

## 10 steps to reduce SARS-CoV-2 transmission risk at home

Most transmission of SARS-COV-2 occurs in the home setting. The high community transmission in most Australian states means there is a high risk someone will bring the infection into a household. The virus spreads through the air you breathe, so [safe indoor air](#) is critical.

Early infection is asymptomatic and can be highly infectious. A large proportion of transmission occurs before symptoms start. So following these steps during periods of high community transmission can reduce silent transmission. Each home and circumstances are different and risk tolerance will vary. Some homes include people with chronic medical conditions, or who are otherwise vulnerable to severe complications. You may want to use some or all the options below, and can tailor your own plan depending on how much community transmission there is, whether someone in the household is at high risk of complications, unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, has not had their booster or works in a high exposure setting like healthcare.

### Before there is infection in the household

1. Ventilate the home by opening windows. If you have small windows, use a fan to move air. Check [CO2 levels](#) and use an [air purifier with a HEPA filter](#) if open windows are not enough.
2. Wear [masks](#) in common areas during high transmission periods. [Research shows](#) you need to wear masks *before* symptom onset to preventing transmission at home.
3. Seal gaps under bedroom doors (and front door if you live in an apartment). Adhesive door draft stoppers can be purchased cheaply online.
4. Use physical distancing where possible.
5. Minimise visitors during high transmission periods. Visitor should have a rapid antigen test on the same day prior to entering the home, and should wear a good quality mask when inside. If weather permits, meet in the garden, balcony or deck.
6. Do grocery shopping online.
7. Open bathroom windows and flush with toilet lid closed.
8. Develop a plan for how you can isolate from others in your home if you get infected. For example, if you have two people sharing a room, can one move into another room or sleep on the couch?
9. Set up a home covid care kit including a pulse oximeter, a thermometer, rapid antigen tests, medication for pain and fever, two weeks' supply of any regular medication, food and other supplies, and keep the numbers of your GP handy.
10. Help family members link in for vaccination if they have not already done so and get your third doses. Have the children vaccinated as soon as they become eligible.

[Additional information for people who live in apartments.](#)

### After there is infection in the household

Use all of the steps above. Assume that everyone in the household is infected until proven otherwise, quarantine and follow instructions for [close contacts](#). If possible the person with COVID should isolate with an ensuite bathroom, and no-one else should use that bathroom. If this is not possible, turn and keep bathroom exhaust fans on and keep a can of disinfectant spray in the bathroom to spray after use of the bathroom. The person with COVID should avoid being in common spaces with others, and should have their meals separately. In addition, [use a P2, N95 or KF94 mask](#) for everyone in the home whenever you are in common areas. If bedrooms are along a common corridor, the corridor is a high-risk zone and every household member should wear their mask when exiting their bedroom. For [managing your COVID-19](#) we recommend you check the government information on how to monitor your symptoms, isolate and manage your illness.