

# The Coronavirus Outbreak





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By Eileen Tran  
Original work by Tara Parker-Pope

For all the frontline healthcare workers and essential workers in food delivery, grocery stores, laundromats, funeral homes, assistance programs, animal agriculture, public transportation, and many many more.

Also for my parents Dang Dung Tran and Nga Hoang who decided to keep their dry cleaning business open in Philadelphia. During the pandemic, they are providing free dry cleaning for uniforms of essential workers and they are sewing masks for the public and healthcare facilities.

**“Coming out of isolation will be like  
opening Christmas presents on  
Christmas Day.**

**Just don't be disappointed if you  
don't get what you want.”**

**Anthony T. Hincks**

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# What You Can Do About Coronavirus Right Now

You have an essential role to play in slowing the spread of the new coronavirus. The good news is that small changes in personal behavior can buy time — slowing the outbreak, preventing hospitals from becoming overwhelmed and reducing cases until scientists develop treatments and, eventually, a vaccine. Here's some practical advice from doctors and public health experts to protect yourself and your community.

## 1. Prevent Infection

Slow the outbreak by keeping yourself and others from getting sick.

## 2. Prepare

Stock up on food responsibly and create a household plan.

## 3. Stay Home

Stay at home to protect others, and use these strategies to keep life as normal as possible.

## 4. Recover From Illness

What to do if you or a family member gets sick.

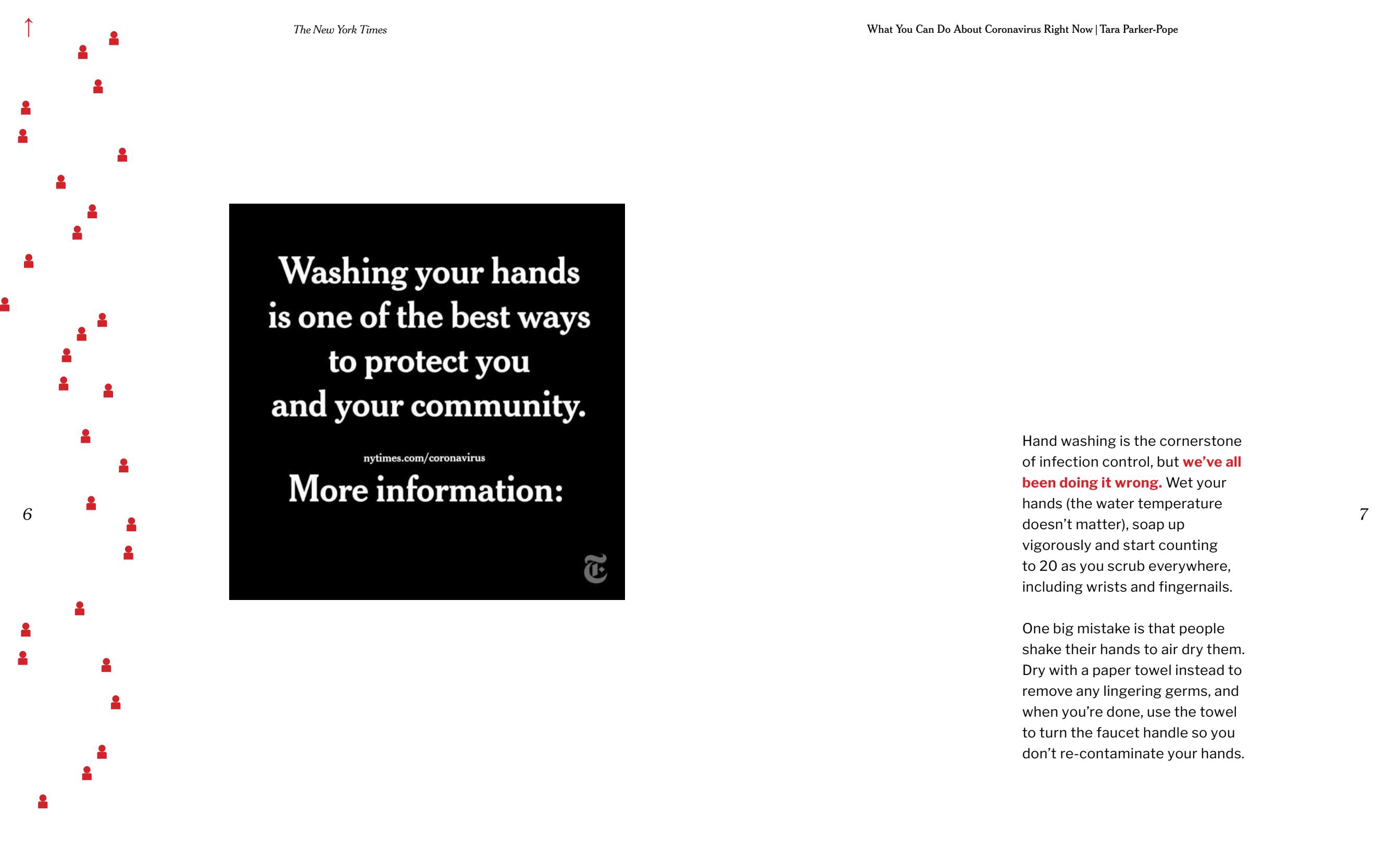
Some pages in this book have interactive elements. Make sure to hover over each page to discover options.

## 1. You Can Prevent Infection

Slow the outbreak by keeping yourself and others from getting sick.

Many of us probably will contract the new coronavirus at some point and experience only mild illness. So why not just get sick and get it over with? Because people at higher risk — older people and those with existing health problems — depend on the actions of everybody else to stay safe. In the space of a month, one infected person leads to about 400 additional cases, according to Adam Kucharski, a mathematician who specializes in disease outbreaks.

The impact just one person can have on spreading the virus — or tamping it down — is exponential. In the space of a month, one infected person leads to about **400 additional cases**, according to [Adam Kucharski](#), a mathematician who specializes in disease outbreaks.



Washing your hands  
is one of the best ways  
to protect you  
and your community.

[nytimes.com/coronavirus](http://nytimes.com/coronavirus)

More information:



Hand washing is the cornerstone of infection control, but **we've all been doing it wrong**. Wet your hands (the water temperature doesn't matter), soap up vigorously and start counting to 20 as you scrub everywhere, including wrists and fingernails.

One big mistake is that people shake their hands to air dry them. Dry with a paper towel instead to remove any lingering germs, and when you're done, use the towel to turn the faucet handle so you don't re-contaminate your hands.

Sick of singing ‘Happy Birthday’ while washing hands to fight coronavirus? Try these pop hits instead

**Beyoncé, “Love on Top”:**

“Baby it’s you / You’re the one I love / You’re the one I need / You’re the only one I see / Come on baby it’s you / You’re the one that gives your all / You’re the one I can always call / When I need to make everything stop / Finally you put my love on top”

**Dolly Parton, “Jolene”**

“Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene / I’m begging of you please don’t take my man / Jolene, Jolene, Jolene, Jolene / Please don’t take him just because you can”

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**Lizzo, “Truth Hurts”**

“Why men great ‘til they gotta be great? / Don’t text me, tell it straight to my face / Best friend sat me down in the salon chair / Shampoo press, get you out of my hair / Fresh photos with the bomb lighting / New man on the Minnesota Vikings / Truth hurts, needed something more exciting / Bom bom bi dom bi duwm bum bay”

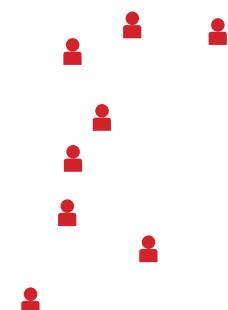
**Eminem, “Lose Yourself”**

“You better lose yourself in the music, the moment / You own it, you better never let it go / You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow / This opportunity comes once in a lifetime / You better lose yourself in the music, the moment / You own it, you better never let it go / You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow / This opportunity comes once in a lifetime”

**Natasha Bedingfield, “Unwritten”**

“Feel the rain on your skin / No one else can feel it for you / Only you can let it in / No one else, no one else / Can speak the words on your lips / Drench yourself in words unspoken / Live your life with arms wide open / Today is where your book begins / The rest is still unwritten”

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Keep your...

The main way communities are trying to slow the virus is to practice social distancing.

Try to keep six feet of personal space in public areas to avoid flying droplets from a sneeze or cough (droplets that carry the virus can travel about that distance).

...distance

Avoid cramped workspace and standing shoulder to shoulder with people in bars or subways. The C.D.C. recommends no gatherings larger than 10 people in places with minimal to moderate spread and no gatherings of any size in harder hit areas.

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Exactly how far apart  
should you be from  
another person?

This black line on the next page  
measures that length. Can you  
guess its height?

Keep scrolling.

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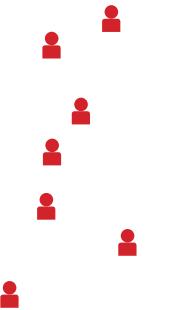


Keep going.

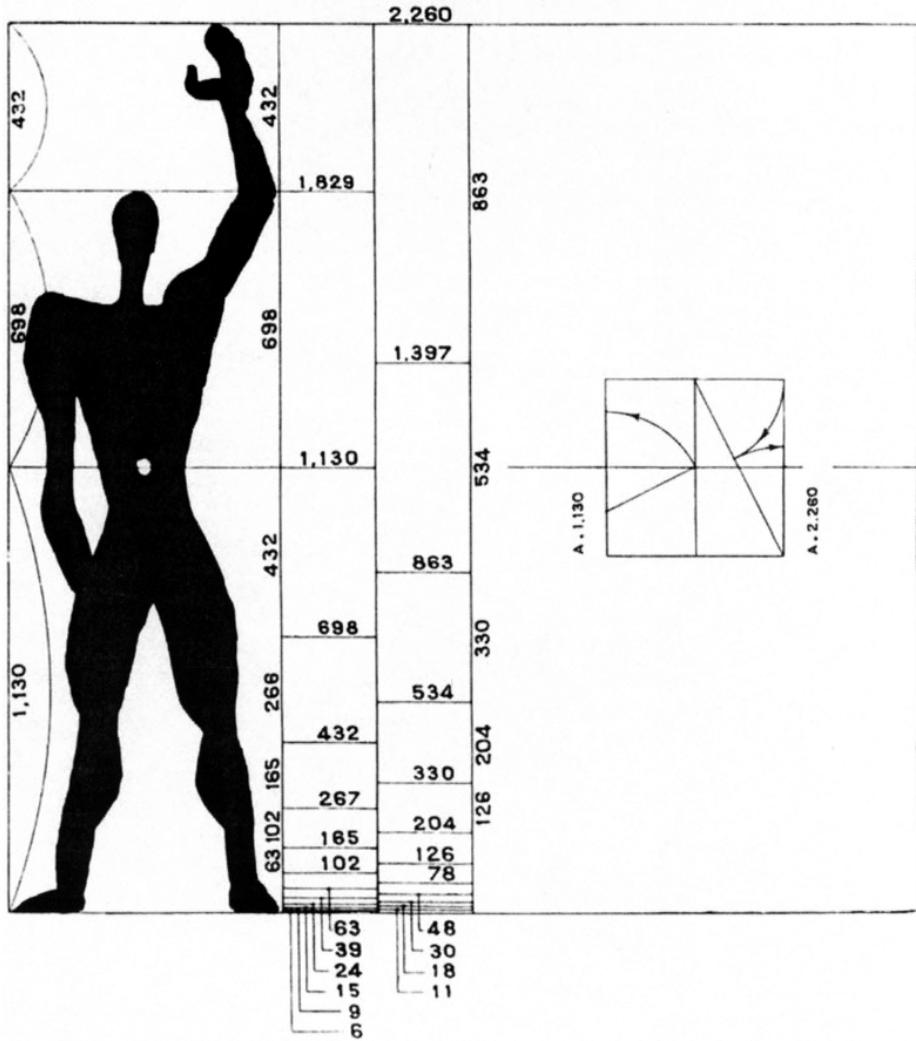
Nope not yet.

Halfway there...

If you can read this, keep going.



Almost there...



Le Corbusier's Modular Man for scale.

That was 6 feet  
of scrolling!

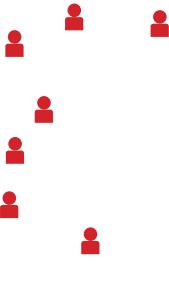
Stay 6 feet between each person  
if you must leave the house for  
any essential errands.

## 2. You Can Prepare Yourself and Your Family

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You can stock up on food and supplies without contributing to shortages. And every family should have a plan for coping with an emergency.

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### Stop Hoarding!

Panic-buying has prompted some people to fight over toilet paper, pilfer from each other's shopping carts and even steal sanitizer and masks from hospitals. Make a commitment to your community and yourself that you will not take more than what you need for a few weeks at a time. Be reassured that while there may sometimes be empty shelves and delays, food makers are confident in the supply chain. If you can't find an item, talk to your grocery or pharmacy manager to find out when new shipments

are expected. Remember, if you stockpile supplies, that means someone else — probably more vulnerable than you — won't have what they need.

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Try for a 90-day supply of prescription medications

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To plan for quarantines or store closings, have an **extra supply of prescription drugs.** Whether you can do that depends on your prescription drug plan. Some plans allow you to get a 90-day supply by signing up for mail order. Other plans may allow you to request a “vacation override” to get an extra month of medication if you plan to leave town. Talk to your pharmacist and your doctor about how you might stock up on medication and whether any of the drugs you take are at risk for shortages.

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## Get to know your neighbors

Only one in four adults knows most of their neighbors, according to a [Pew Research Center study](#). Reach out to neighbors (from a safe distance) about how they are coping with virus worries. Exchange phone numbers so you can help each other out with mail or deliveries or pet sitting if one of you becomes ill or needs to be away for an extended period of time.

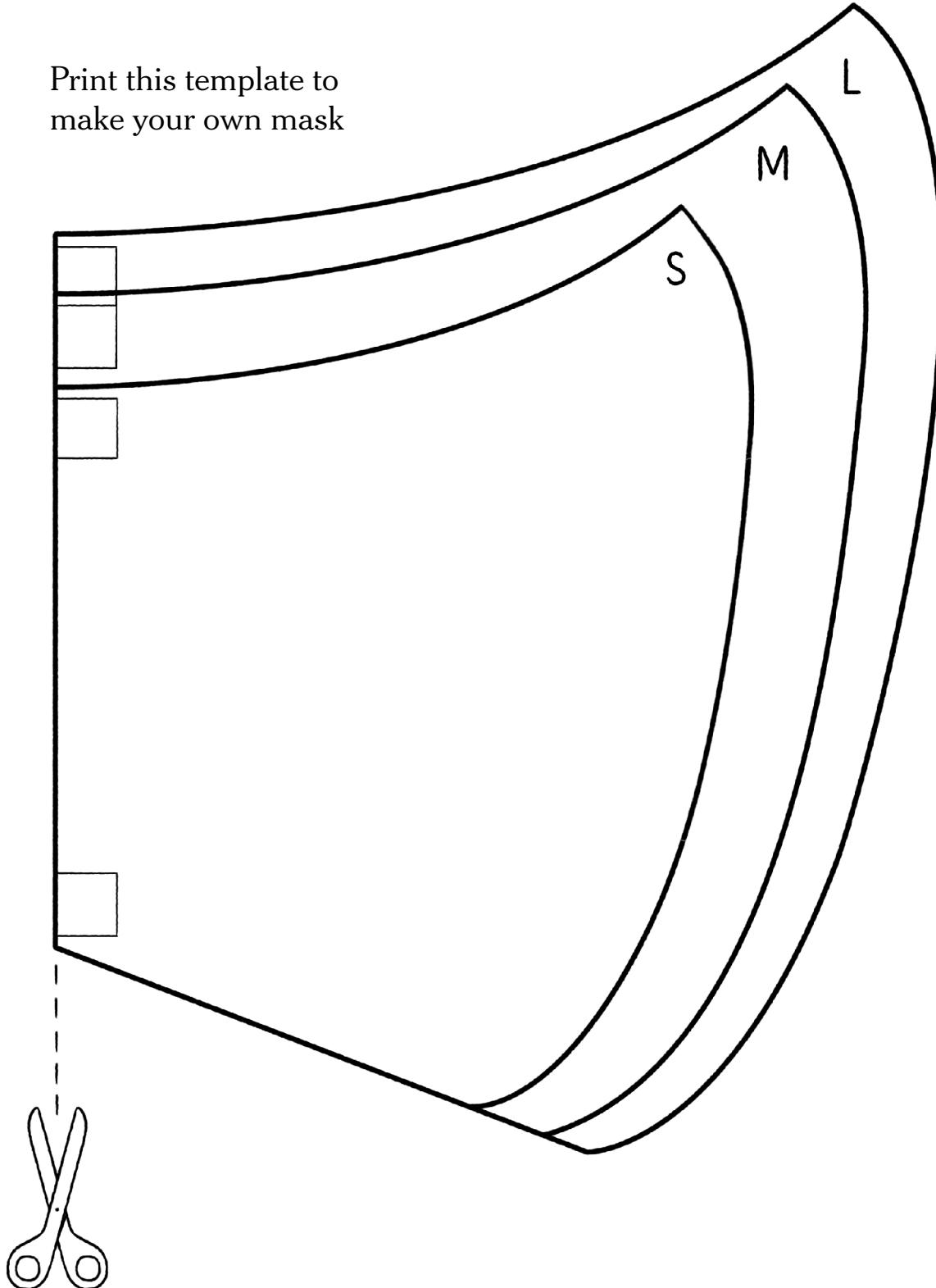
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## Keep important documents handy

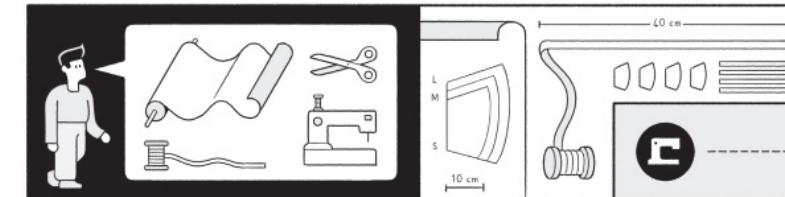
In case of emergency, is there someone who can retrieve needed documents? And would they be able to find them? Keep a digital file or a lock box with essential documents. This includes things like passport, birth certificate and social security card, but also important health documents, like copies of health insurance and prescription drug cards, a list of any allergies or health worries, a list of prescriptions, family contact information and health care proxies and directives.

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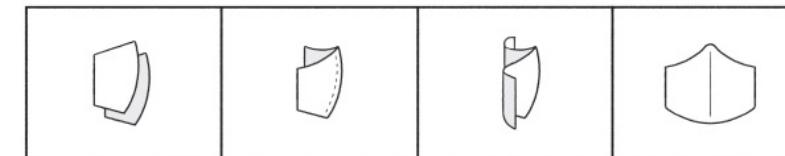
Print this template to make your own mask



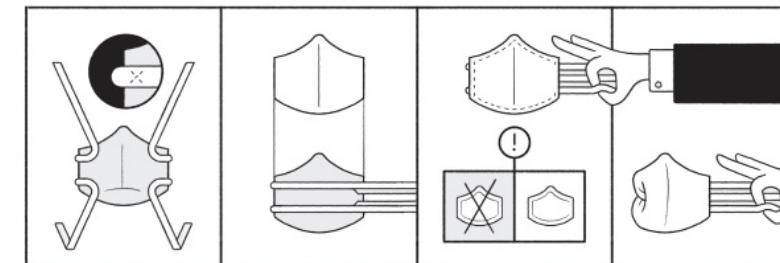
① You'll need scissors, sewing supplies and a breathable, tightly woven cotton fabric.



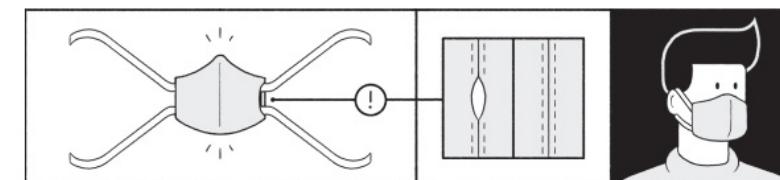
② Using the template (you can download it below), cut four pieces of fabric. Take two pieces and sew the curved side together, creating the front of the mask. Then do it again for the other two pieces of fabric, creating the back side of the mask.



③ Now you will sew the ribbons. Place one side of the mask on the table, seam side down. Place a ribbon on each corner with the ends slightly peaking over the edges. Sew the ribbons in place. Pull all ribbons across the right side. Place the other mask on top, seam side up, sandwiching the ribbons. Sew the two masks together, leaving the area on the right side of the mask unsewn. Then turn the mask inside-out by pulling the ribbons through the unsewn hole.

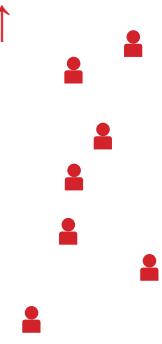


④ Now that the mask is reversed, sew the remaining gap closed. You're done!



Illustrations by Giacomo Gaminbini

[Original article link here](#)



## Make sure you have a thermometer

Given that fever is a common symptom of coronavirus, it's a good idea to take your temperature with a reliable thermometer. Many stores have sold out of thermometers, but keep trying. Drug stores restock supplies daily, so ask when the next shipment is expected. Or ask a friend if they have one to spare. Just make sure you clean it with alcohol.

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## Know your hospital

In any emergency, would you know how to get to your closest hospital? Is

the closest hospital an in-network or out-of-network hospital on your insurance plan? Knowing the answers to these questions now will help you move quickly in any emergency. And it makes sense to rehearse a little

— drive by your hospital so you know where the ER entrance is.

### 3. Stay Home

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Based on the pattern of the virus in other countries, many of us are going to be working from home and sheltering in place for weeks or possibly months at a time. Here are some strategies to keep life as normal as possible.

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#### How and when to stay home

[The rules change by the day](#), and there's always a chance local, state or federal authorities will impose more restrictions on movement. Here's a guide:

#### **Social distancing**

Social distancing is ultimately about creating physical distance between people who don't live together. At the community level, it means closing schools and workplaces and canceling events like concerts and sporting events. For individuals, it means keeping six feet of distance between you and others while in public (indoors and outdoors) and avoiding physical contact with people who do not share your home. For children, this means no playdates or group sports — other than with siblings who live together.

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**Shelter in place** In a nutshell, this means don't leave the house unless you absolutely have to. Don't socialize with people outside your family. Don't go to a friend's house for dinner or invite someone over. Go outside only for essential needs: groceries, prescriptions or to walk the dog. Outdoor exercise is permitted, as long as you keep six feet between you and non-family members.

**Self-monitoring** Self-monitoring is for people who learn they might have been exposed to the virus but had only distant contact with the infected person. This means regularly checking your temperature and watching for signs of coronavirus infection, including fever, shortness of breath and coughing. A person who is self-monitoring should already be following community rules for staying home and limiting interactions with others.

**Self-quarantine** This term is used to separate and restrict the movement of someone who is well but who recently had close contact with a person who later was diagnosed with the virus. A person in self-quarantine should stay home, and avoid going to the grocery store or interacting with the public even on a limited basis for a 14-day period. A person in self-quarantine should sleep in a separate space from family members.

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**Self-isolation** Anyone who has a diagnosed case or a suspected case based on their symptoms should self-isolate. A person in isolation should stay in a separate room with no or minimal contact with the rest of the household (including pets) and use a separate bathroom if possible.

## Create structure

Wake up at the same time each day, shower and get dressed in comfortable clothes.

Create a task list and establish working hours. Do the same for your children.

Take a lunch break. If your children are at home, schedule lunch and a brief recess for all of you outside, if community rules allow it.

Plan check-ins with work colleagues to stay connected.

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Stop work at the end of the work day at the same time you would normally leave the office. Don't forget to take weekends off!

Use your normal commuting time for self-care. You've just gained a significant amount of free time that in the past you used for commuting. Be mindful of the time bonus and use it for self-care, time with family or pleasure, like reading a book or listening to a podcast.

Create a journal and reflect on your activity every day.

**How are you feeling today?**

**What did you eat today?**

**Who did you talk to today?**

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## 4. You Can Recover From Illness

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Many of us may get sick. But most people — about 80 percent — will get mild to moderate symptoms.

Even so, many people are frightened about the uncertainty of a new disease and how to seek medical care. Here's what to do if you get sick.

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### How do I get tested?

It's very possible that even if you have coronavirus, you will never be tested. This is frustrating to patients who have symptoms and want to know if they should isolate and warn friends about exposure. But right now, widespread testing of everyone with symptoms is not happening in the United States. People most likely to be tested are those who arrive at emergency rooms with serious symptoms, those at high risk or those who have come in direct contact with a diagnosed case. This could change:

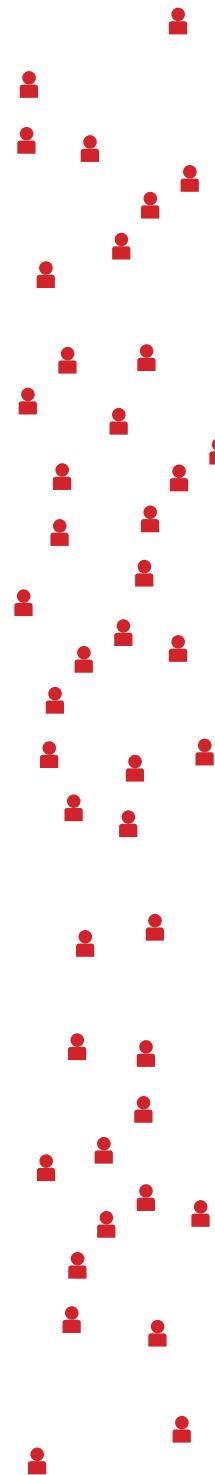
Testing could become more common if public health officials adopt a more aggressive testing strategy. Check the C.D.C. website and your local health department for advice about how and where to be tested.

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## What are the symptoms of Covid-19?

The defining symptoms of Covid-19 in adults are a cough, fever and shortness of breath. Some people get sore throats and muscle aches, much like the flu. Many people get gastrointestinal symptoms. A peculiar symptom, for some, is a loss of taste and smell. Temperature checks are a key part of screening at hospitals and airports, so if you have cold or flu symptoms, it's a good idea to take your own temperature frequently. While it's tough to distinguish coronavirus from the flu, we do know that common

cold and allergy symptoms like a runny nose and sneezing are not typical symptoms of coronavirus in adults. However, reports from China show that a runny, stuffy nose sometimes can be a sign of the illness in children. Given that we are in the midst of a global pandemic, err on the side of caution. If you or your child is coughing, sneezing or has a sore throat, it's best to stay home and keep your distance from others.



## Learn the warning signs that should cause concern

If you become ill, check with your doctor about your symptoms and when you should seek emergency care. The C.D.C. says the following symptoms should prompt you to seek emergency treatment:

- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face
- Any other symptom that is severe or concerning

## Do you have an underlying condition?

**Respiratory symptoms are a great cause for concern for the elderly,** as well as people with asthma or lung disease or a history of pneumonia, heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, a compromised immune system due to illness or a drug therapy, or a person has recently been treated for cancer. Patients with these conditions are more likely to be under a doctor's care already, so it's a good idea to reach out to your doctor by phone or email at the onset of symptoms. A doctor who knows your situation can help

you navigate the system and advise you when to seek treatment for coronavirus symptoms.

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## How to care for people at home who have symptoms or a confirmed case of Covid-19



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# Resources

The originl article can be found [here](#). It was last updated April 11, 2020

The New York Times is providing free access to the most important news and useful guidance on the coronavirus outbreak to help readers understand the pandemic.

To read more about the pandemic from the New York Times, click [here](#).

To find updates about coronavirus from the CDC, click [here](#).

# Acknowledgements

Eileen Tran designed this e-book with help from instructor Aki Nurosi and teacher assistant Sara Martinez. This book was designed to help others learn crucial information about the coronavirus during the pandemic. This e-book was finished in the Spring of 2020.

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