

When do we have to wear a mask outside? The C.D.C. says less often, and here's how and why.

By The New York Times

- April 27, 2021

The [new guidance on mask-wearing](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Tuesday says that [masks](#) can be shed for some relatively safe outdoor activities, especially by fully vaccinated people, because the virus does not spread readily outdoors.

But there are many circumstances where the new guidance still calls for [masks](#) to be worn outdoors, especially by unvaccinated people.

Here are some examples from the C.D.C.'s new guidance:

Everyone can do without a mask when ...

- Walking, running, hiking or biking outdoors, alone or with members of the same household.
- Attending a small outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends.

Fully vaccinated people can do without a mask when ...

- Attending a small outdoor gathering with a mixture of fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people.
- Dining outdoors at a restaurant with people from several households.

For these kinds of activities, unvaccinated people should still wear [masks](#) and maintain social distance, the C.D.C. says.

Everyone should still wear a mask when ...

- Attending a crowded outdoor event, like a parade, sporting event or live performance.
- Doing almost anything indoors that involves contact with people who are not members of your household. Examples include dining indoors at a

restaurant; going to the movies, an indoor concert or theatrical performance; attending full-capacity worship services; traveling on an airline flight or riding mass transit; singing in a chorus indoors; taking part in an indoor exercise class; visiting a shopping mall or museum; getting a haircut or manicure; or attending an indoor social gathering.

Though most of these activities are much safer for fully vaccinated people than for the unvaccinated, the C.D.C. guidance says that everyone should still wear a [mask](#) to protect themselves and others. People are not likely to know the vaccine status of those around them, the guidance says, and it is not yet clear whether fully vaccinated people can still spread the virus while not becoming ill themselves. Unvaccinated people should also maintain social distance, the guidance says.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/27/health/cdc-outdoor-mask-wearing.html>