

South Africa hits Google with searches for 'face masks' and 'hand sanitizer'

By [Andy Walker](#)

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If you're heading to the shops to stock up on supplies this weekend, it could be a busy one. According to data from Google, South Africans will be on the hunt for face masks and hand sanitiser.



Image source: [Pexels](#).

After Google shed light on [what questions those in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa](#) are searching for regarding the coronavirus outbreak, we investigated how often South Africans are searching for common items often mentioned in the same breath as COVID-19 coronavirus.

These include face masks, hand sanitiser, toilet paper and hand wash.

Interestingly, search traffic for all four terms spiked on Thursday, when the Department of Health announced the [first case of coronavirus in South Africa](#).

Searches for “face masks” and “hand sanitizer” — note the American spelling — saw especially notable, with searchers for the latter spiking yet again on Friday.

“Toilet paper” saw a gradual increase in search popularity this week too, but no remarkable search spikes were noted.

While toilet paper isn’t considered a must-have item in the fight against the virus, it was [an item that Australians](#) and those in other nations have been hoarding.

Looking at provincial searches specifically, Limpopo was the only province to not see hand sanitiser take the top search topic for the week. Instead, the province is more interested in toilet paper.

In terms of per city searches, Durban North, Randburg and Roodepoort saw the largest portion of searches for “face masks”.

The Dolphin Coast, Pinetown and Westville — all in KwaZulu-Natal — were almost entirely searching for “hand sanitizer”.

Unsurprisingly, searches for “virus”, “COVID 19” and “coronavirus” [all spiked this week](#) in South Africa.

ABOUT ANDY WALKER

Camper by day, run-and-gunner by night, Andy is editor at Merneburn and prefers his toast like his coffee -- dark and crunchy. Specialising in spotting the next big Instagram cat star, Andy also dabbles in smartphone and game reviews over on Gearburn.

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