

# Mask Guidance for Students

**The best masks are those that fit, don't gap around the edges and are worn consistently**



## Focus on comfort and fit

Masks should:

- Completely cover the nose and mouth
- Fit snugly against the sides of the face and not have any gaps
  - *Questions to ask: Do I feel air blowing in my eyes through the gaps at the nose? Do I feel air escaping by my cheeks?*
- Be handled only by the ear loops, cords, or head straps (not by the surface of the mask)
- Be worn all day at school
- Have a metal nose wire that can be squeezed to fit the bridge of the nose

## Pack a spare for school

Put an extra in your child's backpack, just in case.

## Skip the neck gaiters

Neck gaiters are porous and don't protect well against Covid-19. Same for scarves and bandanas.

## What to look for in a new mask

**Cloth/washable masks:** The best ones are three layers and have an adjustable nose wire. Consider investing in reusable masks with polypropylene layers/filters.

**Disposable masks:** Check the labels to ensure that they are made of multi-layered, non-woven material. They should not gap on the face. To help avoid gapping, knot the ear loops of the mask where they join the edge of the mask, then fold and tuck the unneeded material under the edges. → → →



## Consider adding a filter or double-masking

Many masks are sold with a filter layer built in. If your cloth mask has a pocket for a filter, you can insert a good-quality surgical mask. You can cut the surgical mask to fit inside the pocket.

If it's comfortable, children can also double-mask, by wearing a surgical mask closest to their face, with a snug-fitting cloth mask on top to eliminate any gaps.

## What to make of KN95s for kids?

KN95 respirators for children do exist, and are very effective in filtering out COVID particles. The downsides are they can be uncomfortable to wear for long periods of time, often require more effort to breathe, and must fit very well to be effective.

**Parents should take these factors into account, research, and choose the mask that works best for their children**