

Blank Face Mask Guide

Thank you for purchasing one of my face mask blanks from Red Nebula Studios! Each of these pieces started as an original clay sculpture by myself (Sarrah Wilkinson), which I then molded in silicone and hand-cast using tough urethane resin.

This guide includes tips and tricks for how I recommend cleaning, painting and assembling your mask - but feel free to get creative with it and finish it however you see fit - my methods are certainly not the only way of doing things! Also, feel free to e-mail me at contactus@rednebulastudios.com or send a convo on Etsy if you have any questions or want to share pictures of your work with me. I'd love to see it!

Always read the instructions and MSDS information on any chemicals or tools you use to complete your project, and use appropriate safety equipment and ventilation when needed. Red Nebula Studios is not responsible for any damages caused to yourself, others, or property. Be careful and stay safe.

Painting Your Mask

1. Start by thoroughly cleaning the mask surface. You can use mineral spirits or soap and water to remove any oily contaminants (like fingerprints). Using a paintbrush or old toothbrush helps to get into the details. It also helps to sand the surface lightly (220 to 400 grit sandpaper) to help the paint bond to it.
2. In a well-ventilated area, coat your mask with a spray primer rated for use on plastic. (I like the Rust-Oleum 2x Ultra Cover brand, but you can use whatever you prefer.)
3. Once primed, you can use acrylic paints to detail your mask. Even if you want it to be all one color, using a slightly darker color to enhance shadowed areas and a lighter color to enhance details can make it look much more realistic!
4. Finish with a spray sealant, like Krylon brand clear-coats. They come in matte, satin, and glossy varieties, so you can choose which one will best suit your needs.
5. Finally, make sure you give the primer and sealant plenty of time to set before you try wearing your mask. Some primers take a few days to fully set; be sure to read the instructions!

TIP: A mask painted in one flat color rarely looks good, especially in photos. If you want a black mask, start with a dark grey base and enhance it with black shadows and slightly lighter grey highlights. Similarly, if you want a white mask, start with slightly off-white with white highlights, and enhance the shadows and crevices with grey, bone yellow, or light blue for different effects.

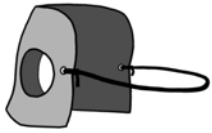
Glue

If you need to bond anything to your mask, some glues work better than others. I've had the best luck with superglue, high temp hot glue, and epoxy two-part adhesives. In any case, it's best to roughly sand the area first (60 to 80 grit sandpaper) to give the glue more texture to adhere to.

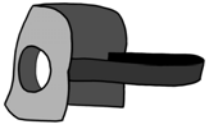
Padding

If you're planning to wear this mask (as opposed to using it for a display piece), you'll want to pad it for comfort. Try it on and see which places press or feel uncomfortable. Add at least a layer of felt to those places so you're not in direct contact with the hard resin. You may also wish to use thicker padding like 1/2" upholstery foam. The most common places to pad with foam are the forehead and the cheeks, just under your eyes, but this step is very much up to your personal preference and what feels comfortable to you.

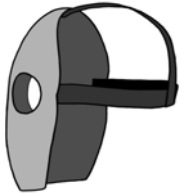
Straps or Other Wearable Options



Drill holes in either side and run a piece of elastic cord or a thin elastic strip through them. Either tie or glue it in place once you've determined how tight it needs to be to fit you comfortably. This is a good option for half-masks, if you're going for the "masquerade" sort of look.



Glue a strap to the mask rather than drilling holes. A wider strap allows for a more secure fit. You can use either an elastic strap, or a non-stretch strap with sliders to allow for adjustability. I have an adjustable strap kit available in my store: <https://www.etsy.com/listing/236565095>



If you've gotten a full face mask, it can help to add an additional strap from the forehead to the back. This helps keep the mask from slipping down, and it doesn't need to be strapped so tightly, which allows you to wear it comfortably for longer. Attach the strap to the inside of the forehead in the same way as the last step. You can either sew the pieces together at the back, or glue them together. Hot glue works just fine for this.



Or, you can opt out of using elastic entirely, and glue the mask directly to a balaclava, making it a pull-on mask. This works well for full face masks, especially if you're trying to hide the rest of your face while wearing it. I recommend a balaclava made from cotton spandex, as it breathes much better than other materials. You can buy balaclavas online, or from sporting goods stores. They're pretty easy to make, too!

IMPORTANT: While my masks are made from impact-resistant materials to keep them from breaking, they are **NOT** rated to protect the wearer during sports, motorcycle riding, or other dangerous activities. They will not take the place of an appropriate helmet.

While vision in these masks is pretty good, your **vision will always be somewhat limited while wearing a mask**. Please be cautious while wearing your mask in public areas. It's a good idea to have a handler, someone who can help negotiate crowds, coordinate photographs, and ensure your safety while in costume. Red Nebula Studios is not responsible for injuries due to the mask being worn in an unsafe manner, so avoid running, dangerous areas, or any other situation where limited vision could put you in harm's way!

The resin these masks are cast in is **heat sensitive**, so please do not leave your mask in a hot vehicle or anywhere else it might be exposed to heat significantly higher than room temperature. Heat may cause your mask to warp. If this happens, you can use a heat gun or hair dryer to soften the material, allowing you to bend it back to its proper shape.

Finally, please note that you **do not** have permission to mold or otherwise duplicate this mask. If you have a project that requires multiple masks, please contact me - I can set you up with a bulk order discount. :)

In Closing...

Once again, thank you for purchasing one of my masks, and please feel free to contact me with any questions!

- Website: <http://www.rednebulastudios.com>
- E-mail: contactus@rednebulastudios.com
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RedNebulaCosplay>
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