

Respirators vs face coverings

What is the difference?

There are many different types of face covering, but not all of them protect the wearer from contaminants. Face coverings which provide respiratory protection are known as respirators.

Face Coverings and Loose Fitting Masks



- Intended to help protect the work environment from substances expelled by the wearer.

Respirators



- Intended to help protect the wearer from substances (airborne particles) in the work environment.

Types of respirator and face covering

	Cloth Face covering	Procedural Mask	Surgical Mask	Filtering Facepiece Respirator	Elastomeric Respirators	Powered Air Respirator with helmet or headcover
						
Also known as	Reusable Face Cover	Disposable Mask	Medical Mask	Disposable Respirator	Reusable Respirator, Half or Full Face Respirator, half mask, full face mask, Elastomeric Facepiece	PAPR, turbo, hood
Fitting	Loose	Loose	Loose	Tight	Tight	Loose
Description	Cloth mask used to cover mouth and nose.	Disposable procedure mask used to cover nose and mouth.	Surgical procedure mask used to cover nose and mouth. Also provides fluid barrier.	Disposable respirator used to cover nose and mouth.	Reusable respirator used with replaceable filters. Options for nose and mouth covering or full face (including eyes)	Motorised turbo unit used with helmet or headcover to provide filtered air to the wearer.
Certification	None	None	MDR	CE Approved	CE Approved	CE Approved
Intended Use	May help contain spit or phlegm expelled by the wearer, like covering a cough or sneeze with a facial tissue	Designed to help reduce liquid droplets that are expelled by the wearer.	Designed to help reduce liquid droplets that are expelled by the wearer. Fluid barrier in surgical mask is designed to help protect the wearer from splashes or sprays of bodily fluids.	Designed to help protect the wearer from potential airborne hazards when properly selected and worn.	Designed to help protect the wearer from potential airborne hazards when properly selected and worn.	Designed to help protect the wearer from potential airborne hazards when properly selected and worn.
Will help reduce the wearer's exposure to airborne particulate hazards when properly selected and worn	No	No	No	Yes, CE approved FFP2 are at least 94% efficient in filtering particulates per EN149:2001+A1:2009	Yes, CE approved P2 filters are at least 94% efficient in filtering particulates per EN140 and EN143. Different filters help offer protection from different types of contaminant.	Yes, CE approved powered air respirators, fitted with efficient particle filters per EN12941 or EN12942.



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For more information about 3M respirators, visit 3m.co.uk/respiratory

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