

Wear a Face Mask to Keep COVID-19 from Spreading

Face masks are required in Vermont public spaces.

You are required to wear a face mask or covering in public spaces in Vermont. This includes both indoor and outdoor spaces (for example, businesses, public buildings, parks) and group living settings (for example, long-term care facilities, nursing homes, apartment and condo complexes), and other places where it's not possible to stay at least 6 feet away from people you don't live with.

People with COVID-19 can spread the virus through respiratory droplets produced when they cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe. They can spread the virus even if they don't have any symptoms. Masks protect others around you as well as offer some protection to you. Wearing masks is one way we can help slow the spread of COVID-19 – in addition to staying at least 6 feet away from people you don't live with and other [prevention steps](#).



Examples of when a mask is required:

- Trips to any store, pharmacy, doctor or hospital
- At a gathering in the park with friends and family who do not live with you
- At any indoor or outdoor public event, such as a farmer's market or protest
- Riding the bus, taxi or ride share
- Walking on a busy and crowded street or trail

Examples of when mask is not required or should not be worn:

- Children under the age of 2
- Anyone who can't remove it without assistance
- Anyone who has a medical or behavioral reason for not wearing a mask
- Anyone who has trouble breathing
- Going for a walk in the woods or in your neighborhood alone or with people you live with
- Doing strenuous exercise or activities, such as running or bike riding

Bring a mask with you whenever you leave home and put it on anytime you are around people you don't live with. If you have a medical or developmental condition, or have trouble breathing, you do not have to show evidence or documentation of your condition.

What about wearing a mask in private spaces and settings?

We recommend that everyone wears a mask when they are in a private setting or space with people they don't live with. For example, everyone should wear a mask at a gathering with family and friends in your backyard or when you are riding in a car. If you are sick, wear a mask at home whenever you are around other people.

How to wear a mask:

A mask must be worn properly to be effective and avoid spreading the virus:

- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting it on.
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Make sure it fits snugly against the side of your face.
- Slip the loops over your ears or tie the strings behind your head.
- Do not touch it when you are wearing it.
- Remove it by handling only the ear loops or ties and fold the outside corners together.
- Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth, then wash your hands immediately after removing it.
- If you wear glasses, find a mask that fits closely over your nose or has a nose wire to help reduce fogging.

Wash your masks regularly, by hand or machine, using detergent.

Include your mask with your regular laundry. Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask. Use the highest heat setting and leave it in the dryer until it's completely dry. Have a few on hand so you can rotate them for washing and have enough clean ones ready to wear.

What to do during hot or cold weather:

During hot weather, if you feel like you are overheating and are having trouble breathing because it is hot, take off your mask, drink water, rest and seek shade or a cool place. It is important that you stay at least 6 feet away from others whenever possible, especially when you are not wearing a mask.

During cold weather, change your mask when it becomes wet. Keep a spare mask to replace the wet one, and put the wet one in a plastic bag until you get home. If you need to wear a scarf, ski mask or balaclava, wear it over your mask.

Make your own.

CDC has instructions on [how to make a mask](#) in several different methods, including machine or hand-sewn, a no-sew method with a t-shirt and scissors, and a no-sew method with a bandana.

For more information:

- [Frequently asked questions about masks](#)
- [Face coverings for children](#)
- [Where to buy face coverings in Vermont](#)
- [CDC's Guide to Masks](#)

