

Face mask popularity in the US

Which type of protective mask is America's favorite? Hint: It's not face shields.



Walk down the street in any major city right now and you'll likely notice most people are wearing some kind of face covering. A Finder survey found nearly 4 out of 5 American adults, or 78.2%, currently own a face mask. This equates to just shy of 200 million Americans owning at least one of the following types of face masks:

- Cloth mask
- Surgical mask
- Homemade mask
- Medical-grade mask (N95, KN95)
- Fashionable/branded mask
- Face shield

How many of us own a face mask?



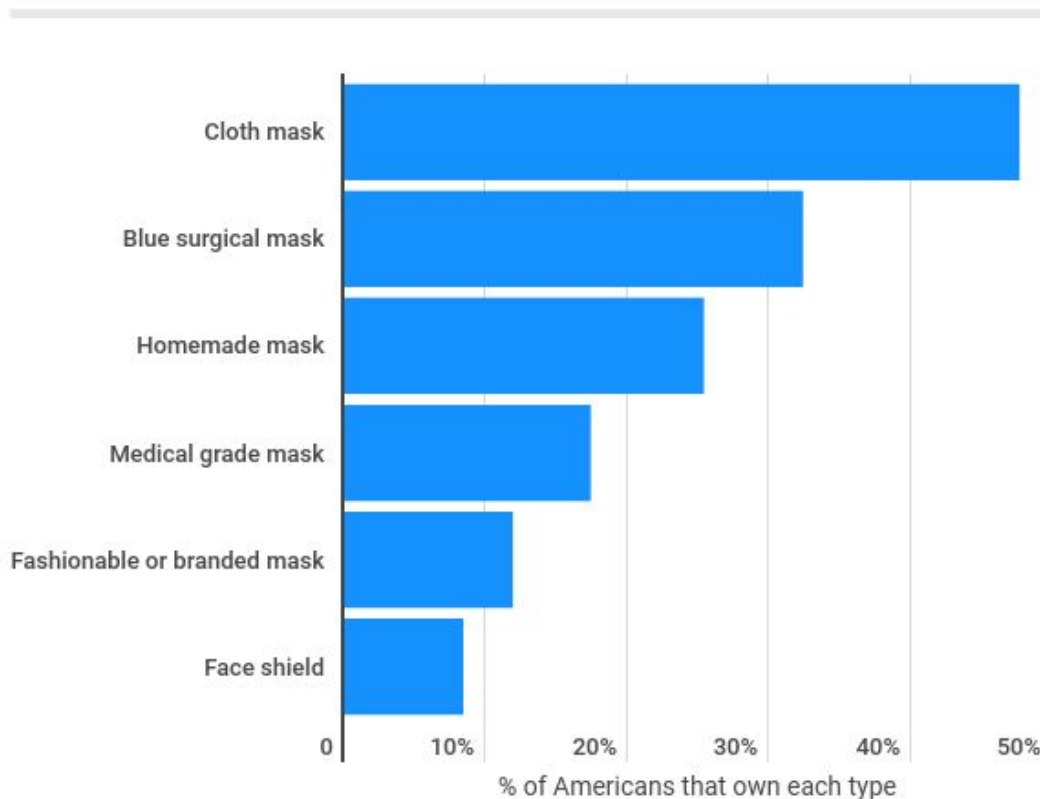
Finder.com commissioned surveys in 14 countries around the world throughout August 2020. Respondents ranged from 1,200 to 2,000 depending on the country

What are the most popular types of masks with Americans?

Almost half (47.7%) of the adult population has at least one cloth mask at home, with nearly 122 million people claiming they currently own a cloth mask. While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has noted the effectiveness of filtration in cloth masks is lower than that of medical-grade masks, cloth masks have likely been easier to find during the pandemic. Widespread availability and the fact that the CDC still recommends some form of face covering when in public explains the popularity of cloth masks.

Surgical masks came in second with roughly 32.4% of people surveyed. While this is far shy of the popularity of cloth masks, it equates to roughly 83 million people. Finally, a quarter of Americans (25.4%) reported they went the DIY route with a homemade mask.

Most popular masks in the US



Source: Finder.com



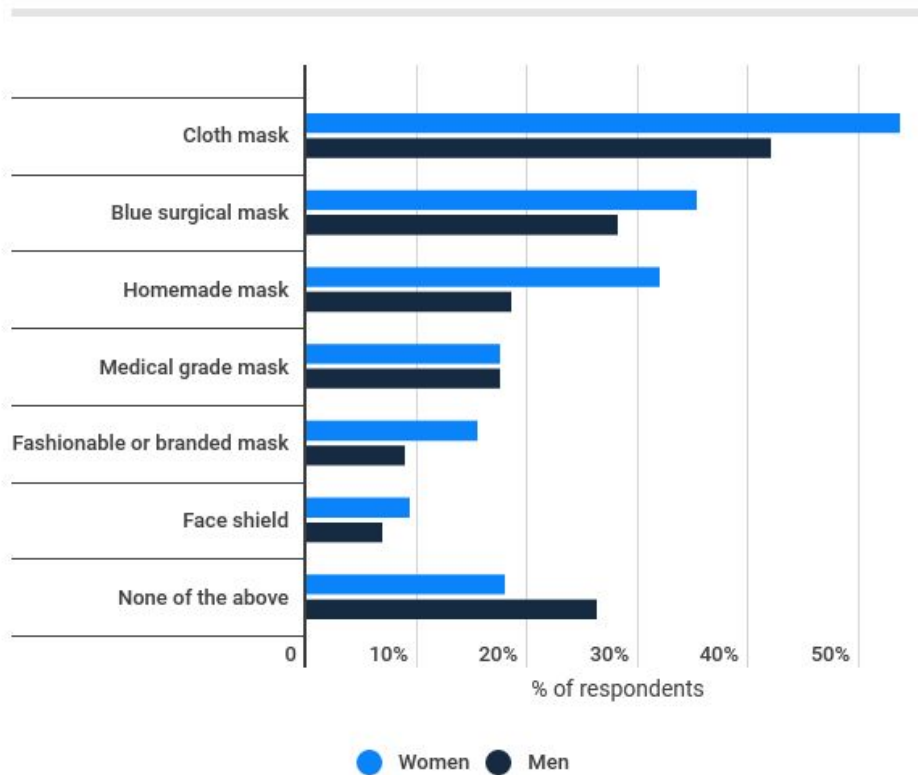
Women are more likely than men to don a face mask

More than a quarter (26%) of men surveyed said they don't own any type of face covering, compared to less than one-fifth (18%) of women. And over half (54%) of women said they owned a cloth mask versus 42% of men.

Similar disparities were seen in the other two most popular types of face protection, with women more likely to own a surgical mask (35% of women versus 28% of men) or have a homemade mask, with 32% of women crafting a mask compared to 19% of men.

In fact, the only place where men outranked women in terms of mask ownership was medical masks, with men (18%) being slightly more likely to have purchased one than women (17%).

Most popular masks in the US by gender



Source: Finder.com



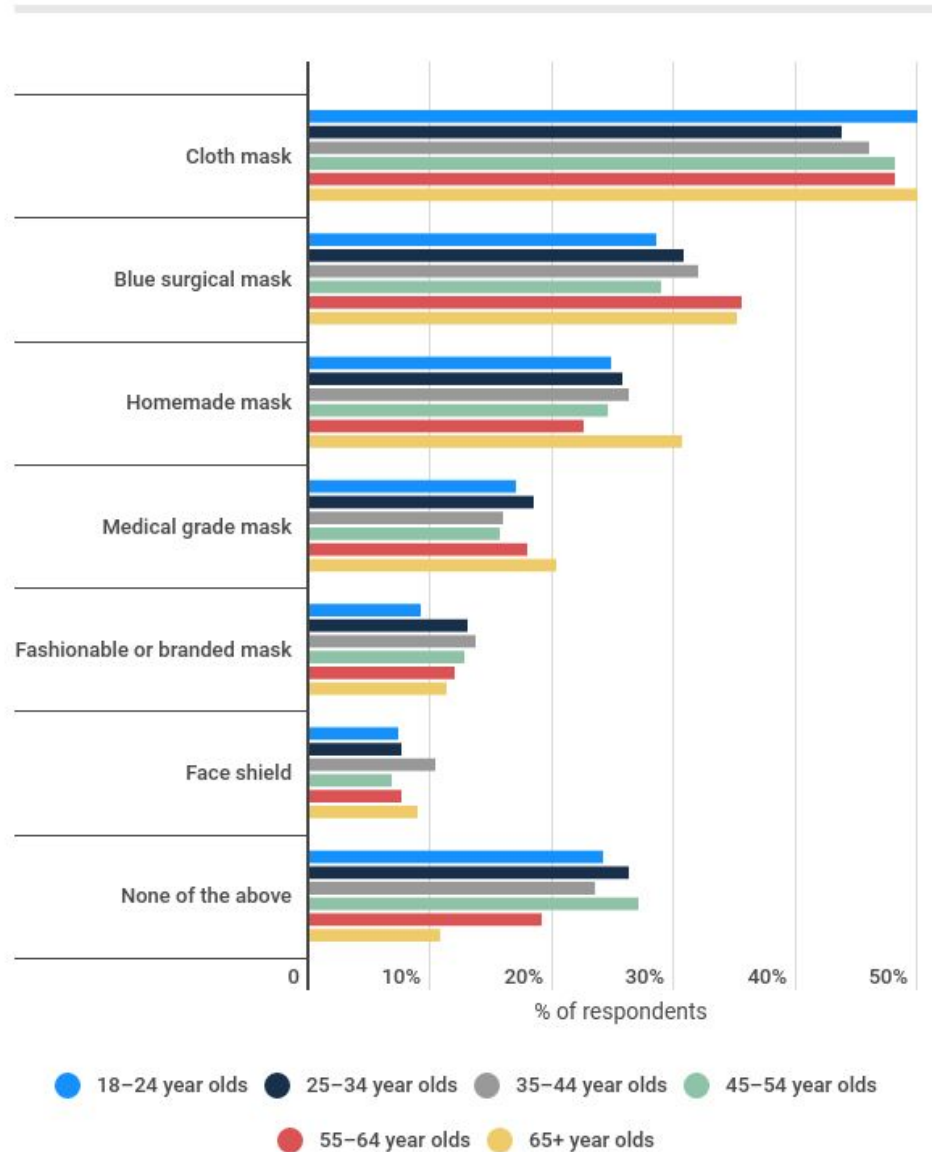
Mask ownership is far higher with older Americans

With mask ownership across America at roughly 78%, you may have assumed that people are buying masks at the same rate no matter their age. But people over 55 are far more likely to have purchased a mask than those ages 18 to 54. Roughly 75% of people in the younger bracket own some kind of mask, versus 85% in the older bracket.

And even within the older age group, Americans 65 and older are far more likely to own a mask than those between ages 55 and 64 — 89% of people 65 and older reported owning a face mask versus 81% of 55- to 64-year-olds.

People over 65 are also most likely to own two of the top three most popular mask types, with 54% owning a cloth mask and 30.6% a homemade mask. Blue surgical masks are most popular with 35.5% of 55- to 64-year-olds.

Most popular masks in the US by age



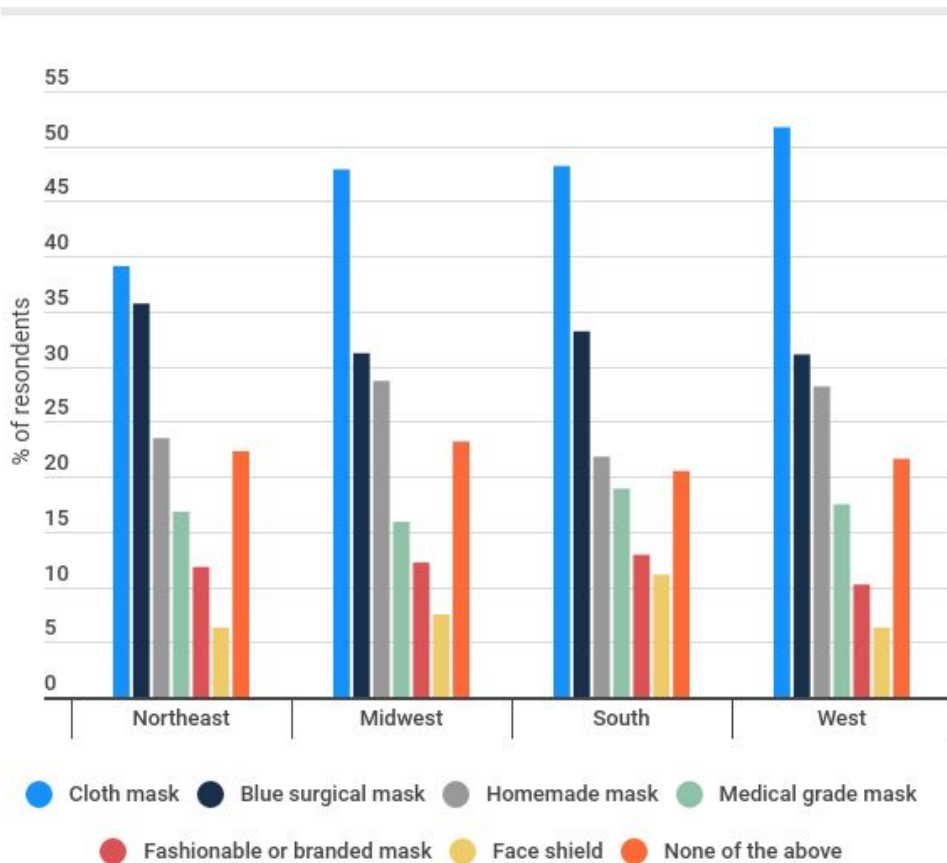
Source: Finder.com



With masks being far more popular with older Americans, it makes sense that the South — America’s retirement haven — would have the highest percentage of the population owning a mask at 80%. Next are those in the West and Northeast at 78%, followed by those in the Midwest at 77%.

When looking at the popularity of different kinds of masks, the West sees the highest usage of cloth masks at 51.7%. Blue surgical masks are most popular in the Northeast, with 35.7% of the population noting they own that type. Rounding out the top three most popular face coverings are homemade masks, which are used most commonly in the Midwest at 28.7%.

Most popular masks in the US by region



Source: Finder.com



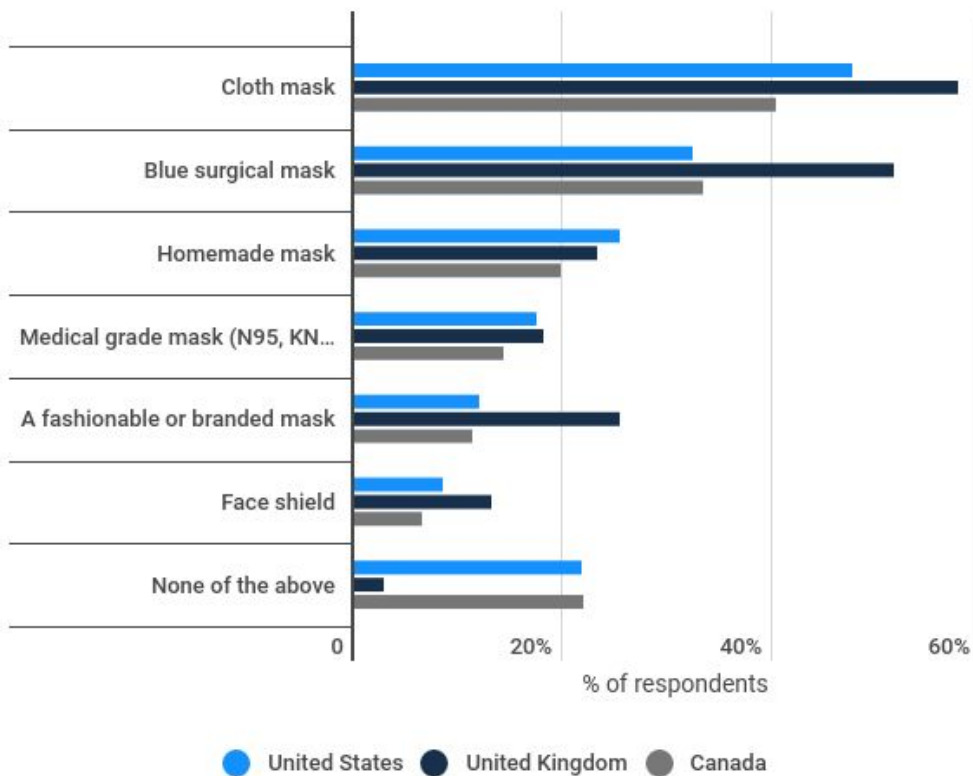
How does US mask usage compare to other countries?

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In a transatlantic comparison, we looked at the popularity of facial coverings in the UK and Canada. We found that cloth masks were far more popular in the UK than in North America, with 57.8% of people in the UK donning this mask type versus 47.68% in the US, and just 40.47% in Canada.

Blue surgical masks are also more popular in the UK, with 51.75% saying they owned one compared to 33.39% in Canada and 32.38% in the US. While 25.39% of Americans use homemade masks, only 23.2% in the UK and 19.82% in Canada own a DIY option

Most popular masks in the US by country



Source: Finder.com



Who's looking to buy more masks on Finder?

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In addition to the survey results, Finder looked at the traffic coming to our mask pages and the states our visitors are from compared to the percentage of the US population those states comprise. This allowed us to see what states were overrepresented in mask ownership. We found that New Jersey contributed 76.2% more traffic to our mask pages than its share of the US population.

Connecticut was the next closest state with 47.3% more traffic to mask pages than its share of the US population, followed by Massachusetts at 43.3%. The table shows where other states came in.

Percent difference between share of mask traffic and share of US population – data

Rank	State	% of mask page traffic	Share of US population	Percent difference between mask traffic and population
1	New Jersey	4.79%	2.72%	76.2%
2	Connecticut	1.64%	1.11%	47.3%
3	Massachusetts	3.11%	2.17%	43.3%
4	Virginia	3.53%	2.62%	35.1%
5	New York	8.12%	6.04%	34.4%
6	Maryland	2.46%	1.85%	33.4%
7	District of Columbia	0.30%	0.23%	32.6%
8	Illinois	4.97%	3.86%	28.7%
9	Florida	8.28%	6.76%	22.5%
10	Georgia	3.86%	3.18%	21.6%
11	Rhode Island	0.38%	0.33%	12.1%
12	Delaware	0.33%	0.30%	8.6%
13	New Hampshire	0.46%	0.43%	6.9%
14	California	12.51%	12.00%	4.3%
15	Nevada	0.98%	0.94%	4.2%
16	Pennsylvania	4.12%	3.98%	3.5%
17	Texas	8.59%	8.46%	1.5%
18	Michigan	3.00%	3.07%	-2.3%
19	Colorado	1.71%	1.76%	-2.7%
20	North Carolina	2.93%	3.21%	-8.6%

21	Arizona	1.97%	2.21%	-10.6%
22	Washington	2.00%	2.33%	-14.2%
23	Ohio	2.97%	3.57%	-16.8%
24	Tennessee	1.64%	2.08%	-21.3%
25	Hawaii	0.34%	0.44%	-21.3%
26	Minnesota	1.27%	1.70%	-25.2%
27	Oregon	0.98%	1.31%	-25.7%
28	Missouri	1.37%	1.87%	-26.8%
29	Vermont	0.14%	0.20%	-28.4%
30	Alabama	1.00%	1.49%	-32.9%
31	South Carolina	1.05%	1.58%	-33.4%
32	Indiana	1.33%	2.02%	-34.3%
33	New Mexico	0.40%	0.64%	-37.4%
34	Wisconsin	1.11%	1.79%	-37.6%
35	Maine	0.27%	0.43%	-37.7%
36	Utah	0.55%	0.89%	-37.7%
37	Louisiana	0.83%	1.40%	-40.3%
38	Nebraska	0.34%	0.57%	-41.4%
39	Kentucky	0.76%	1.36%	-44.3%
40	Iowa	0.53%	0.95%	-44.5%
41	Oklahoma	0.65%	1.18%	-44.9%
42	Kansas	0.47%	0.87%	-46.2%
43	West Virginia	0.29%	0.56%	-48.1%
44	Arkansas	0.46%	0.91%	-49.1%
45	Idaho	0.26%	0.52%	-49.8%
46	Mississippi	0.44%	0.89%	-50.4%
47	Alaska	0.09%	0.22%	-59.3%
48	Montana	0.13%	0.33%	-60.5%
49	South Dakota	0.10%	0.26%	-60.6%
50	North Dakota	0.09%	0.23%	-61.9%
51	Wyoming	0.06%	0.17%	-63.5%

Methodology

Our data is based on an online survey of 2,001 US adults 18 and up commissioned by Finder and conducted by Google Surveys from August 14 through August 17, 2020. Participants were users on websites in the Google Surveys Publisher Network and were unpaid.

We assume the participants in our surveys represent the US population of 255.2 million Americans who are at least 18 years old according to the July 2019 US Census Bureau population estimate. This assumption was made at the 95% confidence level with a 2.19% margin of error.

Our survey asked respondents what types of face masks they currently owned, with the possible selections of Cloth mask, Blue surgical mask, Homemade mask, Medical grade mask (N95, KN95, etc.), A fashionable or branded mask, Face shield, or None of the above. Respondents were able to select multiple types of masks.

We define geographical regions as defined by the [Census Bureau](#).

Our website traffic data was gathered through Google Analytics looking at dates between April 1 to August 24, 2020.

About Finder

Finder is a personal finance website which helps consumers compare products online so they can make better-informed decisions. Consumers can visit the website to compare utilities, mortgages, credit cards, insurance products, shopping voucher codes, and so much more before choosing the option that best suits their needs.

Finder.com launched in the US in July 2015 and is privately owned and self-funded by two Australian entrepreneurs — Fred Schebesta and Frank Restuccia — who successfully grew finder.com.au to be Australia's most visited personal finance website.

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About the author

Richard Laycock is Finder's insights editor and spent years writing and editing articles about insurance for Finder. Richard studied Media at Macquarie University and The Missouri School of Journalism and has a Tier 1 Certification in General Advice for Life Insurance.