

SUMMARY

There has been an [increased push](#) to use single-use plastic during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is timely to remember:

- Single use items are not necessarily more sterile or safe.
- You can reuse items such as coffee cups and cloth face masks by following simple safety measures.
- DIY hand sanitiser, soaps and face masks can be as effective as purchased alternatives.

BUSTING THE SINGLE-USE MYTH

The Victorian State Government stated that, 'There is currently no evidence to suggest any benefit in switching to disposable, single-use food and beverage containers, cutlery and crockery'. This stance is supported by several [international health experts](#) and the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#).

HOW TO REUSE

Reusable coffee cups tips:

- Wash your coffee cup in detergent before and after use.
- Clean hands will ensure a clean coffee cup.
- Hold the lid while your coffee is being made.



Reusable mask tips:

- Wear a clean mask each time you need to put one on.
- Wash your hands with soap before you put on a mask and after removing it.
- Keep a mask in an isolated area until you can wash it.
- Wash masks with soap or detergent, preferably in a washing machine at 60°C.

GET CRAFTY

Cloth masks

A UNSW [newsroom article](#) suggests that cloth masks need to have at least three or four layers, including a water-resistant outer layer, a fine weave and a high thread count.

The Victorian Government has an [easy-to-follow guide](#) for creating face masks.

Hand sanitiser & soap

- Hand sanitiser can be made at home with only [a few ingredients](#). Homemade formulas should aim for a final concentration of 80% ethanol or 75% isopropanol.
- You can also make your own soap with one of the many recipes online. [All soaps](#) will work against COVID-19.