

Making Rectangular Face Mask

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Last update: 4/8/20 -- Added info about filtering material. Minor changes to step #8.

MASK OPTIONS: These instructions are *based on the [video instructions](#)* created by Beth Eischen Call. She makes a rectangular mask with two layers of cotton fabric and a pocket for adding more filtering material inside. She moves pretty fast in the video, so the steps are broken down here for clarity. Best options for filtering material is surgical sheeting. Lacking, a piece cut from a tea towel, shop towel, T-shirt, or antimicrobial pillow case would be helpful. Check out this article from the Washington Post, 4/8/20: [Answers to your DIY face mask questions, including what material you should use.](#)

Included in these instructions is a second option: a mask without a pocket but with a third inner flannel layer sewn in. Since the inner layer is washable, it need not be removed for cleaning and thus can be sewn into the mask permanently. It's a good option when you don't know what filtering materials will be available to the end user.

There are two options for ties: elastic ear loops or four corner ties. Either of these can be used with either of the rectangular mask designs. Directions for inserting an optional nosepiece are included for both mask designs. The nose piece helps the mask fit over the bridge of the nose better for a tighter fit. It is recommended. The nose piece can be made from a 5" piece of pipe cleaner, floral wire, or a heavy twist tie like those found in a garden shop.

WHICH DESIGN? Which mask design and which tie you use will depend a lot on what materials you have to work with. If you don't have flannel or any other washable inner lining fabric available, you can choose to make the design with the pocket. The same would apply to the ties. If you have elastic, you may choose the earloop option. If all you have is fabric, you may choose the four corner ties.

PIECES REQUIRED:

For both mask options:

- 1 MAIN FABRIC piece from *prewashed* quilting cotton, 15" x 7.5"
- 2 strips of 2" x 5" cotton fabric to bind the edges
- 4 strips of cotton, 1.5" x 18" for the corner ties
 - or -- use four 18" pieces of ½" bias binding
 - or -- two 7.5" pieces of narrow elastic for ear loops.
- 1 metal strip made from aluminum flashing (make yourself - see below* - or check www.nancysews.com for local availability)
 - or -- one 5" piece of pipe cleaner
 - or -- one 5" piece of heavy twist tie
 - or -- one 5" piece of floral wire

For 3-layer mask without pocket, add:

- 1 LINING FABRIC piece from *prewashed* flannel (or cotton, or T-shirt if that's all you have), 7.5" x 7.5"

Rectangular Mask with Pocket

CREATE POCKET OPENING

1. With right sides of 15" x 7.5" MAIN FABRIC piece together, stitch for 2" along the edge opposite the fold, $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the raw edge (see photo). Leave a 3.5" gap, then stitch the remaining 2" along the raw edge. This will be the pocket opening. Press the seam allowance open and turn the piece right side out.



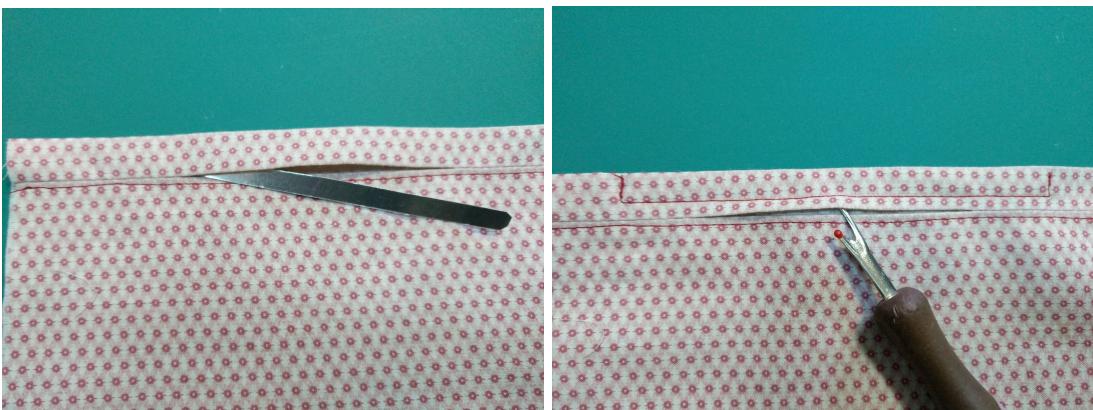
2. OPTIONAL TOPSTITCHING (but recommended). Working inside the tube you have just made, topstitch along one side of the previous seam line, $\frac{1}{8}$ " away from that previous seam line, making sure to catch the seam allowance and the outer layer in your stitching. This will be the lower finished edge of your pocket.



3. Press the tube flat with the pocket opening $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the top edge. Make sure the topstitched edge of the pocket is closer to the center of the tube.



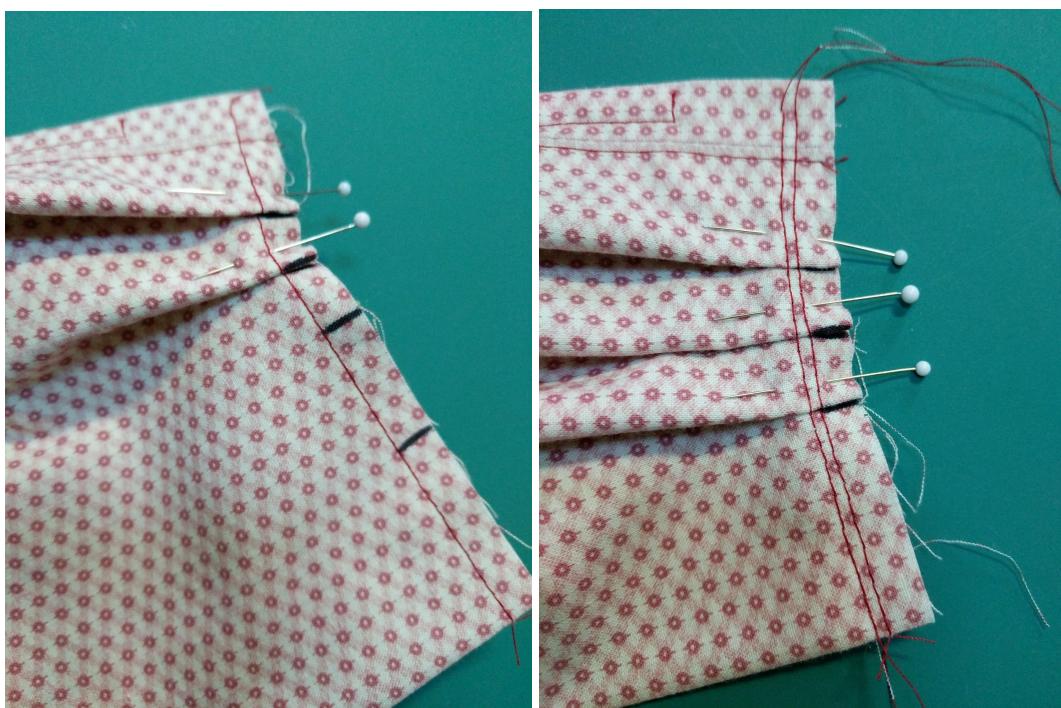
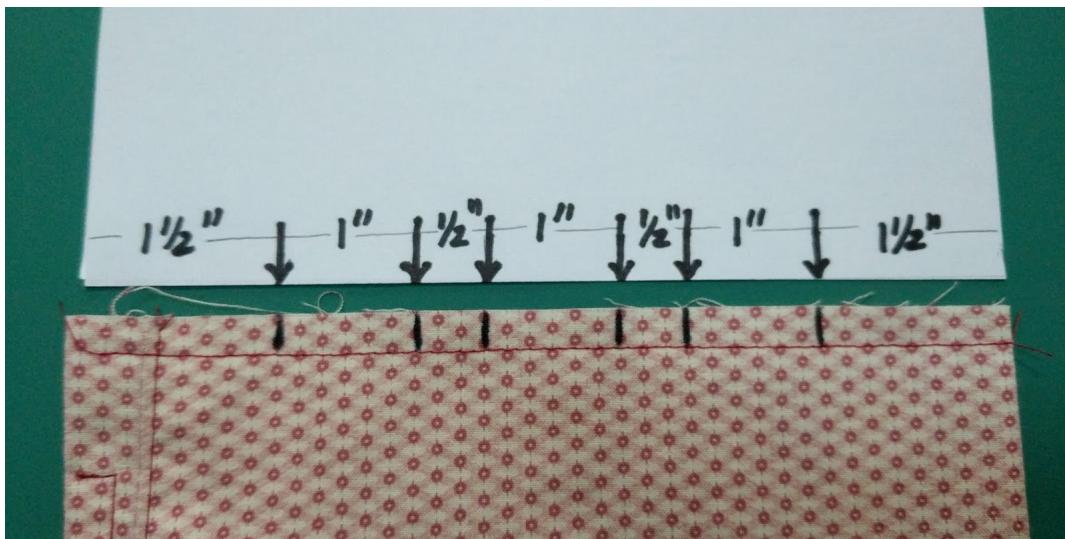
4. NOSE PIECE (optional): Insert the nose piece into the fold above the pocket opening and center it. Topstitch $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the top folded edge, trapping the nosepiece in place. Be careful not to hit the nose piece with your machine needle. You can place tacks at each side of the nosepiece to keep it from shifting, but it's not necessary.



5. BASTE SIDES (optional): To make the next step a little easier to manage, stitch along both unfinished sides of the flattened tube, $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the raw edge.

PLEAT SIDES

6. On one unfinished edge of your mask body, place marks as shown ($1\frac{1}{2}" - 1" - \frac{1}{2}" - 1" - \frac{1}{2}" - 1" - 1\frac{1}{2}"$). Make tucks along the edge using the marks as reference. The edge will now be pleated, and the pleats should point downward. Pin the pleats in place. Stitch through all layers along the pleated edge, $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the raw edge. Repeat on the other unfinished edge of the mask body. The pleated edge should be about 4" long.



TIES AND EARLOOPS

7. IF USING FABRIC TIES: Fold the strips of cotton in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, press. Open back up. Fold each long raw edge towards the center fold line and press. Fold the whole strip in half again and press. Topstitch $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the long (open) edge.
NOTE: Fabric ties can also be made from a 18" lengths of bias binding. Fold the binding lengthwise and stitch along the open edge to make a tie that is $1/4$ " wide.



8. Fold the two 2" x 5" binding piece of cotton in half lengthwise, wrong sides together, press. Open back up. Fold each long raw edge towards the center fold line and press. Open one side back up again.

With the **right** side of a 2" x 5" binding piece to the **wrong** side of mask, wrap the binding piece around each end of the mask as shown.



Stitch through all layers $\frac{1}{2}$ " from raw edge. Pull binding to the back of the mask and line up the folded edge of binding to the stitching line.



Before topstitching the binding in place, insert elastic or corner ties at the top and bottom edges as shown. Topstitch through all layers close to the folded edge of binding. The binding will flip to the inside of the mask when it is worn.

9. Your mask is finished. Please place masks in a clean bag, along with a card with your name, phone number, and email address. Check syracusemaskproject.org for a local drop off location. THANK YOU!

Three Layer Rectangular Mask without Pocket

CREATE MASK BODY

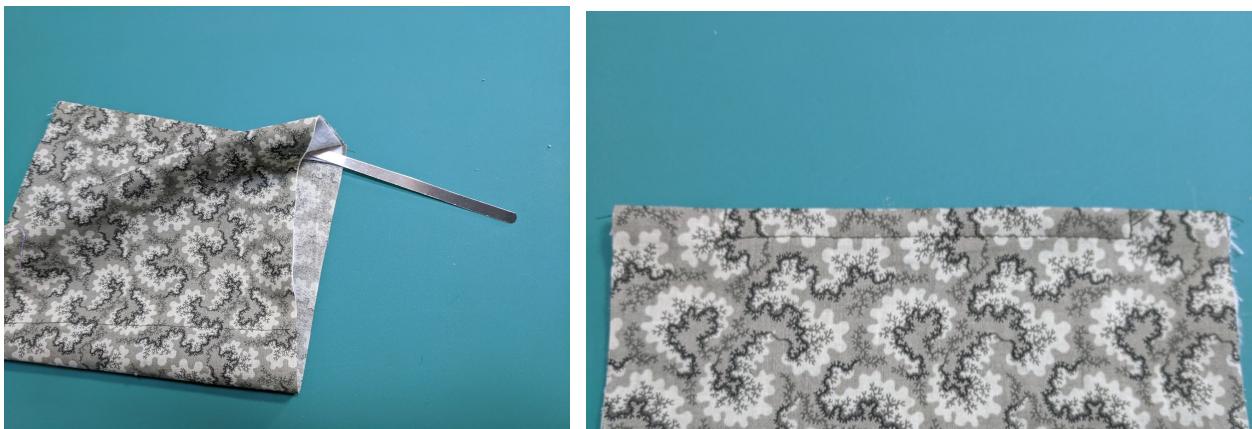
1. On the wrong side of the MAIN FABRIC piece, lay the square of flannel on one half. Stitch along the center edge of flannel, $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the raw edge. This will anchor your lining in place. You can now treat this assembly as one piece.



2. With right sides of 15" x 7.5" MAIN FABRIC piece together, stitch along the edge opposite the fold, $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the raw edge (see photo). Press the seam allowance open and turn the piece right side out.



3. Press the tube flat with the seam at the top edge.
4. NOSE PIECE (optional): Insert the nose piece into the top edge and center it. Topstitch $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the top edge, trapping the nosepiece in place. Be careful not to hit the nose piece with your machine needle.



5. BASTE SIDES (optional): To make the next step a little easier to manage, stitch along both unfinished sides of the flattened tube, $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the raw edge.

For the rest of the assembly, following steps 6-9 for the previous mask design.

***To make metal nose pieces ...**

Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ " strips out of a roll of [aluminum roof flashing](#) and cut these to 5" lengths. You can use either a pair of metal snips or heavy scissors. Nip off the corners so they are more "user friendly" and slide into the casing easier. The more accurate you make the $\frac{1}{4}$ " cut the better -- these need to slide into a narrow casing and if they are too wide, they won't fit! If the edges seem sharp, you can sand them lightly, but I've found this to be unnecessary. Please wash your hands thoroughly and disinfect sheets of flashing before cutting strips. If you are cutting strips for others, package them in paper envelopes or sleeves.

