

How to properly use an N95 mask

Knowing how to put on and take off a filtering facepiece respirator ensures proper fit and protection. The images below show the correct way to wear your respirator. **First, wash your hands thoroughly.**

Putting on your respirator



1. Position the respirator in your hand with the nosepiece at your fingertips.



2. Cup the respirator in your hand, allowing the straps to hang below your hand. Hold the respirator so the chin cup is below your chin and the nosepiece is at the bridge of your nose.

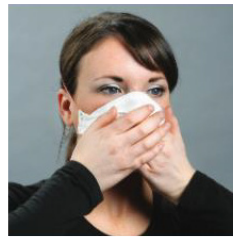


3. Bring the top strap over your head and place it on the crown of your head, above the ears. Take the bottom strap, bring it over your head, and place it on your neck, below the ears.



4. If the respirator has a nosepiece, it should be molded to your face by pressing with the index finger of both hands. Start at the bridge of your nose and slide your fingers down your nose. This evenly shapes the nosepiece to your nose shape.

Checking the seal and fit



Negative pressure seal check:
Place both hands over the facepiece and quickly inhale to ensure it seals to your face.



Positive pressure seal check:
Place both hands over the facepiece and slowly exhale. If you feel leakage around the facepiece, it is not sealed properly.



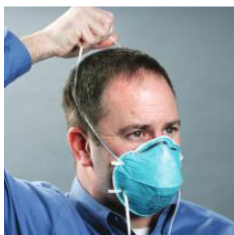
If the respirator leaks, try to

- readjust the nosepiece
- readjust the straps
- move facepiece around your face. If fit is still not right, you may need a different size, model, or brand of respirator.

Taking off the respirator



Do not touch the front of the respirator, since it may be contaminated.



First, remove the respirator by bringing the bottom strap over your head, then bringing the top strap over your head. Do this without touching the facepiece.



Handle the used respirator according to your facility's respiratory protection and waste disposal program.

(Photos and instructions courtesy of University of North Carolina, Gillings School of Global Public Health).

Additional information

See more training on wearing respirators and user seal checks in English and Spanish on the CDC's National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory's (NPPTL) page (bit.ly/445JJS3).