

Apple to require masks in half of its US stores starting Thursday following CDC mask guidelines

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Apple will require shoppers to wear masks again at half of its U.S. stores, the company confirmed to USA TODAY. It is the first major retailer to confirm a change to its policy.

The company's updated mask policy begins Thursday, two days after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued new masking guidelines that recommend people vaccinated for the coronavirus start wearing [masks](#) indoors again in areas with substantial or high transmission of COVID-19.

The new CDC mask guidance also recommends that people with underlying conditions that may make them more susceptible to the coronavirus wear masks, along with anyone residing with vulnerable people.

A list of the Apple stores that will require masks wasn't available Wednesday afternoon, but the information will be added to the retailer's website.

Stores that will require masks are in COVID hotspots or in areas that have local or state mandates.

Apple was one of the first retailers to close stores at the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and when stores started reopening in May 2020 had mask requirements and had temperature checks along with limiting capacity.

The change comes just weeks since Apple stopped requiring masks in most of its stores in June. Most retailers quickly dropped mask guidelines for fully vaccinated customers this May following the CDC's last update.

Since May, most states have backed off mask requirements for vaccinated people and some lifted their mask mandates for everyone. Several [local governments](#)—including Los Angeles County and St. Louis—recently began requiring vaccinated people to again wear masks, citing concerns about the delta variant.

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