

Protective masks

Masks made to reduce inhaled particulates may look similar, but each is meant for a specific purpose:

Dust mask



Fit
Loosely covers mouth, nose

Use
Filtering wood, masonry dust; not FDA regulated

Pluses, minuses

- Looks similar to surgical mask
- Does not protect against airborne microorganisms

Surgical mask



Fit
Loosely covers mouth, nose

Use
Protects against microorganisms, body fluids and large airborne particles

Pluses, minuses

- Not sized for individual fit
- Helps contain wearer's coughing and sneezing

N95 respirator



Fit
Tight seal over mouth and nose

Use
Protects against small droplets of respiratory fluids and airborne particles

Pluses, minuses

- Must fit properly
- Facial hair makes respirator less effective

NOTE: Surgical masks and N95 respirators are not tested against specific microorganisms and should not claim to prevent specific diseases