



Masks for Medical Heroes

Learn how to easily sew a surgical face mask with this step-by-step tutorial.



Currently, the supply of surgical masks is at a critical all-time low throughout the entire nation. For those of us who sew and can assist your Girl Scouts, we can band together and make a huge difference in this time of need! In this tutorial, we will be sewing a standard face mask with fabric ties and an inside pocket. At the end of this guide you will find where you can receive a free patch and how to distribute these masks to medical professionals, safely.

While wearing a homemade face mask will not prevent someone from catching COVID-19, it can decrease the spread of large particles when someone sneezes or coughs. Face masks can be used in cases of the flu, cold and other airborne illnesses. As a reminder, these masks should only be worn if you are sick or caring for someone who is sick.



SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 1-piece cotton fabric 10"x8" (front of mask)
- 2-Pieces cotton fabric 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" (Pocket flaps on back side)
- 2-2"x 44" cotton strips (for Cotton cloth ties)
- Ruler or cutting mat, scissors, straight pins, iron & iron board and a sewing machine or needle & thread



Step 1: Fabric Ties

Take one of the 2"x 44" strips and fold in half long ways, then iron in place.



Next, open the fold up and fold the fabric strip long edges in so they meet in the center, again ironing in place.



Lastly, fold in half the long edges and iron in place.

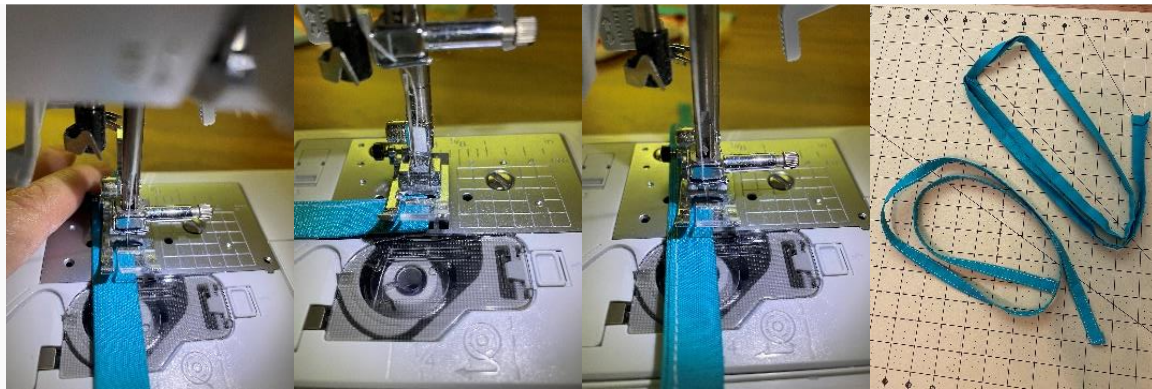




To clean up ends, fold inward 1/2" then fold a second time to iron in place. Repeat on both ends.



Sew down the open edge to secure using a straight basic stitch, lining your needle right on the edge of the open edge. Sew the whole side closed. When you reach the end, square off the end and continue down the other side of the strip to square off the other end.



You will repeat this with both 2" x 44" long strips.

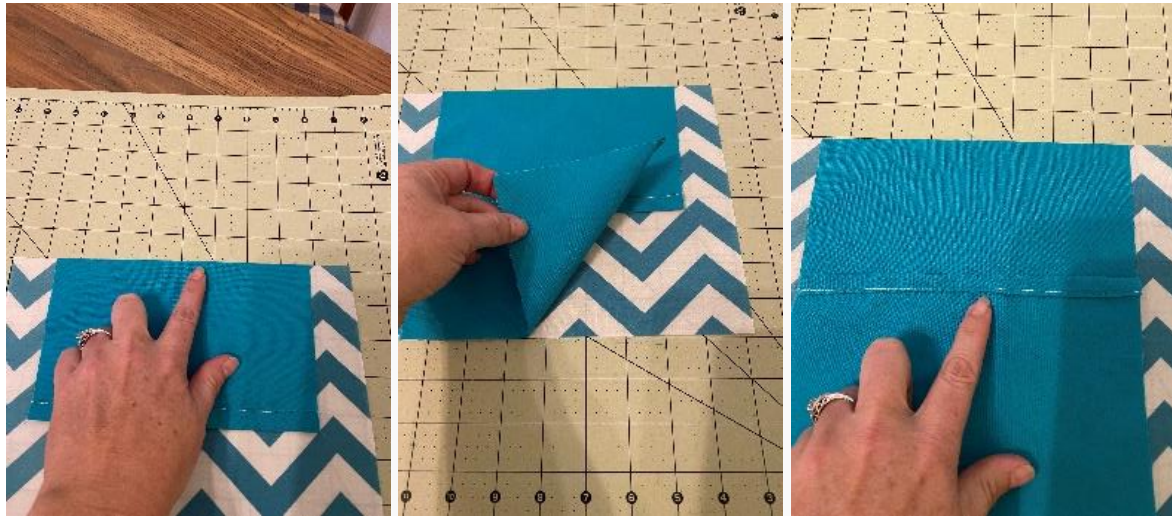


Step 2: Fabric Mask

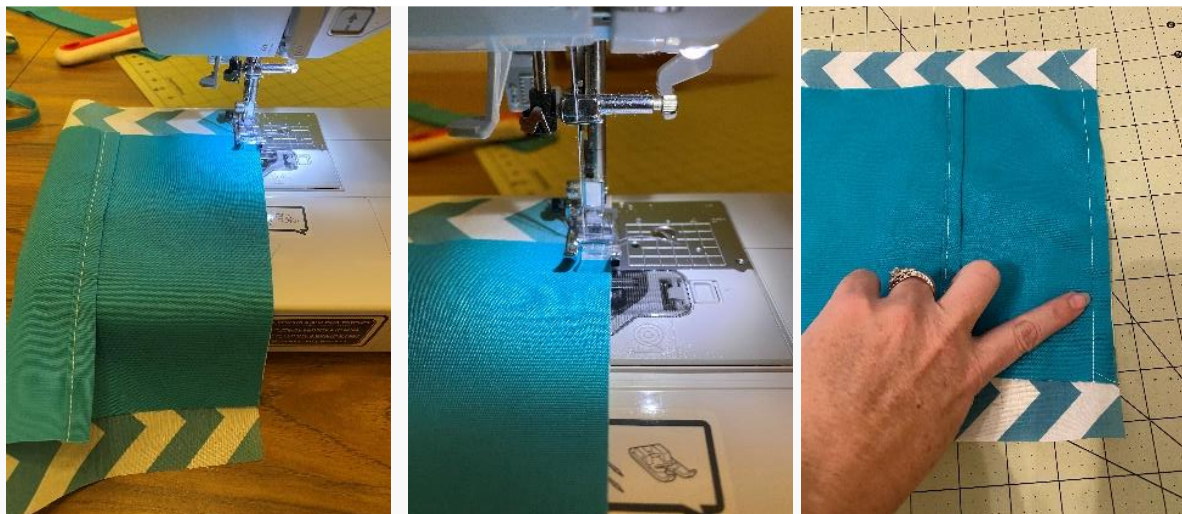
First you must prepare the 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" fabric for the pocket. Lay flat and take the longer side raw edge, fold over a 1/2" flap down, then iron in place. Then fold that same side a second 1/2", fold down, and again iron in place. Stitch down that entire length to secure it using a straight basic stitch, lining your needle right on the edge of the open edge. Repeat with the second 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" fabric square.



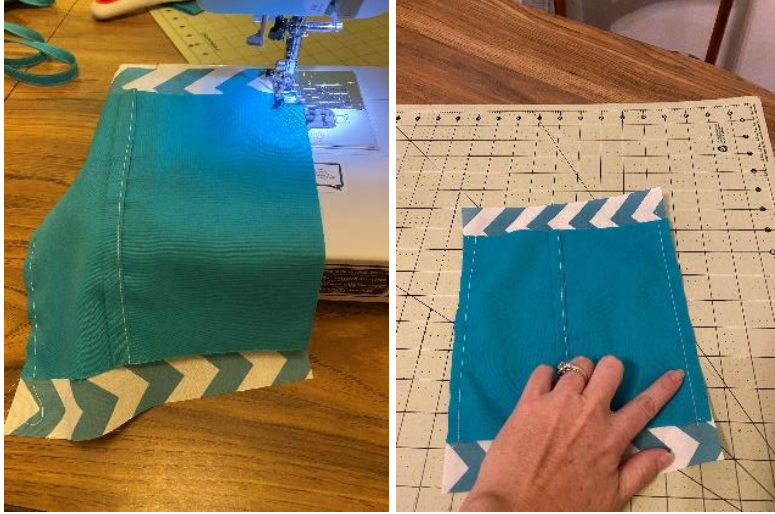
Next, sew the two sides of the mask together by placing the large 10" x 8" mask square front side or printed side up. Place one of the two pocket sides raw side up, matching the top of the main piece raw side (pin in place) to the pocket side (solid color piece). Make sure the raw folded edge is facing up on both sides so that when we turn the fabric right side out, the pocket will have a clean edge. Then place the second pocket side raw side down, matching the bottom raw side down (pin in place) and leaving the two folded-over clean edges overlapping in the middle of the mask.



After you get them pinned in place, sew both the top raw edge and bottom raw edge together. Sew a quarter of an inch down with a basic straight stitch.



Do that for both sides.



Then iron it with both flaps open to help flatten seams. Flip it right side up and iron the seams again.



Now place your mask right side up, and we are going to create pleats or folds about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (it helps to pin them in place). You will make 3 of these pleats. Try to keep them all even-looking, but they don't have to be perfect because after sewing they will be spread out when someone wears them.

Once you have all your pleats done and pinned, you will want to give them a good iron to help keep them in place.



Now that you have them ironed with the pins still in place, sew along the lining side (the raw edge of the pockets) all the way across and again on the other side along the raw edge all the way across.

It will hold all the pleats in place.



Now you will take care of those the raw edges on both sides of the mask by placing the mask pocket side up. With your iron fold the raw edge inward once about 1/2", iron into place, then fold that same side again 1/2" in and iron in place. Do that for both sides of the mask.

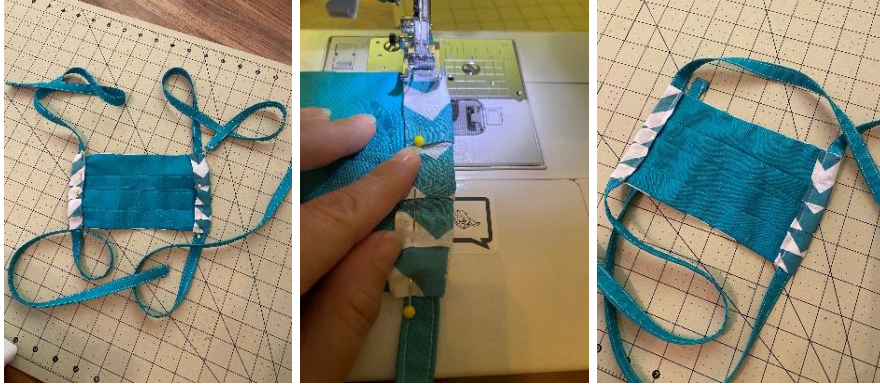


Next you will add the fabric ties. Take the fabric ties and fold in half to find the center of the tie.

Once you find the center of the tie, place the center of the tie on the center of one of the raw edges of the mask. Lift up on the fold and slip the tie underneath. Move the tie into the back of the fold so that you can lay the flap down and pin, still catching the tie in place. Pin it all the way across so that the tie does not move during sewing. Do that to both sides.



When pinned in place on both sides, sew down on both ends of mask securing the ties in place under the folded flaps. Move the ends of the ties out of the way so you don't accidentally sew one of the ties. Pull pins out when secured.



You should be able to pull apart the back side flaps to reveal the pocket. This allows medical staff to insert their paper masks or filler of some kind to help keep them safe.



Now you have the finished product!





Resources & Delivery

Once your mask(s) are complete you can mail or drop them off directly at your local hospital.

Receiving the Patch

1. Fill out the [following form](#) once you have completed at least one mask and donated it per the instructions above.
2. Send a photo or two to media@girlscoutscoc.org of your completed work.
3. Share this program with a Girl Scout friend!