Respirator mask: Common mistakes

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Mask only covers the mouth

No protection as breathing through the nose is unfiltered.

Nose clip not adjusted

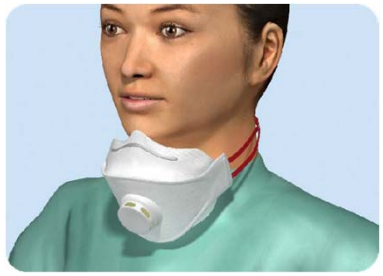
Mask cannot form a tight seal. Glasses steam up when exhaling.

Not completely unfolded

Mask cannot form a tight seal as the seal is not on the chin.

Mask put on backwards

Mask cannot form a tight seal.



Mask worn around the neck

Contamination of the neck and chin from the mask. Contamination of inside of the mask from the lab coat.

Mask worn with a beard

Mask cannot form a tight seal if the wearer has a beard or severe scarring in the area around the seal.

Hair not tied back

Mask cannot form a tight seal in the cheek area.

Mask worn over a hood

Mask provides no protection of the mucosa when removing the hood.

Bands incorrectly positioned

Mask cannot form a tight seal if the mask slips.

Bands twisted

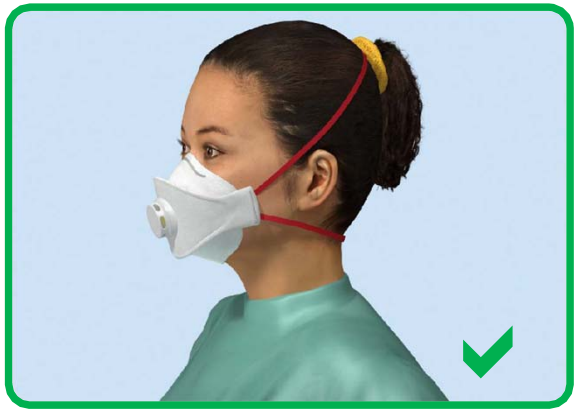
Bands may cause discomfort. This leads to the wearer touching the head with contaminated hands.

Bands over the ears

Bands may cause discomfort. This leads to the wearer touching the head or the ears with contaminated hands.

Mask over the protective goggles

Mask cannot form a tight seal around the nose and cheek area. Mask provides no protection of the mucosa when removing the goggles.



Regular training increases safety when using personal protective equipment (PPE)

This shows an example with a folding respirator mask with an exhalation valve and with protective goggles. Other models of respirator masks – e.g. cup-shaped masks or masks without an exhalation valve can also be used.

WARNING: Respiratory masks with exhalation valve do not protect other people from the wearer but protect the wearer only - unless the exhalation valve is covered by a fleece according to DIN EN 14683.

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Respirator mask without or with exhalation valve?

Respirator mask without exhalation valve

- filters inhaled and exhaled air
- protects the wearer from other people as well as other people from the wearer

- reduces absorption and transmission of infectious agents

Respirator mask with exhalation valve*

- filters inhaled air only
- protects the wearer from other people but NOT other people from the wearer

- reduces absorption but not transmission of infectious agents

- **Exhalation valve:**
  - less (breath) resistance during exhaling
  - less accumulation of heat and humidity
  - prolongs wearing period

Further information about management of patients –
www.rki.de/covid-19
Further information about occupational health and safety standards –
www.baua.de

* Respirator masks with an exhalation valve protect the wearer from other people, but NOT other people from the wearer – unless the exhalation valve is covered by a fleece according to DIN EN 14683.