

## What is binding?

Binding refers to the process in which an individual utilizes some form of multi-purpose garment to compress their chest for the appearance of a flatter chest. A flat chest can affirm an individual's identity and allow them and their gender identity to be correctly perceived in public. The most important thing about binding is safety.

## Is binding healthy?

In certain cases, consistent unsafe binding over years can cause damage to the skin and ribs. Although there may be certain health risks associated with unsafe binding practices, binding can provide significant improvements to an individual's mental health, and thus overall health. Binding is considered safe if done carefully and responsibly.

## Important rules for binding

1. Tightness ≠ better binding. The goal is to create a masculine shaped torso, not to crush the ribcage or cause breathing complications.
2. Always bind for less than 8 hours consecutively.
3. Always take the binder off at night.
4. Use breathable materials to minimize sweat and the risk of rashes or fungal infections.
5. Wash binder regularly to lessen the risk of rashes and itchiness.
6. Never use tape, including duct tape, plastic wrap, or ace bandages as they could cause physical harm and restrict breathing.

## What to look for when obtaining

- Breathable materials (nylon, spandex, cotton)
- There are not one-size fits all binders; specific sizes matter.

Size	Chest (inches)	Chest (centimeters)
XS	29-31	74-79
S	32-34	81-88
M	35-39	89-99
L	40-43	102-110
XL	44-47	112-119
2X	48-51	122-130
3X	52-55	132-142
4X	56-59	142-150

- Avoid a binder that is too small. Use exact measurements, as illustrated above.
- Look at online return policies. It may take some experimenting to find the right binder size. If your binder hurts
- Sports bras can also serve as a binder.

## Purchasing

Sites such as [Underworks.com](http://Underworks.com), [GC2B.co](http://GC2B.co), [F2mbinders.com](http://F2mbinders.com), and [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) offer great binders. Some sites offer free binders for you as well. For free binders, visit [Transactivegendercenter.org/in-a-bind](http://Transactivegendercenter.org/in-a-bind) or [Ftmessentials.com](http://Ftmessentials.com).

## Moving beyond just a “flat chest”

For many, binding can provide a new level of confidence, energy, comfort, and joy that positively enhances their self-esteem and identity. Affirming your child's gender identity also plays an important role in their development