Cloth face masks
Fact sheet

To help slow the spread of COVID-19, the Victorian Government has made it mandatory for people living in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire to wear face coverings when they are leaving the house.

Studies have recently shown that, even when factoring in imperfections and human error, wearing face masks can reduce transmission of COVID-19 by around 60 per cent.

Face masks provide an added layer of protection but the best ways to reduce the transmission of coronavirus remain the same

— good hand hygiene, cough and sneeze etiquette and keeping a physical distance of 1.5 metres. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get tested.

In accordance with the Victorian Government, Glen Eira City Council recommends a cloth mask made of three layers — a mix of breathable fabrics to ensure adequate protection. Cloth masks are reusable, simple to make and easy to use. For instructions on how to make your own cloth mask, visit the Department of Health and Human Services' website.

How to make a cloth mask

A mask should fit securely around the face, specifically covering your nose and mouth areas. The face mask should be secured by ties at the back of your head, or by ear loops. Make sure your mask does not have holes or a valve. This can result in breathing out the virus if you have COVID-19.
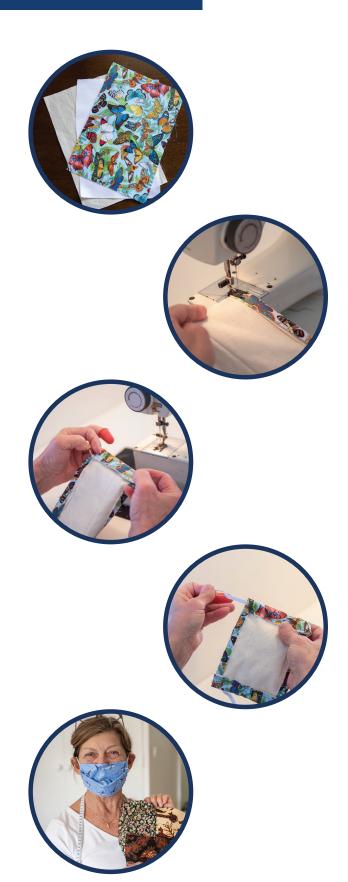
You will need:

Section	Quantity	Material type	Example materials
Outer layer	one piece (25cm x 25cm)	Water resistant fabric (polyester/pokpropylene)	- Clothing - Reusable shopping bags - Exercise clothing
Middle layer	one piece (25cm x 25cm)	Fabric Blends (cotton/polyester blend/ polypropylene)	- Clothing - Reusable shopping bags
Inner layer	one piece (25cm x 25cm)	Water-absorbing fabric (cotton)	- Clothing
Ear loops	two pieces (20cm each)	Elastic or string or cloth strips	- T-shirt - Shoelaces

Instructions

1. Cut out the outer layer, middle layer and inner layer pieces (see above for dimensions and material to use). Place the outer layer on the bottom, the middle layer in the middle, and the inner layer on top.

2. With the inner layer facing up, fold over one cm of the three pieces of material for the top and bottom edges and stitch at the borders (see red dotted lines).

3. With the inner layer facing up, fold over 1.5 cm of material for the side edges and stitch (see red dotted lines).

4. Thread a 20 cm piece of elastic, string or cloth strip through the wider edge on each side. Use a safety pin or large needle to thread it through. Knot the ends tightly or stitch them together.

5. Put on the mask with the outer layer facing away from your face. Adjust the mask to make sure it fits tightly over your nose and mouth. While wearing and removing the mask, do not touch the outer layer. Wash your hands before putting your mask on and after taking it off.

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Wearing your cloth mask

Before putting the mask on and taking it off, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser that's made up of more than 60 per cent alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth at all times. Store cloth face masks in a plastic bag. Your cloth face mask should be washed after each day of use.

Masks are not the only way to stay COVID-Safe. Wherever you can, keep 1.5 metres physical distance, wash your hands often and cough or sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get tested.

For more information or for any questions, contact the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 (24 hours) or visit the Department of Health and Human Services' website.