



What can you use if the Personal Protective Equipment is not available?

Personal Protective Equipment or PPEs are disposable gowns, disposable gloves, disposable facemasks, and disposable goggles. Here are some creative ways you can use other items when you do not have any PPE.

Disposable Masks:

- You may reuse facemasks. Surgical masks or procedure masks can be used more than one time. This is called extended use.¹
- You may cover the N95 mask with a regular surgical mask or a hand-made cloth mask. This will prolong its durability.
- You may use a large handkerchief, scarf or bandana to cover your nose and mouth. You can do this when there is no mask available.¹ Put the handkerchief, scarf or bandana in a plastic bag after you use it. Wash it when you get home.
- You may use a cloth mask when there is no surgical mask available.² Make sure you put the cloth mask in a plastic bag after you use it. Wash it when you get home.
- After use, put it in a plastic bag to avoid contamination.
- When you reuse the facemask, you may add a layer of plastic and/or paper towel on the inside of the mask. Put it in the mask where it will touch your nose and mouth. This helps keep a clean area in your mask.

Disposable gloves:

- Reusable gloves may be used. You would wash them with soap and water before taking them off.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/face-masks.html#crisis-capacity>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

- Put the reusable gloves in a plastic bag after you use them. This will prevent the spread of contamination.
- It is important to remember that even if you have disposable/reusable gloves, you still have to perform hand hygiene. You should wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after you take the gloves off.
- When soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 62% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth when you have gloves on.

Disposable gowns:

- The goal is to protect the front of your body. You may come in close contact with a sick person. The gown on top of your clothing will protect your clothes from getting contaminated. The gown will cover your arms.
- Old jackets or lab gowns or patient gowns may be used.³ Use these with the opening at the back.
- Take off the gown before you get in a car. Take off the gown before you go home. When you take off the gown, put it in a plastic bag. Wash the gown immediately when you get home.
- You can use plastic garbage bags too. Make a hole for your head. Wear it like a poncho. Throw it away after you use it.

Disposable goggles:

- Reuse disposable goggles. Put them in a plastic bag after each use.⁴ You may wash the disposable goggles with soap and water and reuse them.
- You may disinfect the goggles and/or a face shield with an alcohol-based disinfectant after each use.⁴
- If you have no goggles, you may use sunglasses as eye protection. Put the sunglasses in a plastic bag after each use. Wash the sunglasses with soap and water after each use.
- Avoid touching your goggles or sun glasses when you are wearing them.

³ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/isolation-gowns.html#crisis-capacity>

⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/eye-protection.html#crisis-capacity>

Here is a link to frequently asked question on PPE,
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirator-use-faq.html>.⁵ And remember to follow the proper order of putting on and taking off your PPE.⁶

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/respirator-use-faq.html>

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/pdfs/PPE-Sequence-508.pdf>