

How To Sanitize African Fabric Masks?

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If you're still planning on wearing a mask to reduce your chance of contracting coronavirus (or passing it on to others) then it's likely that you'll be wearing a fabric or a disposable face mask. How to Choose Between a Fabric or Disposable Mask?

Disposable face masks don't need to be sanitized as they're designed to be single-use. Whilst this is a hygienic option it's not great for the environment (or your budget), so many people opt for a reusable fabric face mask. But how do you make sure they stay clean and ready to use hygienically?

You can find high quality African print clothing on our website [Nkeoma.com](https://nkeoma.com).



How to Sanitize Fabric Masks?

You should clean your fabric mask after every wearing. This reduces the risk of spreading the coronavirus or other germs.

To sanitize a fabric mask (such as one made from cotton) wash it with your regular laundry using hot water. You can then tumble dry them on a high setting. Try to skip a really thorough spin cycle as this can cause damage.

You can also hand wash your mask, using hot, soapy water. Scrub the mask for at least 20 seconds, and dry them on high heat in the dryer. Handwashing is effective but washing with your laundry is more likely to thoroughly clean it.



You might consider using a non-scented laundry detergent if you are sensitive to perfumes so it is easier to wear the masks.

Satin, silk or polyester fabrics will need to be treated differently so take a look at the manufacturers instructions. Washing at a high heat can damage these fabrics and completely ruin your mask for future wear. If you're choosing your mask because you want to reuse it then this isn't something you'll want to do!

You should store clean masks carefully and safely in a clean place when you are not using them. Always keep a back up to hand when you're somewhere where you plan to wear a mask just in case the one you have gets dirty or lost.



Myths to Sanitize a Fabric Mask

There has been some misinformation about keeping masks clean and sanitized so let's run through some things to avoid when it comes to keeping your fabric mask clean.

Using Bleach

Even if you've diluted bleach, you should avoid it as this can be dangerous to inhale and can affect the integrity (and color) of your fabric. This could compromise how effective your mask actually is, which can render it a little redundant.



Microwaving Your Face Mask

While it's true that heat can be great for handling germs, this isn't recommended. You might burn your mask, cause changes to the fabric, ruin the color or in the worst-case scenario actually start a fire at home.

You Don't Need To Worry About Touching Your Mask

Whilst it's easy to forget when you adjust your mask (or remove it), you could potentially transfer germs from your hands onto your mask each time you touch it. Whilst it isn't something to get obsessed over, you do need to think about it as viruses can be transmitted by touch as well as through the air.

Here's what to do when you take off or touch your mask:

- Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Don't touch the front of the mask or your face.
- Carefully remove your mask by grasping the ear loops or untying the ties. For masks with a pair of ties, unfasten the bottom ones first, then the top ones.

- If your mask has filters, remove them and throw them away. Fold the mask and put it directly into the laundry or into a disposable or washable bag for laundering.
- Clean your hands again.

Masks Can Cause Mold and Health Issues

When they're kept clean and sanitized properly there should be no issue with mold and health issues caused by masks. If you have underlying health conditions then you should seek advice from your health provider on what the best course of action should be when it comes to wearing a mask.



Tips for Choosing a Fabric Mask

As well as sanitizing fabric masks and keeping them clean, there are some other things to think about when it comes to choosing a fabric mask in the first place.

You want to choose good quality fabric for your cloth mask. It isn't necessarily about the type of fabric that you choose - high quality fabrics have a thicker thread and are woven more tightly so this means less droplets pass through.

If you can see through a mask in the light, and clearly make out the individual threads in the mask when you hold it up to light then it may not be effective. Layers can be a way around this. Masks made from two layers are more effective than those made from one, and three layers is better than two.

From Nkeoma By Ivy & Livy - Nkeoma Blog Posts
December 01, 2021 at 12:02AM