

Masks

Masks are popular in east Asia, not only to prevent the spread of illness, but also to protect from pollution and to provide warmth in cold weather. In Vietnam, many women wear both masks and protective clothing to avoid intense sun directly on their skin. Japan has commonly used masks since 1918, when the Spanish flu was raging, and, during the SARS epidemic, masks in Hong Kong became a symbol of solidarity against the disease. Wearing masks has become a ritual of self-protection and collective responsibility.

www.englishtreasure.asia

In Asia, wearing a mask is a responsibility, both to protect oneself and to prevent transmission to others, but, for Europeans and Americans, they have been a symbol of disease. For some more stupid Westerners, masks are an excuse for racism and discrimination. For example, as the Covid-19 epidemic accelerated in China in January, a Chinese student at the University of Sheffield in England was harassed for wearing a mask, while in New York, a Chinese woman was attacked in February and accused of being infected for wearing a mask in public. Perhaps the current emergency will teach the West what Asia has known for decades.

youtube.com/EnglishTreasure

Why might you want to wear a mask?

www.englishtreasure.asia

What caused Japanese people to start regularly using masks?

youtube.com/EnglishTreasure

Why do Vietnamese women wear both masks and protective clothes?