



Living during the Second World War - Gas Mask

KS 2

The Second World War in Europe began in September **1939** when Nazi Germany, led by Adolf Hitler, invaded Poland. On 3 September, Britain and France declared war on Germany. It was a long and deadly war between two groups of countries – **Axis** and **Allied** – and spread across the world. The main Axis countries were Germany, Italy and Japan, while the main Allied countries were Great Britain, the United States, France and Russia (the Soviet Union). War in Europe ended on 8 May **1945**.



This gas mask was given to us by the Brook Hospital, on Shooters Hill. During the Second World War it joined the Emergency Medical Service, and became a general hospital for service personnel and civilians, and also provided treatment for the many air-raid casualties.

This picture shows British school children taking part in a gas mask drill. By September 1939, everyone in Britain was given a gas mask in a cardboard box. This was to protect them from gas bombs, which, it was feared the Germans would drop on Britain. In the end, the gas attacks never came.





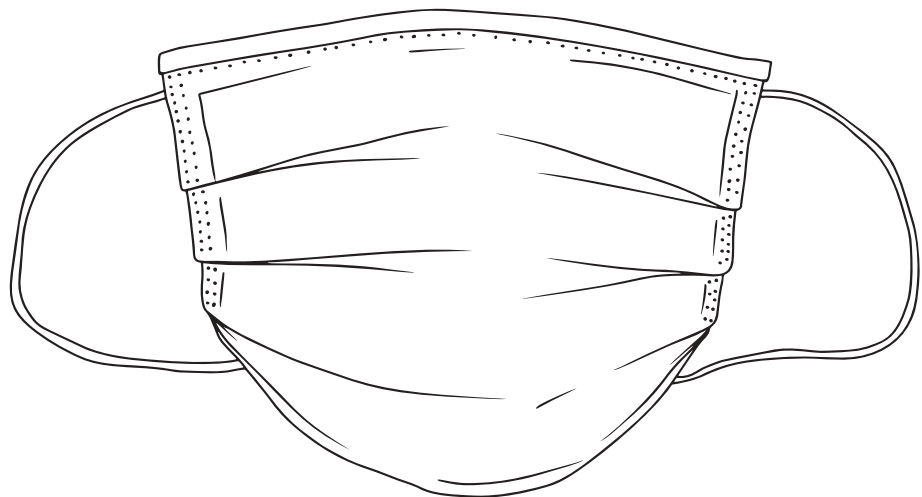
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For different reasons, we also have to wear masks today. During the Second World War, it was to protect us from potential deadly gas attacks. Now, it is to protect ourselves and others from catching and spreading Coronavirus.

**Your
turn!**

What would your
mask look like if
you could design
it yourself?
Have a go!



Here you can write what you think about wearing a mask and how your life has changed since they were made compulsory for most people:

