

Trans Resources

The below is information gathered by people from within our trans and non-binary social groups.

Binding

There is no “one-size-fits all” binding method because everyone is shaped differently, and we all have different levels of comfort with our bodies. Some trans guys don’t bind at all. Some slump or hunch over to hide their chests (which can be very effective but can also cause posture problems over time). Some use different methods of layering clothing to help hide their chests. Some bind only on certain occasions; some bind all the time.

Safety tips:

- The clasp binders put pressure on one side so **best not to** use those unless you have to.
- **Always** bind for less than 8 hours a day (the more breaks and time you can go without the better). Binding for long hours every day over time breaks down tissue and can cause breathing problems, back pain, and skin irritation.
- **Always** take your binder off before you sleep. Give your body rest while you rest. Also, take it off before exercising. Sports bras are designed to move with you as you workout, while a binder can make movement and even breathing more difficult.
- **Never** use duct tape or Ace bandages/sports tape or trans tape to bind your chest. Binding with these materials can restrict your ability to breathe and move properly. Ace bandages in particular are designed to constrict, so as you breathe, they get tighter and tighter and can really hurt you.
- If it hurts, **stop**. Try out a larger compression shirt, find binding alternatives that work for you, or try different ways to hide your chest without binding.

Brands of binder:

- GC2B – has a UK store
- Spectrum – has a UK store
- Underworks – US based

Measure yourself correctly for a binder – all the different companies have different sizing, you may be one size in one place but another in another.

Most binders are hand wash or cold wash only, never, never put them in the tumble dryer.

Remember – if it becomes painful stop and find a more comfortable alternative.

Tucking

Safety tips:

- Tucking might be uncomfortable but if it becomes painful, stop, take a break and go back to tucking later.

- Practice tucking a few times in a relaxed environment, at home before going out whilst tucking – this will enable you to get used to tucking without panicking when out and about.
- Do not use tape to tuck, this can hurt the skin and cause irritation.

Pre-made tucking devices:

- Dance belt – a dance belt is used by male ballet dancers to create a smooth look when they wear leotards. This smooths rather than tucks but creates the same overall look as tucking and is less uncomfortable.
- Pre-made gaffe – this is a piece of underwear that aids tucking and can be bought online.

Home-made tucking devices:

- A homemade gaffe can be made using a sock and tights, which is an easy and affordable way to tuck – further instructions can be found online.

Remember – if it becomes painful stop and find a more comfortable alternative.

Top packing

There are many ways to top pack or create a curvy figure, whether that is through stuffing your bra with socks or tissue paper or buying breast forms.

Buying breast forms

Breast forms can be bought from many different places online, a recommendation for soft leaves was made within the group. There are also many different sizes and shapes which come with different price points.

There are two principal variants of breast form: those with flat backs – perfect for girls with completely flat chests – and those with concave backs, for accentuating small breasts. Make sure you're getting the kind that's right for you.

Don't expect them to match your skin tone. Almost all of them are a kind of reconstituted-ham pink that doesn't match any skin tone particularly well (although they are, of course, implicitly white).

There will be a sizing table on the product listing that will relate the boob size (which will be a different arbitrary number for each manufacturer) to two important variables: band size and cup size.

Size and measurement

A bra has three elements: a lightly elasticated band which runs around your chest to hold itself in tension against your body for support, shoulder straps which hold the band in position vertically, and two cups to hold the breasts.

Shoulder straps are usually adjustable, so you don't need to worry about that measurement.

Cup size is in your control when you are buying your breasts. They run from AA to G cup, where AA is very nearly a flat chest and G is so large that people consider breast reduction surgery to reduce the excessive strain on their shoulders. There are two double letters: AA

and DD, where AA is smaller than A and DD is larger than D. Most women, as far as I'm aware, fall in the A-D cup range.

Band size is the thing you'll need to measure. Pass a tape measure around your chest, an inch or two below your nipples, and get yourself a measurement in inches. Bras are usually sold in band sizes 30" to 44" or so, but there are options if you happen to come in above or below that. If you need more detailed instructions, every online bra shop will have a measurement guide. Bras come with three sets of hooks for small adjustment, so this gives some flexibility.

The silicone forms do not change size and shape, the way the rest of our bodies do. They are fixed, and so, if your band size changes, your cup size will change in inverse proportion. If your body is going through some changes, it is worth measuring every so often to make sure your bras don't get too tight.

Bras that work for Top Packing

There are two types of bra that work really well for top packing: sports bras and post-surgery bras.

Post-surgery bras can be bought in most retailers such as Debenhams or M&S but are usually harder to find than regular bras. As they are made for cisgender women who have mastectomies to place breast forms within, they need no alteration. These are also soft on your skin so if you are on HRT any sensitivity or breast growth is allowed for.

Sports bras often come with padding if they are low to medium impact, this can be removed and with scissors you can extend the hole for the padding until it fits the breast form.

Putting on a bra

Put the straps over your shoulders, then reach behind you – or get a friend to help – and put the little hooks into the eyes. The hooks and eyes are normally doubled up, so you have two sets of hooks and eyes to connect up (to reduce strain). Familiarise yourself with the hooks and eyes before you try to put the boobs on so that you know what you're looking for when you're fumbling around behind your back.

The alternative way to do it is to put the bra on backwards – making sure you DON'T put the straps over your shoulders – and do the hooks up at the front, where you can see them, before twisting the whole assembly round and doing the straps up. There are various videos on YouTube explaining how to put on a bra.

Care and hygiene

The silicone will smell. It picks up your body odour and absorbs it, and there is no real way to get that odour out. However, if you're careful, they won't smell too bad.

The trick is to apply deodorant – just as cis women do – under your boobs, a kind of semicircular area under your nipple, as often as you apply it to your underarms. Be careful and use small amounts, since your skin there will not be accustomed to strong chemicals.

Breasts are delicate, and yours are no exception. Your boobs will have come in a box that fits the shape and cradles them. When you're not wearing them, keep them in the box. The

cup-shaped depression means that excessive strain isn't being placed on the fragile 'skin' of the breast, stopping tears from developing and silicone from leaking out.

Also, naturally, be wary of putting excessive tearing/twisting/cutting strain on them. Pressing into them is fine, so don't be scared of tight hugs or massages. But be careful when putting them in and taking them out, because that does require a little contortion to get them into the pockets.

Self-care

[SC Booklet FINAL-Standard-PDF.pdf - Google Drive](#)

GRC and Deedpoll

Filling out paperwork such as the GRC or Deed poll can be daunting, so we have collated some tips and information to help ease the process. This information has been collated at the transgender online group as a form of peer support.

[DEED POLL and GRC.pdf - Google Drive](#)

Fertility

When considering preserving your fertility as a trans person it can be confusing, here's some information collated by the trans group to help simplify the process.

[Fertility Information Sheet.docx - Google Docs](#)

Trans media recommendations

At the trans and non-binary groups we are always looking for good trans and non-binary recommendations for media (books, films, tv, social media etc). Here are some of the groups' top picks.

[Spectra Trans Media.docx - Google Docs](#)

HRT

[Information About Hormonal Treatment for Trans women - PDF.pdf - Google Drive](#)

[NHS-A-Guide-to-Hormone-Therapy-for-Trans-People.pdf - Google Drive](#)

[Female To Male » Testosterone Hormone Replacement](#)