### Tips to Avoid Counterfeits

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued guidance, [Counterfeit Respirators / Misrepresentation of NIOSH-Approval](#), to help healthcare professionals avoid buying counterfeit masks*.

This page includes information on how to identify a NIOSH-approved respirator, and also a link to NIOSH Certified Equipment List and a NIOSH Trusted Source page.

See the ADA’s [mask comparison chart](#) and [interim mask and face shield guidance](#).

### Tips for spotting suspicious websites and/or marketplaces before you buy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website tip-offs:</th>
<th>Signs that an N95 mask** may be counterfeit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Primary email contact uses a free email service</td>
<td>• Lack of, or misspelling of NIOSH in the marking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Presence of typos, bad grammar and other errors</td>
<td>• Claiming approval for use by children</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contains broken links</td>
<td>• Presence of decorative add-ons</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Site is unfinished and temporary “dummy” text is still present</td>
<td>• Lack of NIOSH approval (TC) number on the N95 or headband</td>
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</table>

### Third-party marketplace red flags:

- Use of terms like “legitimate” and “genuine”
- Customer feedback that seems suspicious
- Inconsistency in the type of products sold
- Prices that are too good to be true
- During times of shortage, claiming “unlimited stock”

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*The CDC uses the term “respirators” in relation to N95, KN95, etc., whereas the ADA uses the term “masks.”

**Does not apply to KN95 masks.

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