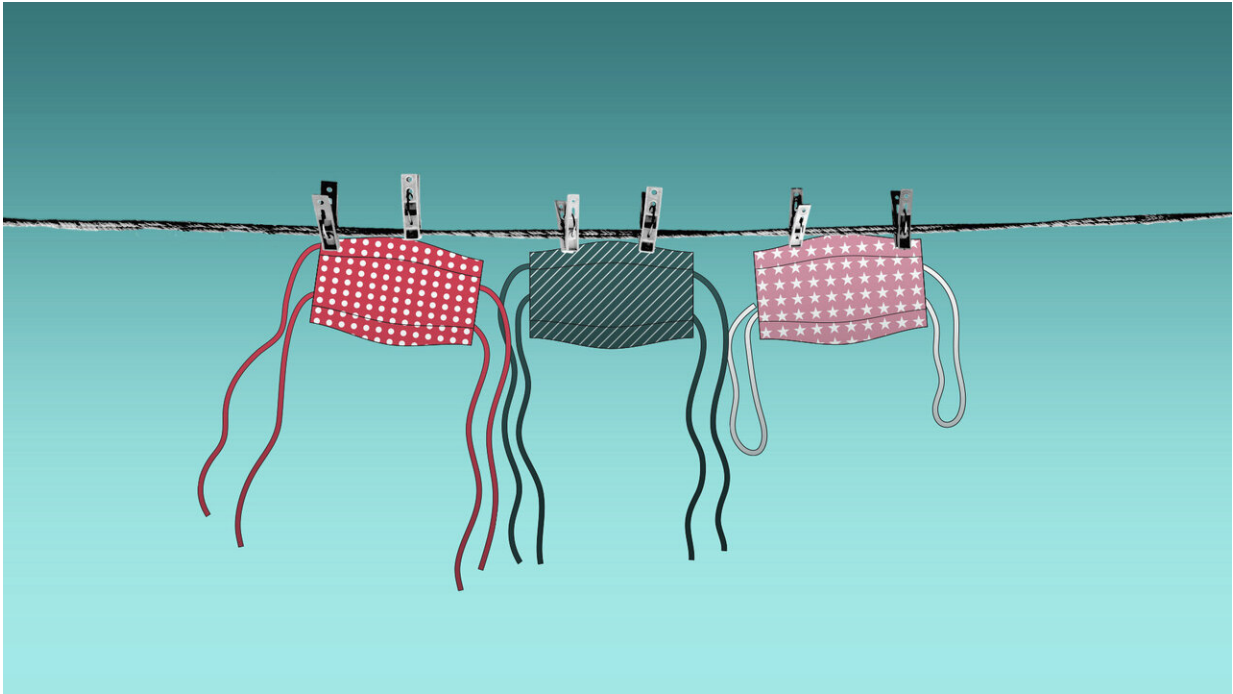


Illustration by Peter Hamlin

How should I clean and store my face mask?

Cloth face masks worn during the coronavirus pandemic should be washed regularly, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Public health experts recommend wearing a mask made from cotton

fabric, such as T-shirts, or scarves and bandannas, when you are outside and unable to maintain social distancing from others.

The covering should be washed daily after use, says Penni Watts, an assistant professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's School of Nursing.

It is best to clean your mask in a [washing machine](#) or with soap and [hot water](#). The mask should be dried completely. Dry it in a hot dryer, if possible.

Watts advises storing the clean, dry mask in a new paper bag to keep it safe from germs.

The CDC has urged people to use washable cloth coverings to ensure there are enough surgical and N95 masks for medical workers.

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Citation: How should I clean and store my face mask? (2020, May 21) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-05-mask-1.html>

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