

Mask Prep at Home

It is necessary to prepare the glass of the mask before its first use. A thin film of silicone forms on the surface of the glass during the manufacturing process, and this film makes the glass more prone to fogging up.

To remove this film, vigorously rub regular toothpaste (not gel) on the inside surface of the glass for several minutes. Rinse the toothpaste off with cold water and test the result by breathing onto the glass. Wherever it fogs up, reapply toothpaste and rub on that area. Rinse, breath, reapply toothpaste, repeat. Once the glass doesn't fog up any more, it's good to go.

(For a lengthy discussion of the different ways to prep a mask, see, e.g., <https://www.girlsthatcuba.com/how-to-clean-new-scuba-mask/>)

Mask Prep Before Entering Water

Before putting on the mask, either use a commercial anti-fogger on the inside surface of the glass, or spray on a homemade weak solution of water mixed with baby shampoo, or spit onto the inside of the glass and rub the saliva around the entire glass.

Doing this covers the glass with a surfactant, which keeps moisture from beading on the glass. Air is able to hold more moisture at higher temperatures, and less moisture at lower temperatures. When snorkeling in a humid climate in water that is a lower temperature than the air, as the air in the mask cools while under water, if the air isn't able to hold all its moisture, moisture drops out of the air (like dew on a car). With a surfactant on the mask's glass, the moisture that drops onto the glass isn't able to maintain sufficient surface tension to bead on the glass, and it instead spreads out flat and slides down the glass to the bottom of the mask, leaving the glass clear for viewing.

Mask Care

Thoroughly rinse the mask with fresh water after each immersion. Keep the mask away from heat surfaces and avoid prolonged exposure to sunlight. Clean only with baby shampoo or other gentle soap. Do not clean with solvents, or with any detergent products that contain alcohol or hydrocarbons.