

## How to Sew Conversation Face Coverings

During the COVID-19 pandemic, personal protective equipment, including surgical masks and face coverings, have become an important health and safety tool.

To make conversation easier, face coverings with vinyl cutouts that show the wearer's mouth, have been developed.

To help others sew their own conversation masks, Vocational Rehabilitation staff volunteered to create the following instructions and offer this document as a service to the community.



### You will need:

- 100% cotton fabric
  - Pipe cleaners
  - Ties (these can be ribbons, old t-shirt strips, etc.)
  - 8-gauge clear vinyl fabric cut in 3x5 inch pieces
- 2x3.75-inch template to cut the area for the vinyl

**Care instructions:** Please read the CDC recommendations on How to Wash Cloth Face Coverings at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-wash-cloth-face-coverings.html>

Rub a drop of dish soap on the inside of the mask to reduce fogging.

**Cautions:** Follow CDC recommendations for handling masks and face coverings (links on Page 6). Wash your hands before putting on your mask and after removing the mask.

Materials to make these face coverings are not medical grade. These face coverings have not been tested or approved for medical use.

## Conversation Face Covering Instructions

*Please note: The following photos were taken at different times so you may notice different ties being used and different layout of the fabric.*



1. Begin by cutting the fabric into 9x14-inch sections. The volunteers found it easiest to put cut marks at the 9-inch length and rip the material all the way across and then do the same for the 14-inch length on the strip of 9-inch.

then the bottom. The top will not be hemmed during this step. Sew the side, bottom and side.

Next, iron the hem seam. Iron the sides and



2. Place your tie and pipe cleaner on the raw edge of the fabric.

This will help to keep your pipe cleaner in place.

## Conversation Face Covering Instructions



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3. Fold the seam over.



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4. Sew along the raw edge.

## Conversation Face Covering Instructions



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5. Pull the bottom edge up to the top, just below the pipe cleaner and tie.

Sew along the finished edge, just below the pipe cleaner and tie.

Add the bottom tie and pin it in the middle to hold it in place.



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6. Now it is time to cut the area for the vinyl insert.

Using the 2x3.75-inch template, trace an outline in the middle of the fabric, about 2 inches from the top.

## Conversation Face Covering Instructions



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7. Once you are ready to cut, pinch the middle of the fabric and cut a V to allow your scissors to fit and cut out the traced area.

Use caution during this step to avoid cutting your ties.



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8. Once the area is cut, insert the plastic. Ensure that the vinyl is square within the two layers so when you sew you will catch all the edges of the material and vinyl.

Pin through all the layers on the top and the bottom.

Sew near the raw edge.

This may take a while on the first few you make, but you will get it!

## Conversation Face Covering Instructions



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10. The pleats are next. There are three pleats.

Pinch and fold down at the top of the plastic.

Pinch and fold up near the bottom of the plastic.

Add one more small pleat, folded up below the two pleats.

Do this on both sides. It is easiest if you pinch and fold across the entire mask. Pin each side.

Sew along each side from top to bottom to secure the pleats.



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9. The final step is to pin a small pleat at the bottom of the mask to wrap under the chin.

Pinch two pleats together and pin. Sew a bit before and after the pleat to hold.

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### **CDC information about face coverings**

Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/cloth-face-coverings-information.pdf>

How to Make Cloth Face Coverings:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html>