

What is binding?

Binding refers to the process in which an individual utilizes some form of garment to compress their chest for the appearance of a flatter chest.

What can binders do for me?

For many, binding can provide a new level of confidence, energy, comfort, and joy that positively enhances their sense of self. Binding could promote a body image that may be more consistent with your individual identity, allowing your gender identity to be correctly perceived in public.

Prioritizing Health

Consistent and unsafe binding over years could cause damage to your skin and ribs. Binding can provide significant improvements to individual mental health, but health precautions should still be taken.

Be smart and safe by:

- Wearing breathable materials (nylon, spandex, cotton, etc.).
- Avoiding a binder that is too small.
- Always binding for less than 8 hours consecutively.
- Always taking off your binder before you sleep.
- Washing your binder regularly to lessen the risk of rash and infection.
- Never using tape, including duct tape, plastic wrap, or ace bandages, as they could cause physical harm or restrict breathing.
- Using exact body, including chest, measurements when ordering binders.

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

Things I should know:

- Tightness ≠ better binding. The goal is to create a masculine shaped torso, not to crush the ribcage or cause breathing complications.
- Pain is always an indicator that something is wrong. If your binder hurts, you may need a different size.
- There are not one-size fits all binders.
- There are different styles and lengths. Test which works best for your body type.
- Sports bras can also serve as a binder.
- Look at return policies when ordering. It may take some experimenting to find the right binder size.

Purchasing

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

You can also access binders for free through Trans*Lounge a program of the Los Angeles LGBT Center. To access binders through Trans*Lounge you can complete an on-line application at <https://translounge.org/binder-exchange> or contact Gina Bigham at gbigham@lalgbtcenter.org.

Pro-tips:

- Depending on your style of binder, it might be easier to put it on by stepping into it rather than pulling it on like a regular t-shirt.
- Many prefer to wear a thin cotton undershirt underneath to add a layer of protection between their skin and the binder. Experiment to see if this is right for you.
- During warmer temperatures, try applying baby powder to absorb some sweat.
- Binding for the first time could be intimidating. Your initial reaction to your new appearance may not be what you expected but that can change overtime.