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About non-medical masks and face coverings

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How to protect others

The best thing you can do to prevent spreading COVID-19 is to wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol base.

To protect others, you should also:

- stay at home
- maintain a 2-metre physical distance from others
 - when physical distancing cannot be maintained, consider wearing a non-medical mask or face covering
- avoid touching your face, mouth, nose or eyes

What is an appropriate non-medical mask or face covering

When worn properly, a person wearing a non-medical mask or face covering can reduce the spread of his or her own infectious respiratory droplets.

Non-medical face masks or face coverings **should**:

- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- allow for easy breathing
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- maintain their shape after washing and drying

Some masks also include a pocket to accommodate a paper towel or disposable coffee filter, for increased benefit.

If possible, use different fabrics for each side of the mask, so you know which side faces your mouth and which side is out.

Non-medical masks or face coverings **should not**:

- be placed on children under the age of 2 years
- be placed on anyone unable to remove them without assistance or anyone who has trouble breathing
- be made of plastic or other non-breathable materials

- be made exclusively of materials that easily fall apart, such as tissues
- be secured with tape or other inappropriate materials
- be shared with others
- impair vision or interfere with tasks

How to put on a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Ensure the face covering is clean and dry.
2. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before touching the mask.
 - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.
3. Ensure your hair is away from your face.
4. Place the face covering over your nose and mouth and secure to your head or ears with its ties or elastics.
 - Adjust if needed to ensure nose and mouth are fully covered.
 - The mask should fit snugly to the cheeks and there should not be any gaps.
5. Repeat Step 2.

While wearing a non-medical mask or face covering, it is important to avoid touching your face. If you do touch your mask or face, you should immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. You can also use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.

How to remove a non-medical mask or face covering

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds.
 - If none is available, use hand sanitizer with a minimum 60% alcohol base.
2. Remove the face covering by un-tying it or removing the loops from your ears.
 - Avoid touching the front of the mask when removing it.
 - It can be placed in a plastic bag temporarily if you are not at home.
 - Make sure you close or zip seal the bag while storing it.
3. If you plan to reuse the mask, wash it before wearing it again.
 - It can be washed with hot, soapy water, or it can be washed with your other laundry.
 - If throwing it out, place it into a garbage bin or plastic bag.
4. After removing the face covering, repeat Step 1.

Instructions for making a sew and no-sew cloth face covering

The following instructions will help you to make your own face covering.

Sew method

Materials

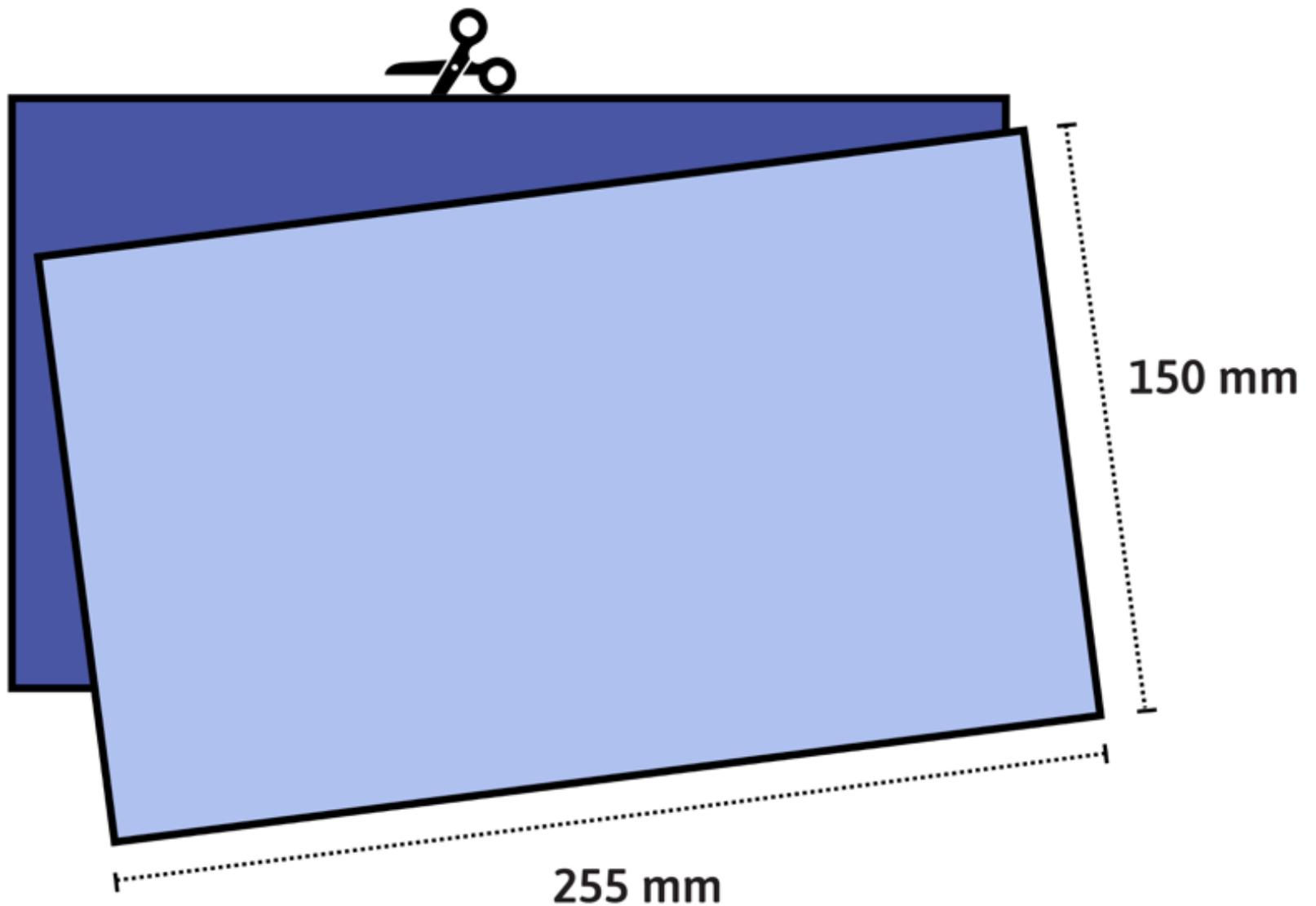
- Two 255 mm by 150 mm rectangles of cotton fabric
- Two 150 mm pieces of elastic (or rubber bands, string, cloth strips,

hair ties)

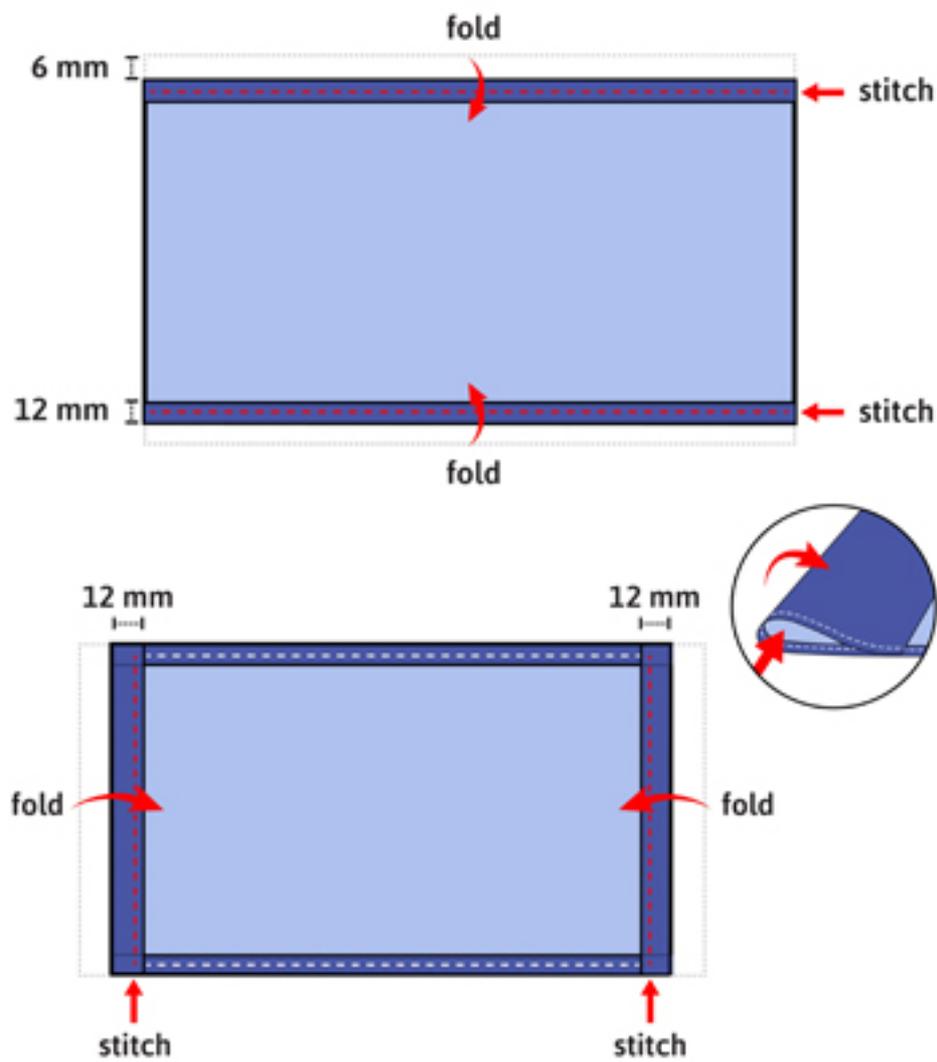
- Needle and thread (safety pins or a stapler will also work)
- Scissors
- Sewing machine (if available)

Instructions

Step 1. Cut out two 255 mm by 150 mm rectangles of cotton fabric. Use tightly woven cotton, such as quilting fabric or cotton sheets. T-shirt fabric will work too. Stack the 2 rectangles, as you will sew the face covering as if it was a single piece of fabric.

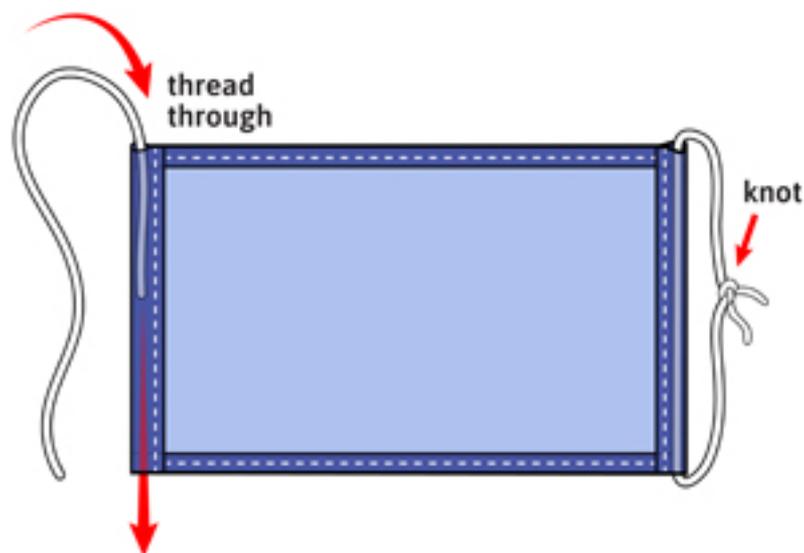


Step 2. Fold over the long sides 6 mm hem. Then fold the double layer of fabric over 12 mm along the short sides and stitch down.

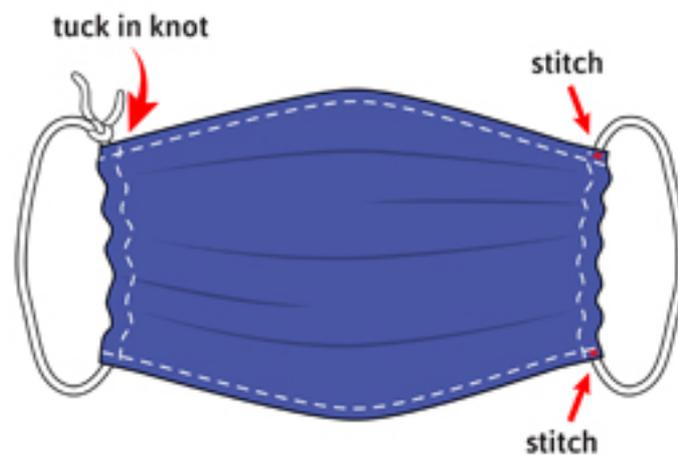


Step 3. Run a 150 mm length of 3 mm wide elastic through the wider hem on each side of the face covering. These will be the ear loops. Use a large needle or a bobby pin to thread it through. Tie the ends tight.

Use hair ties or elastic headbands if you do not have elastic. If you only have string, you can make the ties longer and tie the face covering behind your head.



Step 4. Gently pull on the elastic so that the knots are tucked inside the hem. Gather the sides of the face covering on the elastic and adjust so it fits your face. Then securely stitch the elastic in place to keep it from slipping.



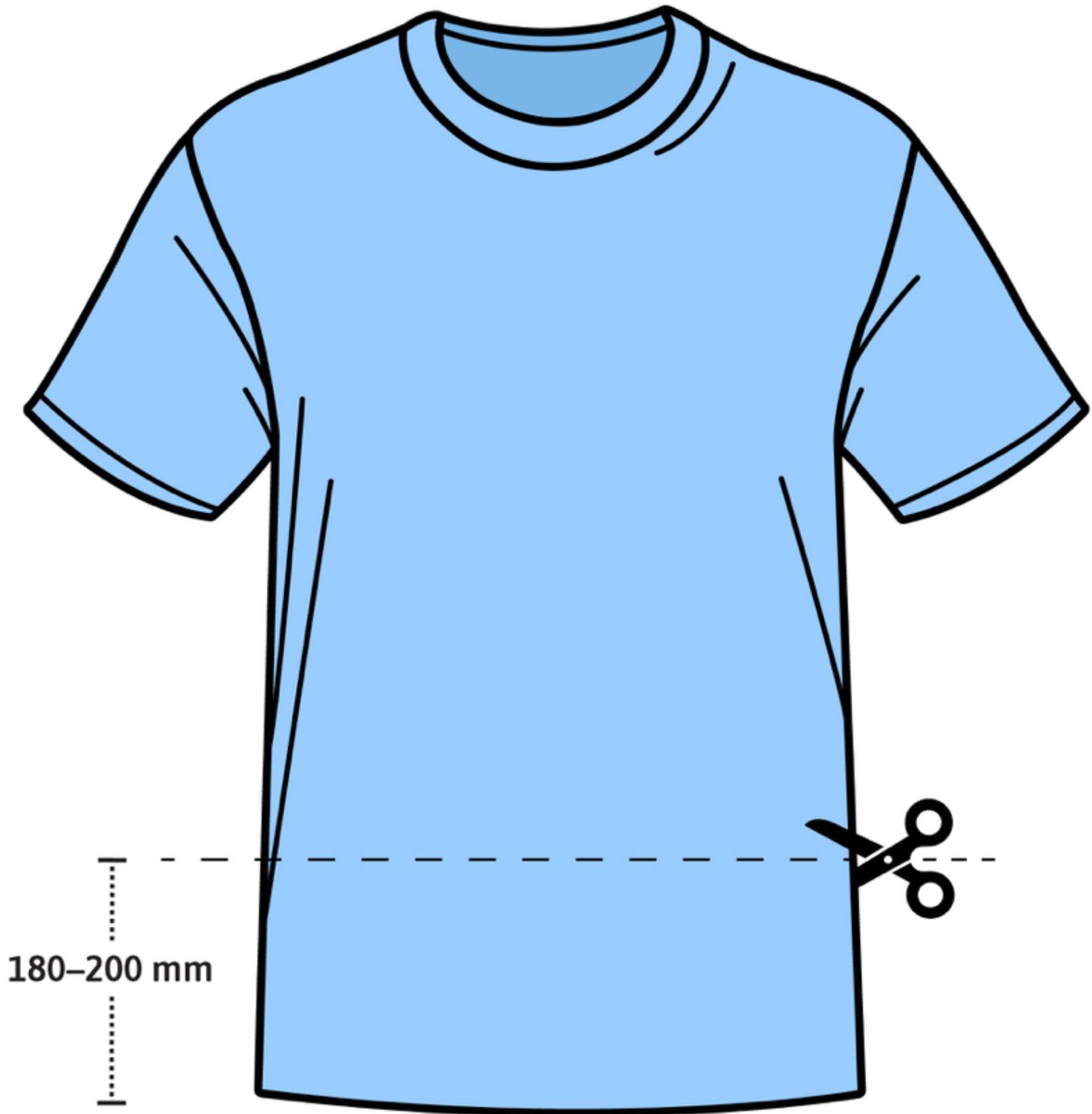
No-sew method using a T-shirt

Materials

- T-shirt
- Scissors

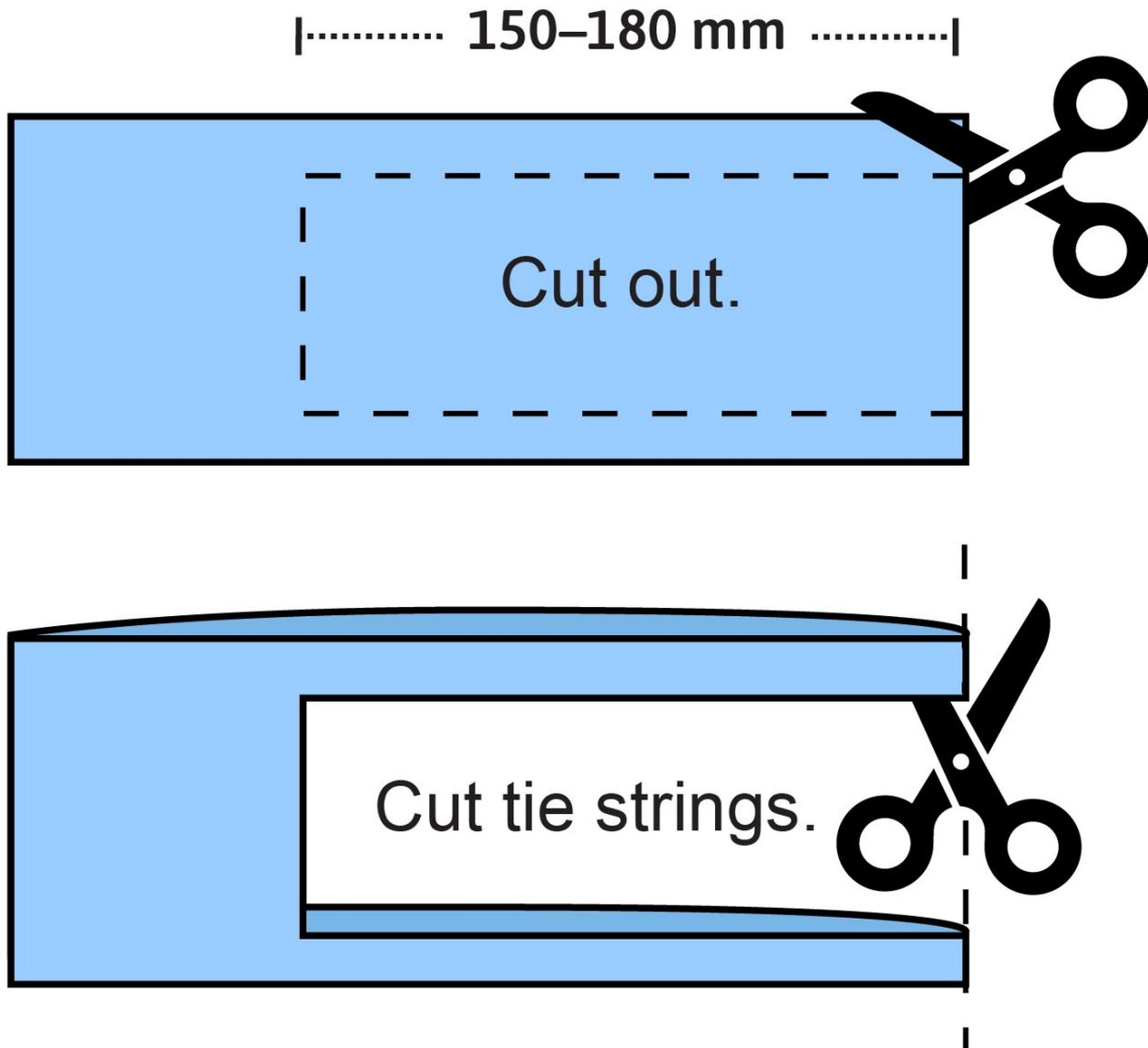
Instructions

Step 1. Cut the bottom off a T-shirt, measuring 180 mm by 200 mm.

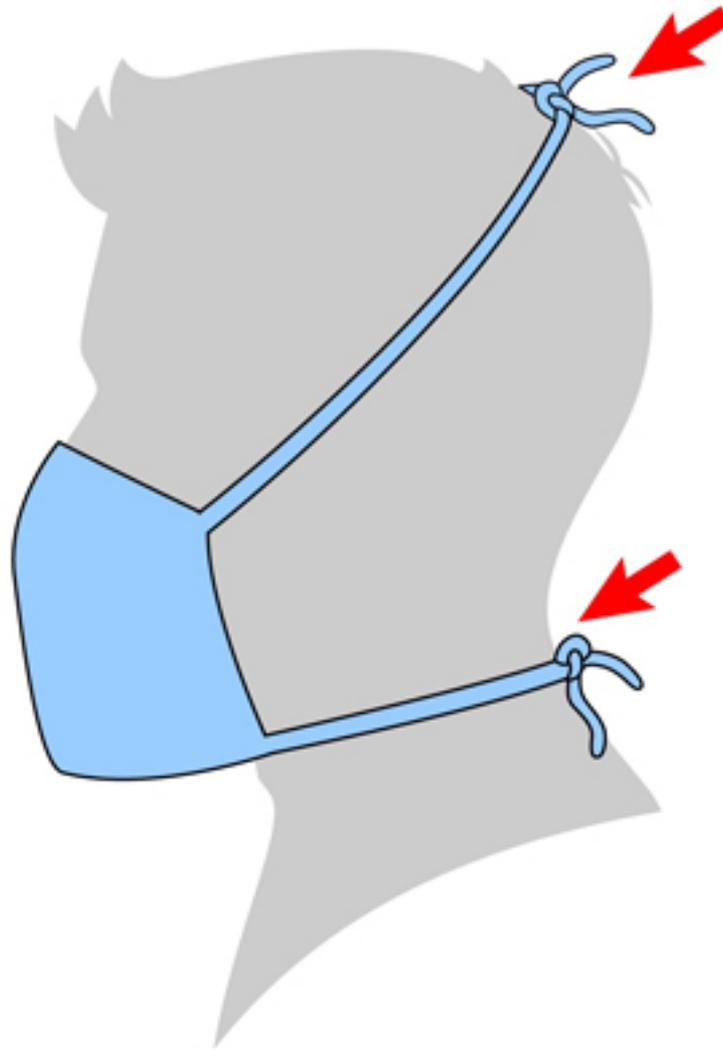


Step 2. With this fabric piece, cut out a 150 mm by 180 mm rectangle. Start your horizontal cut from one of the shorter sides, ensuring you have equal space between your cut and the long ends of the fabric. This

will leave you with a C-shape. Cut tie strings from the narrow parts of the C-shape by cutting vertically on the T-shirt crease. This will leave you with 2 sets of tie strings.



Step 3. Tie 1 set of strings around your neck, and the other set over the top of your head. The strings that attach over the top of your head will run along your cheeks and above your ears.



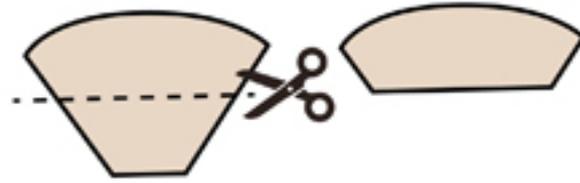
No-sew method using a bandana

Materials

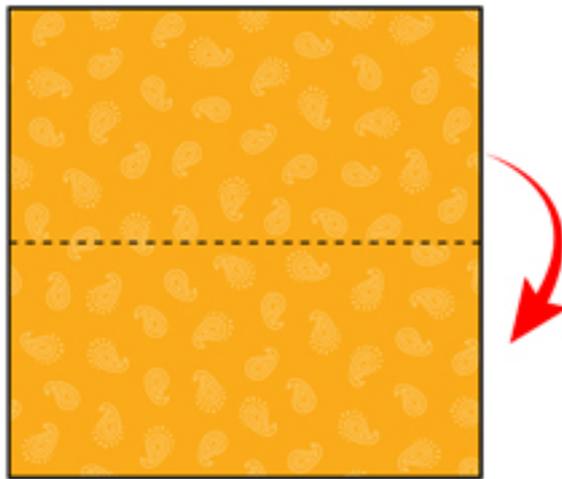
- Bandana (or square cotton cloth approximately 510 mm by 510 mm)
- Coffee filter or a folded paper towel
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

Instructions

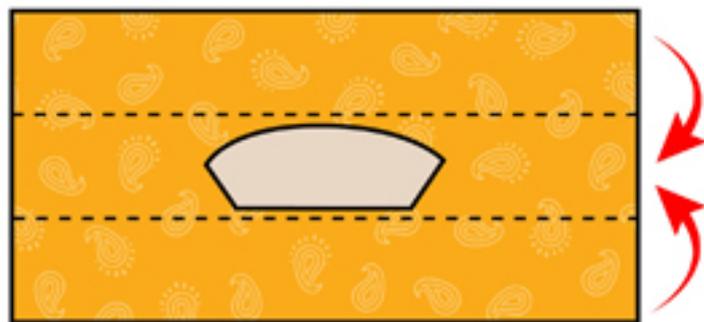
Step 1. Cut a coffee filter horizontally across the middle. Keep the top with the rounded part.



Step 2. Fold a square bandana in half.



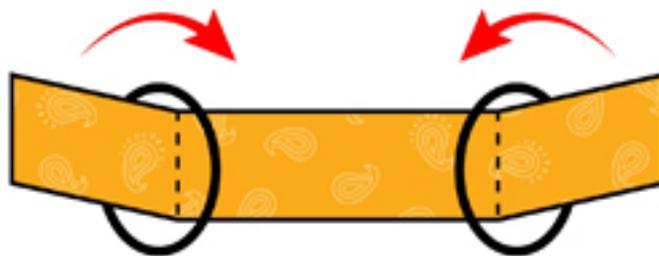
Step 3. Put the rounded top of the cut filter in the center of your folded bandana. Fold the top of the bandana down over the filter. Then fold the bottom of the bandana up over the filter.



Step 4. Insert the folded cloth into 2 rubber bands or hair ties, about 150 mm apart.



Step 5. Fold sides to the middle and tuck around the bands or hair ties.



Step 6. Pull the bands or hair ties around your ears.



Related links

- [Use caution when wearing homemade cloth masks](#)

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