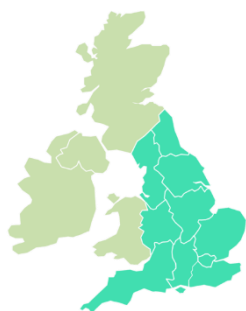




Wearing a face covering



This easy read guide is for people who live in **England**.



Coronavirus is a type of virus that can make people very unwell.



To stop more people getting ill we have had to make changes to how we live.



One of the changes is wearing face coverings. This easy read is all about wearing face coverings.

What is a face covering?



A face covering must fully cover your **nose** and **mouth**.



You can buy them from the shops or you can make them at home from an old t-shirt, or a scarf.



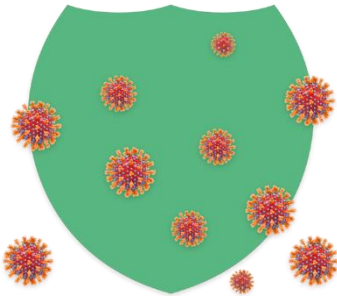
Some face coverings can be washed and used again.



Some can only be used once and must be thrown away.



Coronavirus can spread in the air from person to person in coughs, sneezes and our breath.



Face coverings can help stop the virus from spreading.



Some people can have coronavirus but not feel unwell themselves.



But they could still give the virus to other people.



So it is important for everyone to wear a face covering, even when they do not feel unwell.



What does the law say about face coverings?



It is now the law in England that most people must wear a face covering when they:



- Use public transport, like buses, trains, tubes, trams and taxis.



- Visit a hospital to see a patient, or to go to an outpatient appointment.



From **24 July** people will also have to wear face coverings in **shops** and **supermarkets**.



If people are not wearing a face covering in these places the police can make them leave or pay a fine.



Do I have to wear a face covering?



The law says that you must wear a face covering when you visit a hospital, or when use public transport. From 24 July this will include shops and supermarkets.



But the law also says that if it is very difficult for you to wear a face covering, you do not have to.



This means that all disabled people can still use public transport or visit a hospital or shop, even if they cannot wear a face mask.

Who does not have to wear a face covering?



Most disabled people still have to wear a face covering.



But the law says that if you have a very good reason not to wear a face covering, you do not have to.



Reasons not to wear a face covering include:



Your disability stops you putting it on, or taking it off.



Your disability stops you being able to wear the face covering.



Wearing a face mask makes breathing problems worse or makes you feel very unwell.



Wearing a face mask makes you feel very worried or upset.



The person you are with needs to lip read.



You need to escape from harm or danger.



You can take off your face covering for reasons including:



You need to take medicine.



You need to eat or drink (but only if you have to).



You need to get away from harm or danger.



You must also take off your face covering if the police, transport or hospital staff ask you to.



If wearing the face covering makes you feel unwell, or you are finding it hard to breathe, it is ok to take it off.



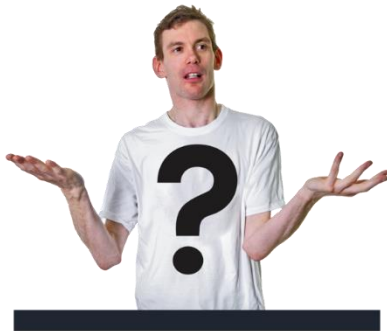
If you do not feel better soon, ask for help.



If you are on public transport, you may want to get off for a bit and take a break.



If you find that wearing a face mask always makes you feel unwell or makes it hard to breathe, you do not have to wear a face mask in future.



Where do I need to wear a face covering?



The law about face coverings is only for **public transport** and **hospitals**. From 24 July this will include **shops** and **supermarkets**.



But it is a good idea to wear a face covering when you go to other indoor places where there are people you do not live with.



You do not need to wear a face covering at home or outside.



How to wear a face covering:



Wash or use hand sanitiser on your hands before putting on the face covering



Try to only touch the straps of the face covering.



Do not touch the bit that will be going over your face.



Make sure your face covering covers your nose and mouth.



When you take your face covering off try to use the straps and not touch the front.



If you can only use your face covering once, throw it away.



Make sure you wash your hands or use hand sanitiser again.



If you can use your face covering more than once, wash it with your clothes in the washing machine before you use it again.



Make sure you have more than 1 face covering so you always have a clean one to put on.

What does wearing a face covering feel like?



It should always be easy to breathe when you are wearing a face covering.



If you find it hard to breathe,
take off the face covering
and tell someone.



It can feel strange at first to
cover your nose and mouth.



It can make you feel warmer
than usual.



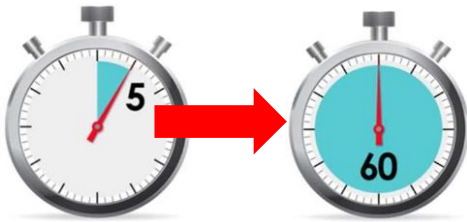
Sometimes it can make your
glasses go a bit cloudy.



It might smell different.



It is hard but try not to touch the face covering when you are wearing it.



At first, wearing a face covering for a long time might feel difficult.



You may find it helpful to practice wearing it at home before you go out for the first time.



Will wearing a face covering stop me from getting coronavirus?



No. Face coverings can only help to stop you from spreading the virus



But they do not stop you from catching it.

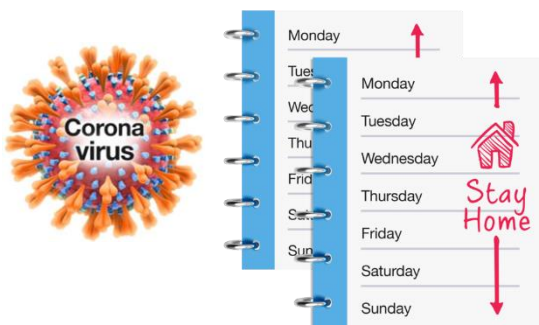


You wear a face covering to keep the people around you safer.

Other people wear a face covering to keep you safer.



We must all still follow the advice about washing our hands, [keeping clean](#) and [social distancing](#).



If you, or someone you live with may have coronavirus, you must still stay at home.