

An easy to make facemask

by Arne Kverneland

(..originally written for my friends in the Junk Rig Association, JRA...)

These days, I am sitting mostly indoors, since my country is more or less shut down to stop the Corona virus from spreading all over the country.

Now, sitting idle like this tends to set the idea-generator spinning. I therefore decided to try to make a simple facemask, and then tell how I did it. Norway is just about empty on facemasks, surprise, surprise...

Note: It has been questioned how effective a facemask is. Some doctors say it is of no use. Still, my attitude is not mainly to protect myself from the infection, but rather not to infect others. The fact is that the Corona-test is only for the few in my country, so although I am feeling fine, I try to act *as if I were infected*.

My first measure is therefore to not mingle with other people more than absolutely necessarily, that is, going to the store, once a week. Man has to eat.

That is when I don the mask. If it stops, 30, 60 or better 90% of any virus from me, then better than not using the mask. I have done a test with it on: I try to blow out a lighter flame, held 10cm in front of my mouth. No way - the flame hardly moves. I therefore think that my mask may well be useful.

Another thing: I re-use the mask! Being of all cotton, it can be sterilised with a hot steam flat-iron. No way will those viruses survive 100°C! (See **Appendix 2, p.9**)

I may be all wrong, of course, but I decide to go ahead anyway.
No guarantees.

Below: I tried to 'cheer up' one of my masks by putting a smile on. However, no matter how hard I tried, the result only varied between spooky and horrible...



NOT recommended!

Here is how I did it:



Photo1

Since I planned to make a few facemasks, I started with cutting out two patterns of cardboard (photo 1) The one for the mask is a rectangle of 21 x 28cm and the one for the patch in front of the mask (to double or triple the thickness there) is 7 x 11cm.

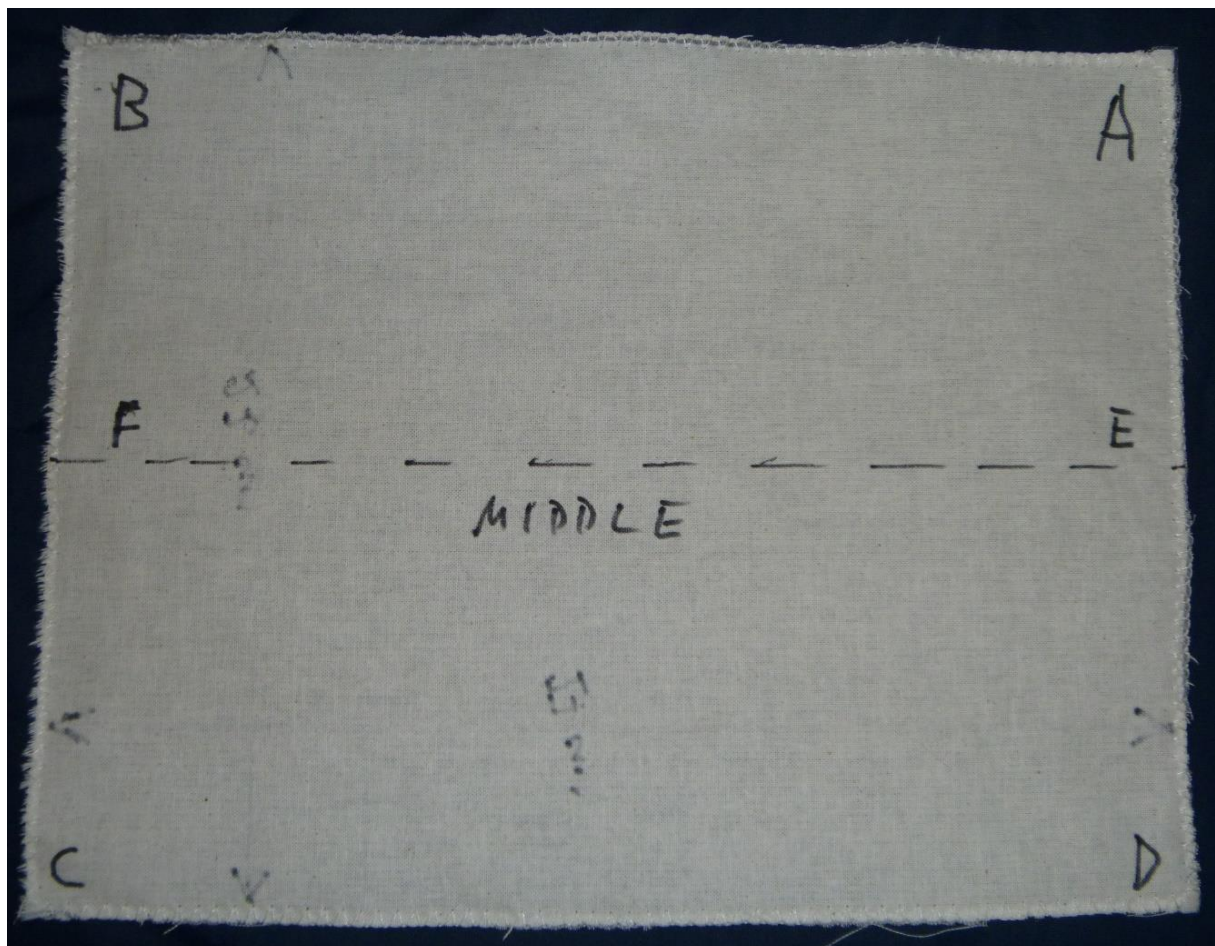


Photo 2: 21cm x 28cm

I cut out the mask from some cotton duck I had. I didn't bother with hemming it, just ran a 4mm wide zigzag seam around the edge. For clarity, I have marked the corners etc. with letters (photo2).

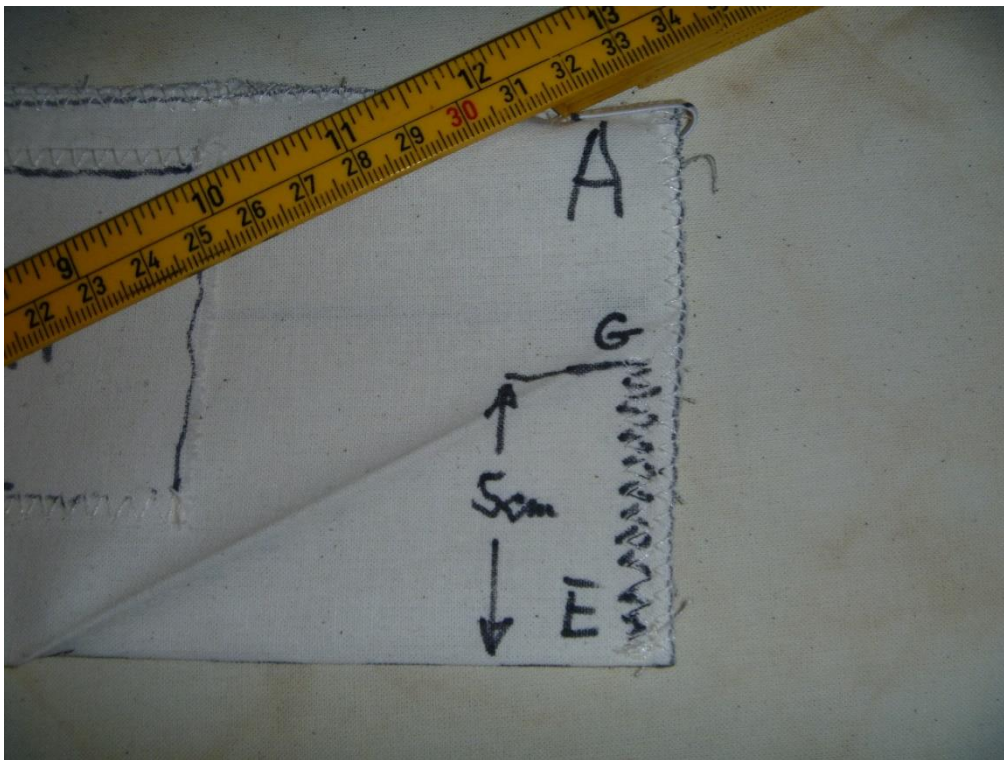


Photo 3: Partly closing the ends

The mask is folded on the middle line EF, with the lower part hidden under the upper half. Then I put a 5cm long seam at the ends of the mask, starting at E and F (photo3)

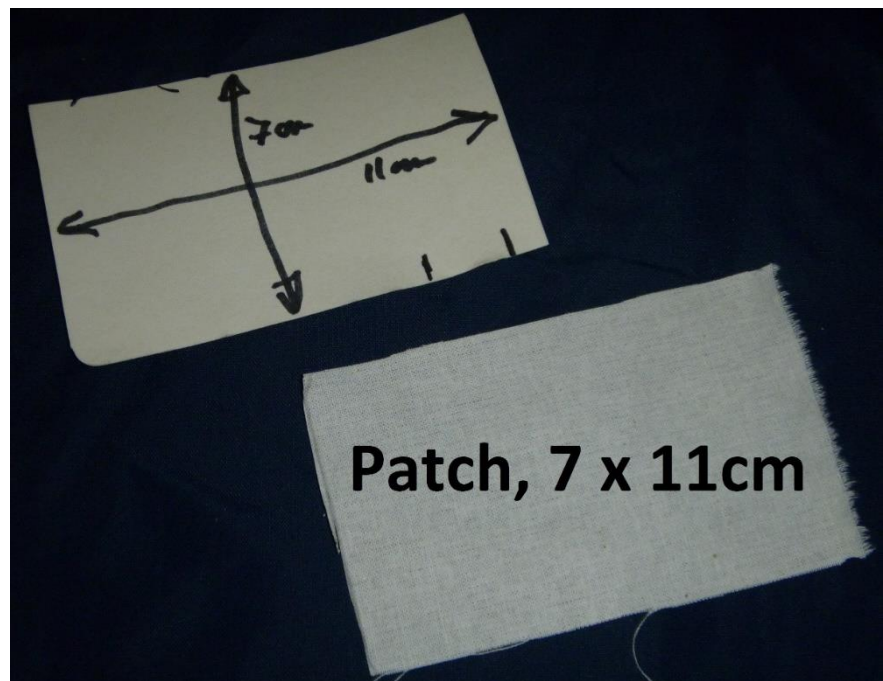


Photo 4: the front patch, could well be fitted to the inside

Time for cutting out and then sewing on the doubling (or tripling) patch. I have put it on the outside, for clarity. (see photo later)

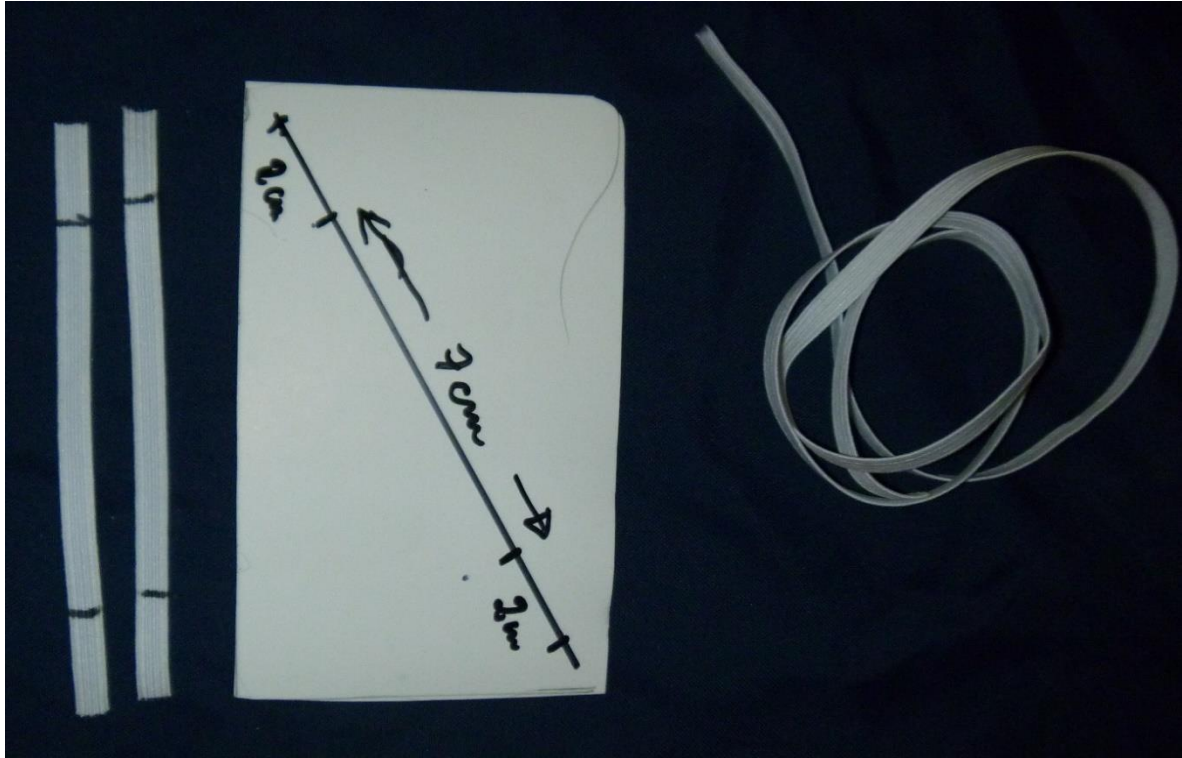


Photo 5: Elastic ear hoops

Then making the elastic ear hoops. Photo5 shows that their net length is 7cm, plus 2cm at each end for sewing on.

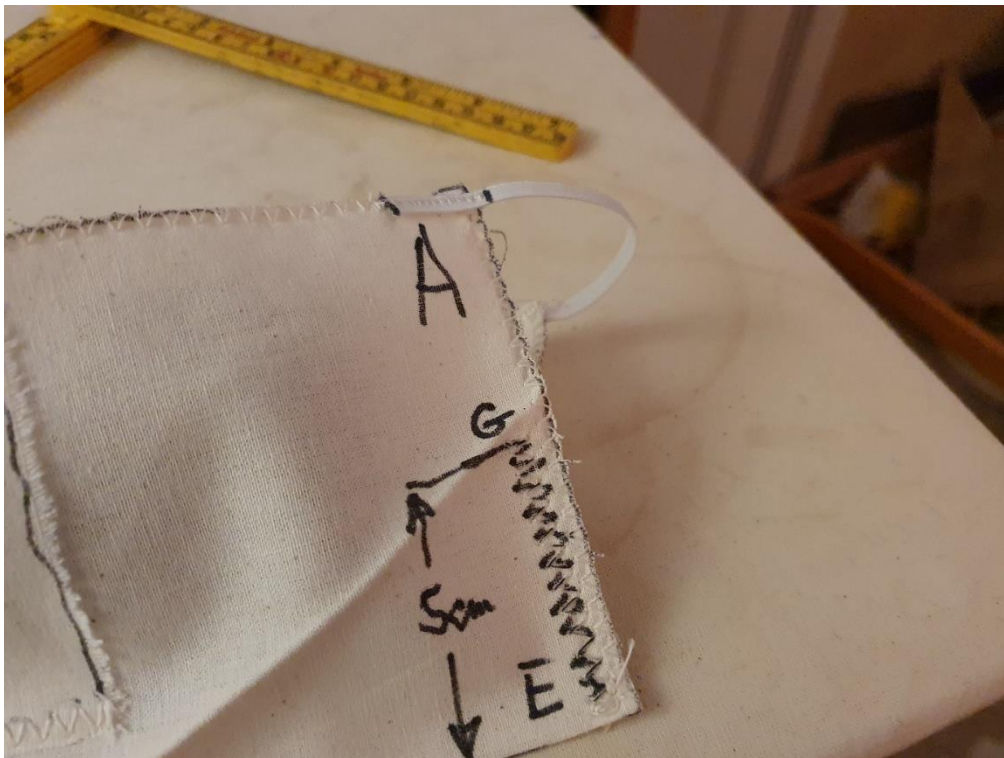


Photo 6: ear hoops on. Ready for the first test.

With the elastic hoops and the patch on, the mask is basically ready (photo 6)



Photo 7: operational, but looks weird.

On photo 7, it is operational, but looks a bit star-warish, but that can easily be rectified:

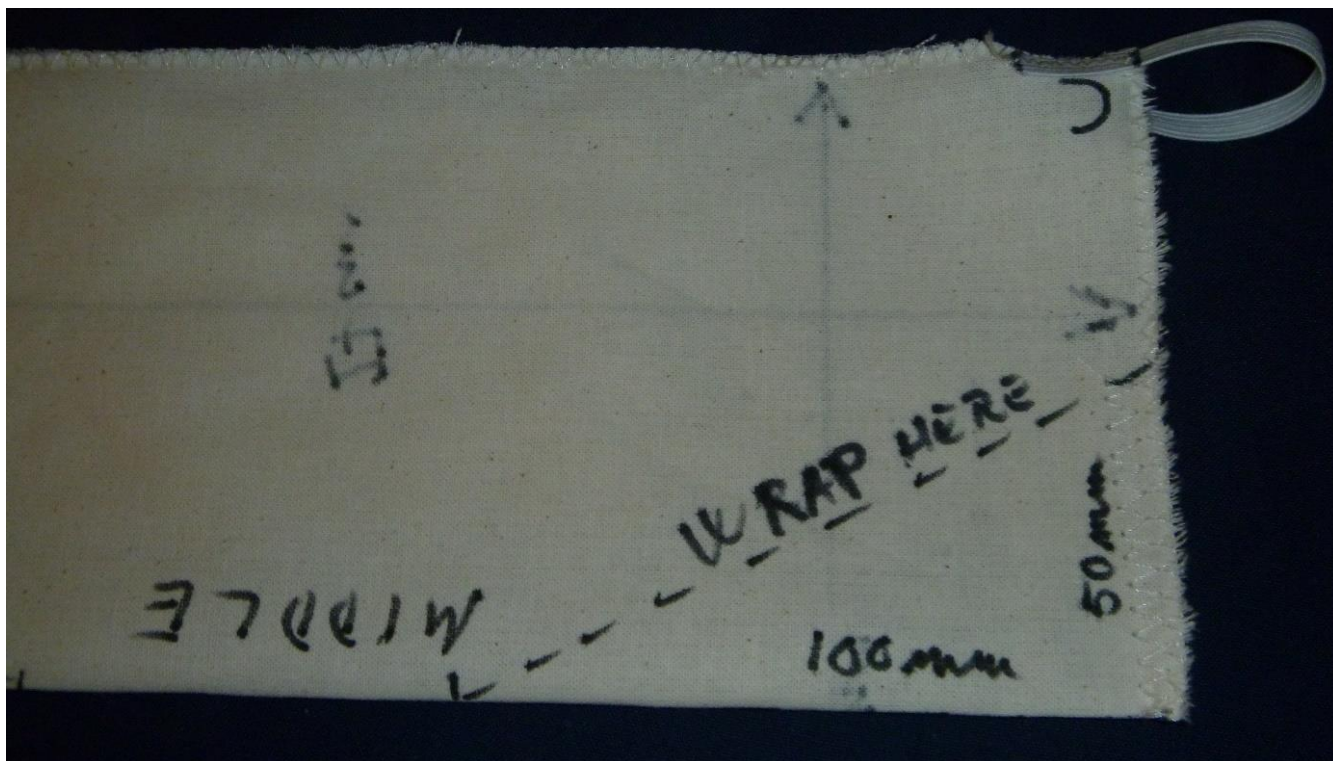


Photo 8: backside of the mask prepared for folding the corners back

Photo 8 shows the backside of the mask ready for folding along the shown line. Those two corners are just fixed to the mask with a couple of stitches.



Photo 9: With the corners secured and the mask tidied up with the steam iron, it is ready for use.

On Photo 9, that job has been done and the hot flat-iron has tidied it up a bit.



Photo 10: Looks a good deal better

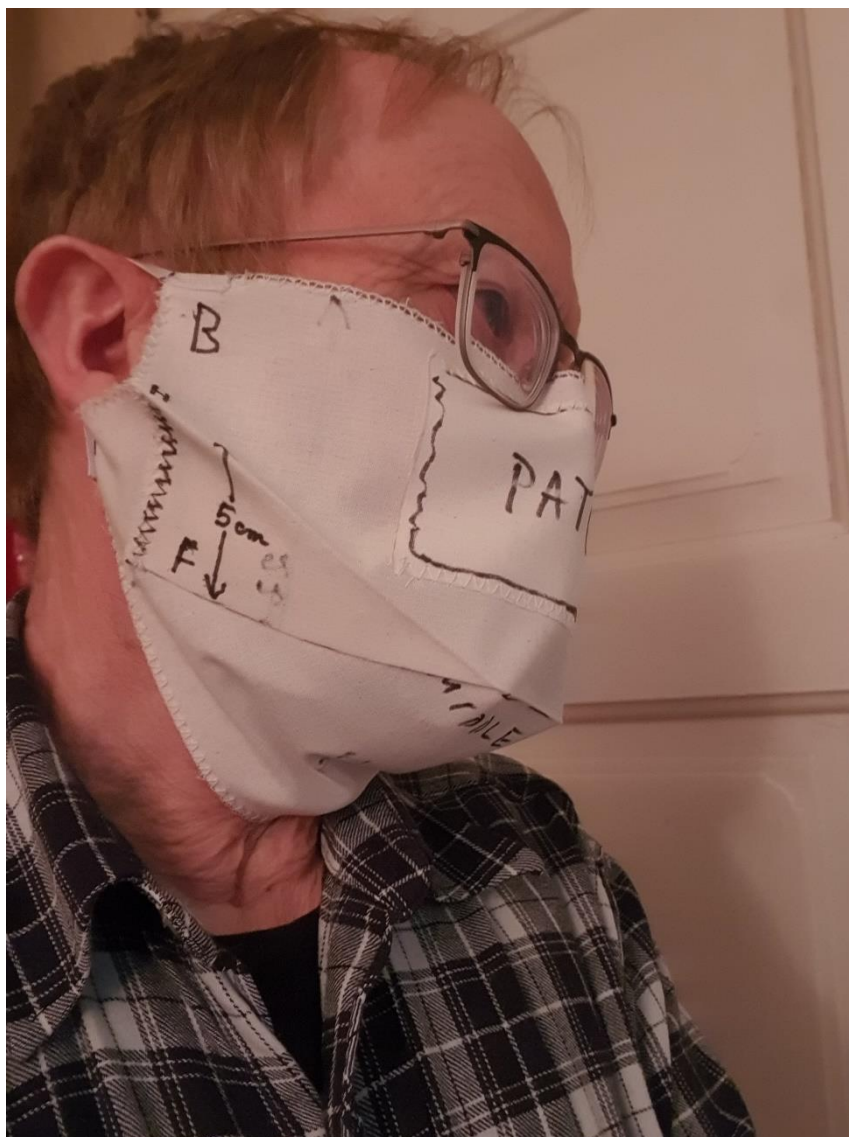


Photo 11: The mask closes quite well all round. A pair of specs helps closing around the nose...

Photo 10 and 11 show the finished facemask. It closes well around the face, and thanks to its wide area, it is easy to breath through, even if the duck itself is quite reluctant to letting air through it.

One may have to make the ear hoops longer or shorter, or even make the mask a bit wider or smaller than my shown version.

Have a good look at the photos. Maybe you find that you want to make it. This should suit well as the first-ever job with a sewing machine.

That's it!

Arne.

PS: Sorry I didn't find a better(-looking) model for showing off the mask...

NOTE: see appendix, next page!

Appendix 26.3.2020

After uploading this little report to my friends in the JRA, I got a few feedbacks. One important one can be found on this link:

<https://smartairfilters.com/en/blog/best-materials-make-diy-face-mask-virus/>

It is about which tissue found at home, which is most useful. I found that the best in my home would be a *dishtowel*, doubled. I don't double it all over, but just put a doubler patch in front of the mask. The patch may well be made bigger than I did.

Belt and braces

Another thing: I gave a mask to my neighbour and she copied it. She then improved it by tying on two 'shoelaces' which she tied on top of her head. This helps preventing the mask from sagging. My interpretation of her shoelaces was a permanently stitched-on strip of canvas. Since my head doesn't change size from one day to another, I found the mask would be quicker to don without needing to tie a knot on top of my head each time.

Here is how it looks:



I think this is an improvement as I find I can wear the mask longer without feeling any need to adjust its position (and thus touch it).

Appendix 2, 4th April 2020.

An armchair afterthought about re-using a non-reusable face mask:

If one has a supply of non-reusable masks, but the supply is running short (or are about to become very expensive), what about trying a way of sterilise a mask for re-use? What about simply putting the mask(s) in the oven for 15 minutes at 100°C? If the mask survives the treatment, any bacteria and virus will no doubt be well and truly cooked by then. This may let one re-use such a mask safely for five to ten times.

Worth a try...

Anyway,

I am looking forward to better days, when we again can hoist our sails, and have a good time on the fjord!



Cheers!

