

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR MEN:
HAIR CUTTING AND STYLING



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INTRODUCTION TO MEN'S HAIRSTYLING

The art of haircutting involves individualized and precise designing, cutting, and shaping of the hair. In order to perform the art of haircutting successfully, the barber must be at ease using a variety of tools, implements, techniques, and methods.

It is important to remember that a good haircut is the foundation of a good hairstyle. To achieve optimal results requires knowing the proper way to cut, blend, and taper the hair using clippers, shears, and razors. Practice and application are necessary for the achievement and refinement of these skills because each new client will present new challenges and learning opportunities that form the basis for future success.

The hairstyle, and therefore the haircut, should accentuate the client's strong features and minimize the weaker ones. The client's head shape, facial contour, neckline, and hair texture must be taken into consideration. The barber needs to be guided by the client's wishes, personality, and lifestyle as well.



THE CLIENT CONSULTATION

A thorough client consultation helps to eliminate any guesswork about the haircut or style to be performed. This is the time when the barber must determine just what it is the client is asking for in the way of a haircut or style. Phrases such as “a little off the top” or “over the ears” are not specific enough for haircutting purposes. How is “a little” measured? Is it 1/4 inch or 1 inch? Does “over-the-ears” mean covering the ears or cut-

ting around the ears? These interpretations are just two examples of why the consultation is so important to both the client and the barber.

Some basic questions that barbers should ask the client before the actual cutting begins are as follows:

- How long has it been since your last haircut?

Knowing that the average hair growth is about 1/2 inch per month allows the barber to envision the preferred length of the hair before it grew out and needed to be cut again.

- Do you prefer a similar style or are you looking for something new?

The answer to this question can lead the barber directly to the cutting stage or to further discussion with the client about appropriate styles and options.

- What is your usual morning routine (shampoo, blow-dry, etc.)?

The answer will indicate how much time the client is willing to spend on hair care.

- Are you having any particular problems with your hairstyle?

- This question provides an opportunity to open dialogue about specific hair-related issues such as problem areas, length, fullness, growth and wave patterns, hair texture, density, or color.

Additional consultation questions should lead to answers that help the barber to determine the length of the sideburns, the shape of the neckline, and whether or not the client desires a neck shave, eyebrow trim, and so on. With practice and experience, barbers learn the questions to ask.

Envisioning is the process of picturing or visualizing in your mind the finished cut and style based on what the client has told you. With the information gained through the consultation, the barber is better able to visualize the client's expectations of the

haircutting service. It is essential to achieve this understanding *before* beginning the haircut.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF HAIRCUTTING AND STYLING

Each haircut is a representation and advertisement of the barber's work. Remember, a good haircut is the foundation of a good hairstyle.

Hairstyling has been defined as the artistic cutting and dressing of hair to best fit the client's physical needs and personality. Pay attention to details such as client comfort, sideburn lengths, outlines, balance, and proportion. The consultation should provide sufficient information about the client's lifestyle and personality to suggest a suitable style, but a study of facial shapes assists the barber in determining the *best* style for a client's features.

Facial Shapes

The facial shape of each individual is determined by the position and prominence of the facial bones. There are seven general facial shapes: oval, round, inverted triangular, square, pear-shaped, oblong, and diamond. In order to recognize each facial shape and then be able to give correct advice, the barber should be acquainted with the outstanding characteristics of each type. With this information, the barber can suggest a haircut and style that complements the facial shape in much the same way certain clothes flatter the body.

The following facial shapes should constitute a guide for choosing an appropriate style:

- *Oval:* The oval-shaped face is generally recognized as the ideal shape. Any hairstyle that maintains the oval shape is usually suitable (Figure 1). Try changing the

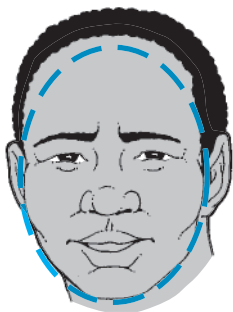


FIGURE 1 | Oval face.

part. Experiment, but keep in mind elements such as the client's lifestyle, comfort, and ease of maintenance.

- *Round:* The aim here is to slim the face. Hair that is too short will emphasize fullness, so create some height on the top to lengthen the look of the face (Figure 2). An off-center part and some waves at eye level will also help lessen the full appearance of the face. Beards should be styled to make the face appear oval.
- *Inverted triangular:* The potential problems with this facial shape are overwide cheekbones and a narrow jaw line (Figure 3). Keep the hair close at the crown and temples and longer in back, or try changing the part and the direction of the hair. A full beard helps to fill out the narrow jaw.
- *Square:* To minimize the angular features at the forehead, use wavy bangs that blend into the temples. This softens the square forehead and draws attention to a strong jaw (Figure 4). If a beard is worn, it should be styled to slenderize the face.



FIGURE 2 | Round face.

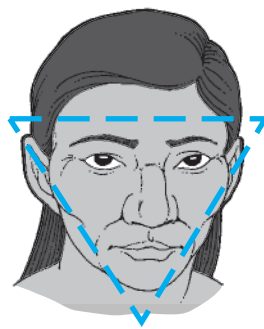


FIGURE 3 | Inverted triangular face.

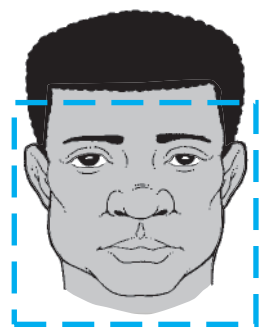


FIGURE 4 | Square face.

- *Pear-shaped:* This shape is narrow at the top and wide on the bottom (Figure 5). Create width and fullness at the top, temples, and sides to produce balance. Short, full styles are best, ending just above the jaw line where it joins the ear area. A body wave or medium-size curl perm is another way to achieve width at the top. If a beard is worn, it should be styled to slenderize the lower jaw.
- *Oblong:* The long face needs to be shortened, the angularity hidden, and the hairline never exposed (Figure 6). Blown bangs can provide a solution. A layered cut is best. A mustache helps to shorten a long face.
- *Diamond:* The aim here is to fill out the face at the temples and chin and keep hair close to the head at the widest points (Figure 7). Deep, full bangs give a broad appearance to the forehead and a fuller back section adds width. A full, square, or rounded beard would also be appropriate.

Profiles

Always be aware of the client's profile because it can influence the appropriateness of a haircut or style for that particular individual.



FIGURE 5 | Pear-shaped face.

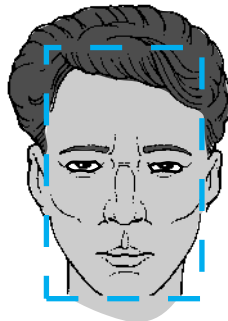


FIGURE 6 | Oblong face.

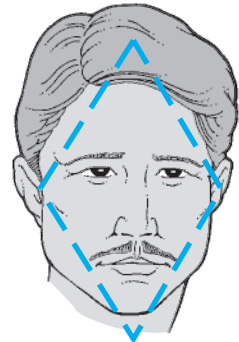


FIGURE 7 | Diamond face.

- *Straight profiles* tend to be the most balanced and can usually wear any hairstyle successfully (Figure 8).
- *Concave profiles* require a close hair arrangement over the forehead to minimize the bulge of the forehead (Figure 9).
- *Convex profiles* require some balance so arrange the top front hair over the forehead to conceal a short, receding forehead (Figure 10). A beard or goatee minimizes a receding chin.
- *Angular profiles* also have receding foreheads, but the chin tends to jut forward (Figure 11). Arrange the top front hair over the forehead to create more balance. A short beard and mustache help to minimize the protruding chin.

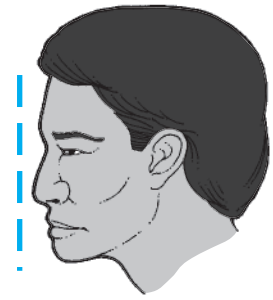


FIGURE 8 | Straight profile.

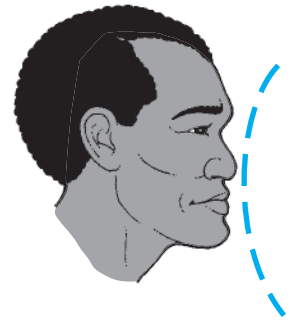


FIGURE 9 | Concave profile (prominent forehead and chin).

Nose Shapes

The shape of the nose influences a profile and should be studied both in profile and from a full-face view.

- *Prominent nose shapes* include a hooked nose, large nose, or pointed nose (Figure 12). Bring the hair forward at the forehead and back at the sides to minimize the prominence of the nose.



FIGURE 10 | Convex profile (receding forehead, prominent nose, and receding chin).



FIGURE 11 | Angular profile.

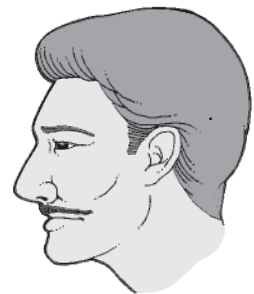


FIGURE 12 | Prominent nose.



FIGURE 13 | Turned-up nose.

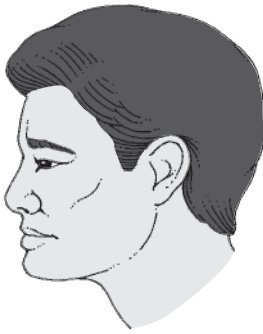


FIGURE 14 | Long neck.



FIGURE 15 | Short neck.

- *Turned-up nose shapes* can usually wear shorter haircut styles because the size or heavy features associated with prominent nose shapes is not an issue (Figure 13). Experiment with combing the hair from different part lines or comb the hair back on the sides.

Neck Lengths

The length of the neck is also a factor in determining the overall shape of the haircut and style. In most cases it is advisable to follow the client's natural hairline when designing a style; however, sometimes an overly long or very short neck limits the options. The length, density, growth pattern, and natural partings of the hair should be considered when deciding on a style that best complements the client's neck length.

Long necks are minimized when the hair is left fuller or longer at the nape (Figure 14).

Short necks are best served by leaving the neck exposed to create an appearance of length (Figure 15). Work with the natural hairline and perform a tapered cut that creates an illusion of a longer nape and neck area.

■ FUNDAMENTALS OF HAIRCUTTING

The fundamental principles of haircutting should be thoroughly understood. The same general techniques are used in cutting, shaping, tapering, and blending men's and women's hair. The differences between the two are usually evident in the overall *design line*, the contour or shape, which includes volume, and the finished style. The fundamental principles of haircutting include the head form, basic terms used in haircutting, and different haircutting techniques.

The Head Form

In order to create consistent and successful results in haircutting, it is necessary to understand the shape of the head. Hair

responds differently in different areas of the head because of the curves and changes from one section to the next. The ability to visualize these sections will assist the barber in the development of individual cutting patterns, help to eliminate technical mistakes, reduce confusion during the haircutting process, and facilitate easier checking of the final result.

When designing and cutting hair, the barber should envision the sections of the head as depicted in Figures 16 through 18. These sections include the front, top (apex), temporal, crown, sides, sideburns, back, and nape.

NOTE: The temporal section is part of the parietal ridge, which is also known as the crest, horseshoe, or hatband region of the head.

Reference points are points on the head that mark areas where the surface of the head changes or the behavior of the hair changes as a result of the surface changes. These points are used to establish proportionate design lines and contours.

- The *parietal ridge* is also known as the crest, temporal, horseshoe, or hatband area of the head. It is the widest section of the head, starting at the temples and ending just below the crown. When a comb is placed flat against the head at the sides, the parietal ridge begins where the head starts to curve away from the

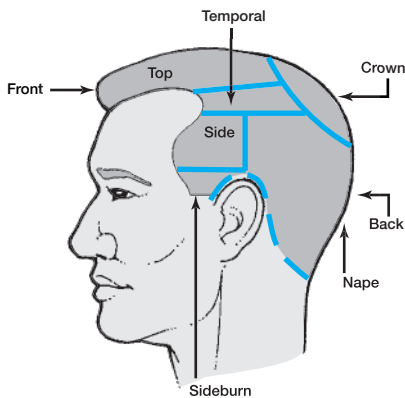


FIGURE 16 | Diagram of sections of head, side view.

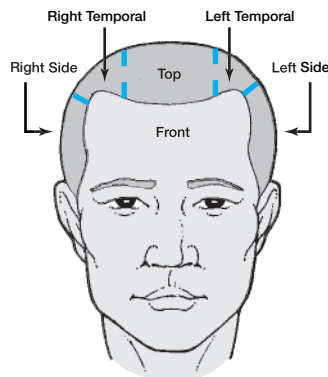


FIGURE 17 | Diagram of sections of head, front view.

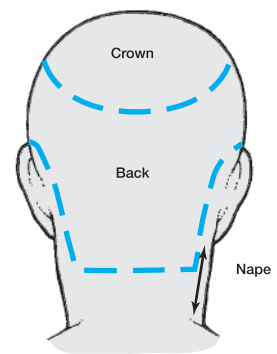


FIGURE 18 | Diagram of sections of head, back view.

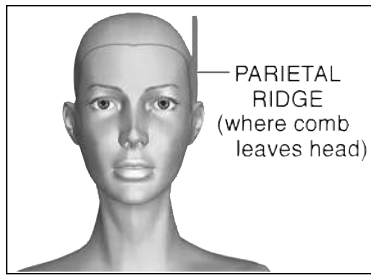


FIGURE 19 | The parietal ridge.

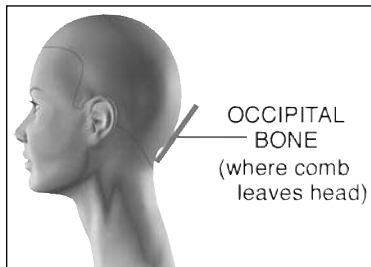


FIGURE 20 | The occipital bone.

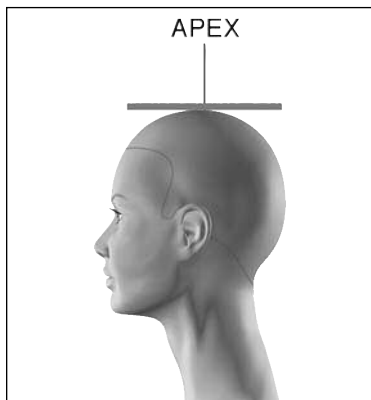


FIGURE 21 | The apex.

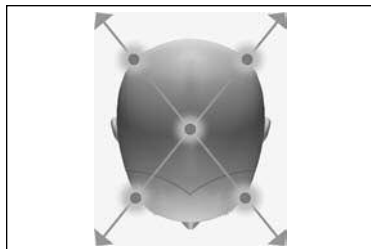


FIGURE 22 | The four corners.

comb (Figure 19). The parietal ridge is one of the most important sections of the head when cutting hair because it serves as a transition area from the top to the front, sides, and back sections.

- The *occipital bone* protrudes at the base of the skull. When a comb is placed flat against the nape area, the occipital begins where the head curves away from the comb (Figure 20).
- The *apex* is the highest point on the top of the head (Figure 21).
- The four corners are located by crossing two diagonal lines at the apex (Figure 22). The lines will point to the front and back corners of the head.

Basic Terms Used in Haircutting

A *line* is simply a series of connected dots that result in a continuous mark. Straight and curved lines are used in haircutting to create the shape and direction from which the hair will fall (Figure 23). The three types of straight lines used in haircutting are the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines (Figure 24).

- *Horizontal* lines are parallel to the horizon or floor and direct the eye from one side to the other. Horizontal cutting lines build weight and are used to create a one-length look and low-elevation or blunt haircut designs. These *weight lines* are usually created at the perimeter or at the occipital area of a haircut (Figures 25 and 26).
- *Vertical* lines are perpendicular to the floor and are described in terms of up and down. Vertical partings facilitate the projection of the hair at higher elevations while cutting. Vertical cutting lines remove weight within the cut and create layers that may be used to cut from short to long, long to short, or uniformly, depending on finger placement (Figure 27).

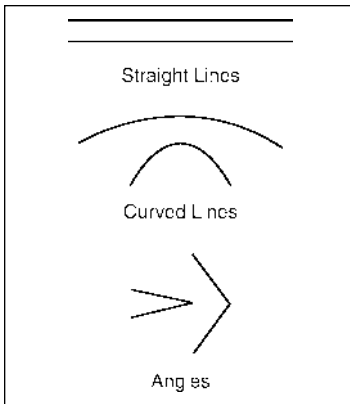


FIGURE 23 | Lines and angles.

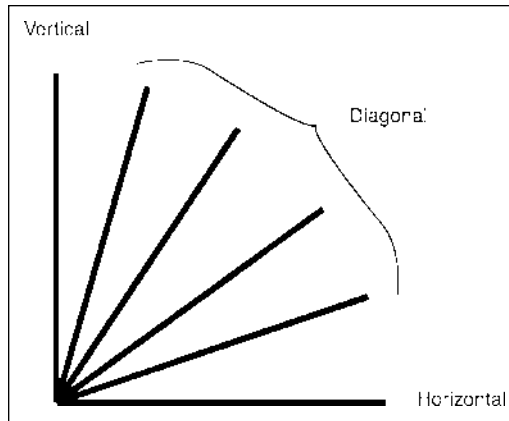


FIGURE 24 | Horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines.

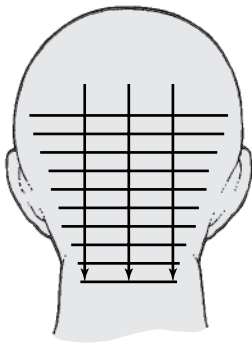


FIGURE 25 | Weight line at perimeter.

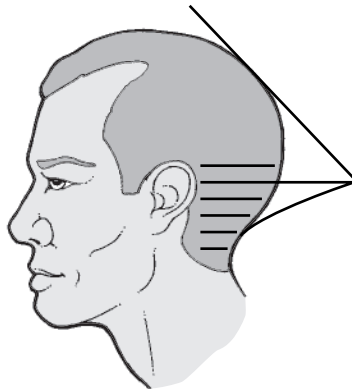


FIGURE 26 | Weight line at occipital.

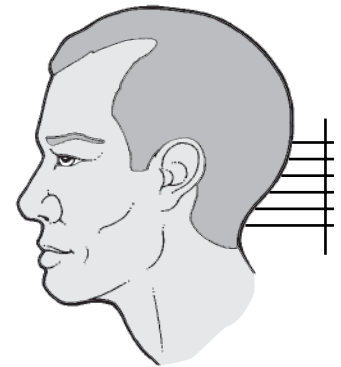


FIGURE 27 | Vertical partings facilitate layering.

- *Diagonal* lines have a slanted direction and are used to create sloped lines at the perimeter on the design line (Figure 28). When used at the perimeter, these lines are often referred to as *diagonal forward* or *diagonal back*. Diagonal finger placement may also be used to create a stacked layered effect at the perimeter or to blend longer layers to shorter layers within a haircut.

An *angle* is the space between two lines or surfaces that intersect at a given point. Angles help to create strong, consistent foundations in haircutting and are used in two different ways. Angles can refer to the degree of elevation at which the hair is

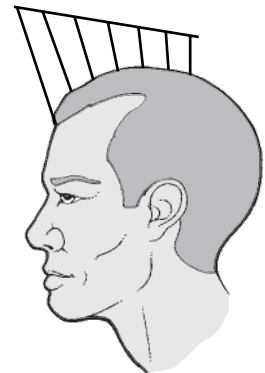


FIGURE 28 | Diagonal line within top front sections.

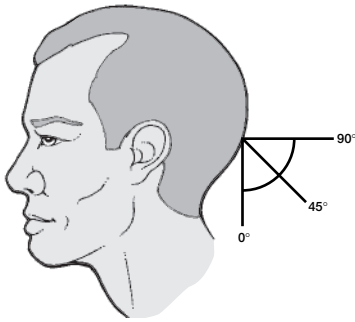


FIGURE 29 | Elevations relative to the head form.

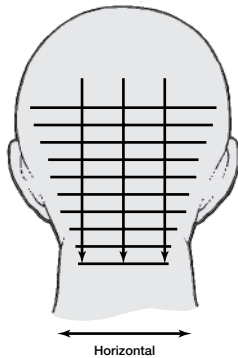


FIGURE 30 | Horizontal, zero elevation.

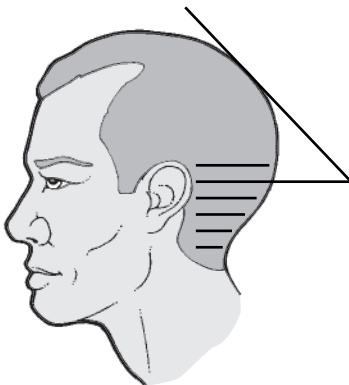


FIGURE 31 | Horizontal, 45-degree elevation.

held for cutting or to the position of the fingers when cutting a section of hair (cutting line).

Elevation is the angle or degree at which a section of hair is held from the head for cutting, *relative from where it grows*. Elevation, also known as *projection*, is the result of lifting the hair section above 0 degrees or natural fall. This projection of the hair while cutting produces graduation or layers and is usually described in terms of degrees (Figure 29).

- A low elevation of *0 degrees* produces weight, bulk, and maximum length at the perimeter of a hair design.
- To perform a 0-degree (zero elevation) cut, a *parting* is made in the section to be cut (Figure 30). After combing the hair straight down from where it grows, it is cut either against the skin (as in the nape or around-the-ear areas) or as it is held straight down between the fingers. Both stationary and horizontal traveling guides are used to create the design or perimeter line. The design line then serves as a guide for all subsequent partings that will be brought to the design (perimeter) line for cutting. This technique creates crisp, clean lines around the hairline on shorter hairstyles and achieves the standard “blunt cut” on longer hair.
- Holding the hair at *45 degrees* from where it grows is considered to be a medium elevation. Medium elevation or graduation creates layered ends or “stacking” within the parting of hair from the 0-degree distance to the 45-degree position. Movement and texture is created within the distance between the two degrees, depending on the length of the hair and the position of the angle in relation to the head form. Both stationary and horizontal traveling guides are used to achieve the graduated or stacked effect (Figure 31). Use of a vertical parting projected at 45 degrees, with the fingers holding the parting

angled at a 45-degree diagonal, will create a *tapered* effect (Figure 32).

- A *90-degree* elevation is probably the most common angle used in men's haircutting. It produces layering, tapering, and blended effects. When using a 90-degree elevation, the hair is held straight out from the head from where it grows. This requires a traveling guide in order to move around the entire head. Lengths in various sections of the head can vary, but the hair will still be blended overall and considered to be a high-elevation cut.

A 90-degree *projection* can be used to create uniform layers, as depicted in Figure 33. Cutting each section of hair the same length creates *uniform* layers.

- To create a *tapered* effect as shown in Figure 34, the hair is held from a vertical parting and cut closer to the head form in the nape and around-the-ear areas at a 90-degree projection.

A *parting* is a smaller section of hair, usually 1/4 to 1/2-inch thick, parted off from a larger section of the hair. The use of partings is essential to maintain control of the hair in manageable

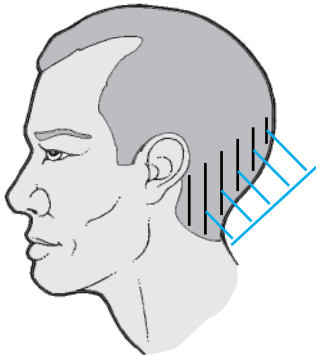


FIGURE 32 | Vertical parting with 45-degree finger placement.



FIGURE 33 | 90-degree uniform layers.

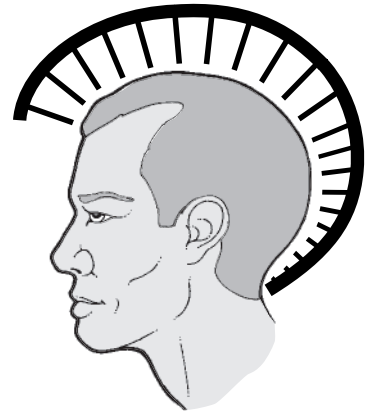


FIGURE 34 | 90-degree taper.

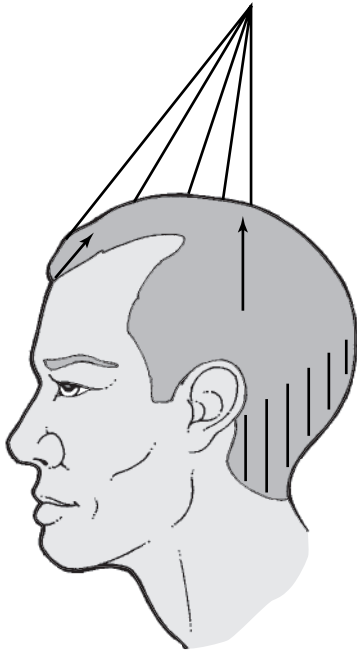


FIGURE 35 | Stationary guide.

proportions while performing the haircut. Partings may be held horizontally, vertically, or diagonally depending on the desired effect, with a usual projection range of 0 to 180 degrees.

The *design line* is the outer perimeter line of the haircut. It may act as a guide depending on the overall design of the haircut and the method the barber uses to achieve it.

A *guide*, also known as a guideline or guide strand, is a cut that is made by which subsequent partings or sections of hair will be measured and cut. Guides are classified as being either stationary or traveling. Both types may originate at the outer perimeter (design line) of the hair, or at an interior section, usually the crown area. Most haircuts are achieved by using a combination of the two types of guides.

- A *stationary guide* is used for overall, one-length-looking designs at the perimeter, such as a solid-form blunt cut, or for maintaining the length of one section while subsequent partings are brought to it from other sections to meet it for cutting, producing either an overall long, layered effect or extra length within a section (Figure 35).
- A *traveling guide* moves along a section of hair as each cut is made. Once the length of the initial guide has been cut, a parting is taken from in front of it or near it, combed with the original guide, and cut. Then, a new parting is taken, combed with the second parting of hair, and cut against that guide. It is this use of the previous guide to cut a subsequent parting of hair that makes it a traveling guide. Care must be taken not to recut the original or subsequent guides as the barber moves along the section. When performed properly, the traveling guide ensures even layering and blending of the hair from one section to another. Refer to Figures 33 and 34.

- Traveling guides are used internally within the cut to create blended layers; they are also used to finish perimeter designs after the hair is cut to the desired length from one section to another. For example, although a stationary guide is used when establishing the length at the perimeter, it becomes a traveling guide when subsequent cuts are made from left to right or right to left around the head form.

Layers are produced by cutting the interior sections of the hair; they can originate from the front, top (apex), crown, or perimeter (usually the design line). Layering can be angled (shorter on top and longer at the perimeter), uniform (even throughout), or fully tapered (longer on top and shorter at the perimeter). It creates blending, fullness, and/or a feathered effect.

Tapered, or tapering, means that the hair conforms to the shape of the head and is shorter at the nape and longer in the crown and top areas. Blending of all of the hair lengths is extremely important in tapering (Figure 34).

A *weight line* refers to the heaviest perimeter area of a 0- or 45-degree cut. It is achieved by use of a stationary guide at the perimeter and may be cut in at a variety of levels on the head, depending on the style. In men's haircutting, a weight line is most often used in combination with a tapered nape area.

Texturizing is performed after the overall cut has been completed. Thinning or notching shears or razors can be used to create wispy or spiky effects within the haircut or along the perimeter.

Tension is the amount of pressure applied while combing and holding a section of hair for cutting. Tension ranges from minimum to maximum as a result of the amount of stretching employed when holding the hair between the fingers and the spacing between the teeth of the comb. For example, fine-toothed combs facilitate more tension while combing than wide-toothed combs.

- Use maximum tension on straight hair to create precise lines.

- Use minimal to moderate tension on curly and wavy hair as the hair may dry shorter than intended if maximum tension is used.

Thinning refers to removing excess bulk from the hair.

Outlining means marking the outer perimeter of the haircut in the front (optional, depending on hair texture), in front of and over the ears, and at the sides and nape of the neck.

Over-direction creates a length increase in the design and occurs when the hair is combed away from its natural fall position, rather than straight out from the head toward a guide.

Hairstyling involves arranging the hair in a particular style, appropriately suited to the cut, and may require the use of styling aids such as hair spray, gel, tonic, oil sheen, or mousse.

During the course of your barbering career, you will be introduced to a variety of haircutting terms. Terminology for the most part depends on who is presenting the information or technique and whether or not a new word has been created in place of former terminology. The same holds true for different style names and what the latest fashion trends are. As a barber you need to be aware that cutting the hair at certain angles and elevations creates specific effects and that hairstyle trends are cyclical in nature.

Variations of design will inevitably occur, as history has a way of repeating itself in our industry. Crew cuts and boxed fades can be traced back to the years of World War II, finger waves were a hit in the 1920s, and braiding has been around since humans first walked the earth. This reinforces the fact that barbers must become proficient in the basic skills in order to adapt those skills and techniques to whatever the current trend may be.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Barbers should always use high-quality implements, tools, and equipment. When taken care of properly,

well-tempered metal implements and electric tools will provide years of dependable service. Because a myriad of choices are available, you may want to ask an experienced barber to assist you in making appropriate selections.

Although all of the implements and tools associated with barbering will probably be used at some time or another, the principal “tools of the trade” are combs, brushes, shears, clippers, trimmers, and razors.

Combs

Combs are available in a variety of styles and sizes. The correct comb to use depends on the type of service to be performed and the individual preference of the barber. Combs are usually made of bone, plastic, or hard rubber. Because bone combs can be costly and plastic combs are not as durable as bone or rubber, most barbers prefer combs made of hard rubber. Fine-toothed combs may be used for general combing purposes, while wide-toothed combs are preferable for detangling or chemical processing. Some available comb styles are the all-purpose comb (Figure 36), the taper comb (Figure 37), the flat top comb (Figure 38), the wide-toothed comb (Figure 39), the tail comb (Figure 40) and the pick or Afro combs (Figure 41).



FIGURE 36 | Assorted all-purpose combs.

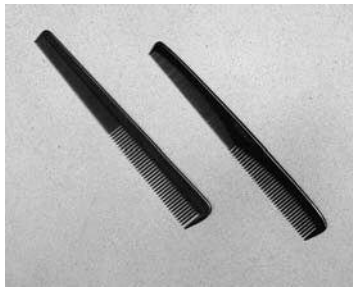


FIGURE 37 | Taper combs.



FIGURE 38 | Flat-top combs.



FIGURE 39 | Wide-toothed combs.

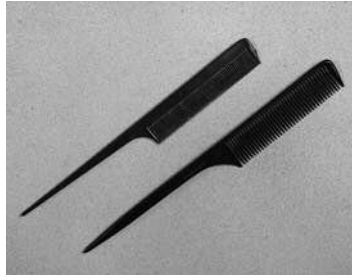


FIGURE 40 | Tail combs.

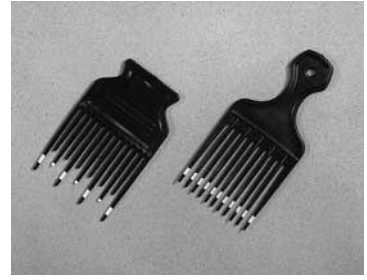


FIGURE 41 | Pick or Afro combs.



did you know

Barbers can simplify their work when cutting hair by using light-colored combs on dark hair and dark-colored combs on light hair. This technique provides greater contrast between the comb and the hair, especially when employing the shear-over-comb method of cutting.

Holding the Comb

The correct manner in which to hold the comb will be dictated by the type of comb used, the service being performed, and the dexterity and comfort of the barber. Figures 42 through 45 show correct and incorrect holding positions that are often used with an all-purpose comb.

Haircutting Shears

The two types of shears generally used by barbers and barber-stylists are the French style, which has a brace for the little finger, and the German type, which does not incorporate the finger brace into the design. Barbers typically choose the French design over the German type and both are now available in ergonomically designed styles (Figure 46). Haircutting shears with detachable blades have also become very popular. The old



FIGURE 42 | Proper comb-holding position.

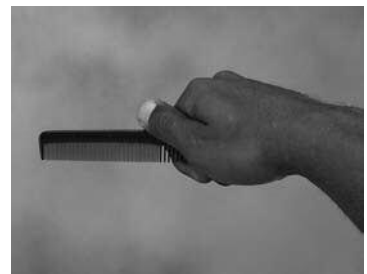


FIGURE 43 | Improper comb-holding position.



FIGURE 44 | Proper holding position for shear-over-comb cutting.



FIGURE 45 | Improper holding position for shear-over-comb cutting.

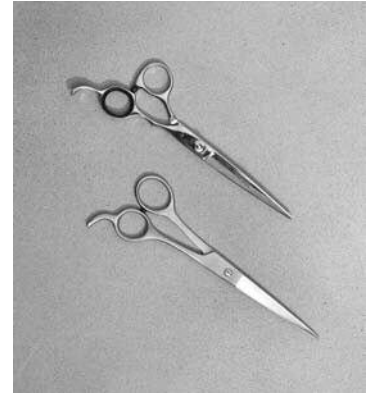


FIGURE 46 | Haircutting shears.

blades can be removed and replaced with new ones, thereby eliminating the need to send shears out to be sharpened.

Shear Facts

Shears are composed of two blades, one movable and the other stationary, fastened with a screw that acts as a pivot. Other parts of the shears are the cutting edges of the blades, two shanks, finger grip, finger brace, and thumb grip (Figure 47).

- **Size.** Shears are available in a variety of lengths, which are measured in inches and half-inches. Most barbers prefer the 6 1/2- to 7 1/2-inch shears.
- **Grinds.** The grind of the shear refers to its cutting edge. The two main types of shear grinds are plain and corrugated. The plain grind is used most frequently and may be smooth (knife edge), medium, or coarse. The corrugated blade has imbrications, or teeth, that assist the cutting process.
- **Set.** The set of the shears refers to the alignment of the blades. This alignment is just as important as the grind of the blades because even shears with the finest cutting edges will be inferior cutting tools if the blades are not set properly.

Thinning, or serrated shears, are used to reduce hair thickness or to create special texturizing effects. They may also be called texturizing shears. One type of thinning shear has notched

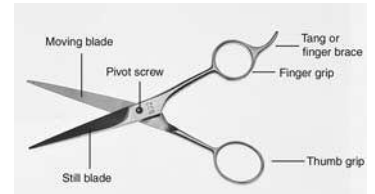


FIGURE 47 | Parts of haircutting shears.



FIGURE 48 | Thinning or texturizing shears.

teeth on the cutting edge of one blade, while the other blade has a straight cutting edge. The second type has overlapping notched teeth on the cutting edges of both blades (Figure 48).

Thinning shears also differ in respect to the number of notched teeth on the cutting blade. The greater the number of notched teeth, the finer the hair strands can be cut without noticeable cut marks. The most common type used is the single serrated blade having 30 to 32 notched teeth. Recent designs include a wider notching pattern, with indentations slightly recessed in the notching teeth in order to perform alternative texturizing techniques. Thinning shears are also available with detachable blades.

How to Hold Haircutting Shears

When picking up your shears in preparation for use, you will probably complete the following steps simultaneously:

1. Insert the ring finger into the finger grip of the still blade with the little finger resting on the finger brace. To ensure proper balance, brace the index finger on the shank of the still blade, approximately a half-inch from the pivot screw.
2. Next, place the tip of your thumb into the thumb grip of the moving blade. The thumb grip should be positioned halfway between the end of your thumb and the first knuckle. Avoid allowing the thumb grip to slide below the first knuckle, as you will have less control of the cutting blade. See Figures 49 and 50 for correct and incorrect finger placement and holding positions of the shears.



FIGURE 49 | Correct finger placement and holding position of shears.



FIGURE 50 | Incorrect finger placement and holding position of shears.

PALMING THE SHEARS AND COMB The shears and comb should be held at all times during a haircut that requires these tools. For safety, shears need to be closed and resting in the palm while combing through the hair. This is called “palming the shears” and is achieved by slipping the thumb out of the thumb grip and simply pivoting the shear into the palm of the

hand (Figure 51). With practice, palming will become a very natural motion. Thinning or texturizing shears should be held in the same manner as regular haircutting shears.

Once the shears are palmed, the process of combing through the hair is performed with the comb in the same hand as the shears (Figure 52). After the section of hair has been combed into position for cutting, the comb is transferred to the opposite hand and palmed (Figure 53). This allows the first two fingers of that hand to be free to maintain control of the hair and the shear hand free to cut the hair section (Figure 54).

Clippers and Trimmers

Clippers and trimmers are two of the most important tools used in barbering. Clippers can be used for a variety of cutting techniques, from blending to texturizing. Trimmers, also referred to as edgers or outliners, are essential for finish and detail work.

Today's barber has a vast array of clipper styles from which to choose (Figures 55 through 57). Function, style, weight, contour, and speed are just some of the factors that should be considered when purchasing a clipper. For example, most clipper models are single speed but two-speed models are also available. Some clippers utilize a detachable blade system, whereas others



FIGURE 51 | Palming the shears.



FIGURE 52 | Holding the comb and shears.



FIGURE 53 | Palming the comb.



FIGURE 54 | Correct palming of comb while cutting.



FIGURE 55 | Rotary (universal) motor clippers.



FIGURE 56 | Pivot motor clippers.



FIGURE 57 | Magnetic motor clippers.

have a single adjustable blade. Clippers with a single cutting head usually have a blade adjustment lever on the side of the unit and rely on clipper guards to vary the length of the hair being cut. Check with your local supplier for information on the different models and styles available.

Blades and Guards

Clipper *blades* are usually made of high-quality carbon steel and are available in a variety of styles and sizes (Figure 58). Some styles are intended for use with detachable-blade clipper models, and others will serve as replacement blades for certain clipper models. Blade sizes can also differ from one manufacturer to another and may not always indicate the same cutting length, so be careful when purchasing these items. A good rule of thumb is to follow the manufacturer's recommendations for the style and size of clipper blades that are appropriate for their clipper models. Manufacturers are constantly improving their clipper blades to permit faster and more precise haircutting; be on the lookout for the newest in haircutting tools.

Clipper *guards*, also known as *attachment combs*, are most often made of plastic or hard rubber and can be used with most clipper models (Figure 59). The purpose of a clipper guard is

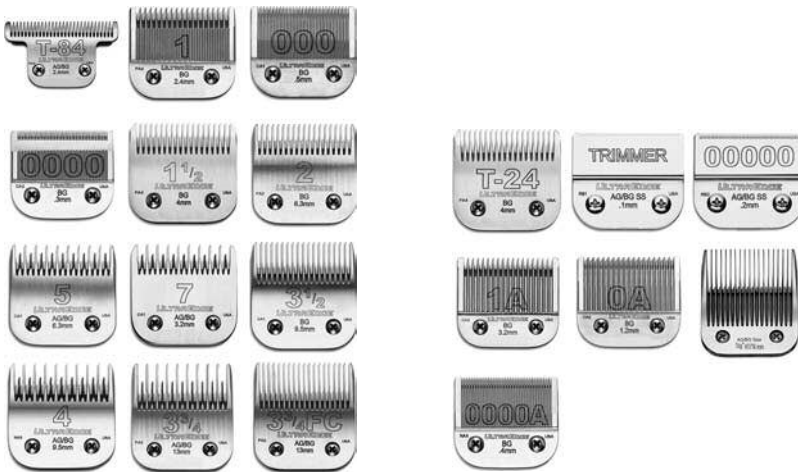


FIGURE 58 | Clipper blades.

to allow the hair to be left longer than what might be achieved from the size of the clipper blades alone. Guards do not do the actual cutting. They are simply supplemental implements that a barber may use in the pursuit of versatile techniques that can be added to his or her professional toolbox.

How to Hold Clippers

The technique used by a barber to hold the clippers is most often determined by the section of the head he or she is working on. Cutting the back section will necessitate holding the clippers differently than when cutting the top section. A general rule to follow is that the clipper should always be held in a manner that permits freedom of wrist movement. Three methods of holding clippers are explained next, but you or your shop owner may use an alternative method that is equally correct.

1. When the right-handed barber holds the clippers, the thumb is placed on top of the clipper with the fingers supporting it from the underside (Figure 60). This position is usually comfortable for tapering in the nape or side areas of a haircut or when the



FIGURE 59 | Clipper guards.



FIGURE 60 | Clipper-holding position #1.



did you know

When using clippers to cut the hair, the amount of hair that remains depends on whether the hair is cut with the grain or against the grain. For example, when using a 1" blade to cut with the grain, the approximate length of the hair that remains will be 1 1/8" to 1 3/8"; cutting against the grain will leave the hair from 1" to 1 1/4" long.



FIGURE 61 | Clipper-holding position #2.



FIGURE 62 | Clipper-holding position #3.

i FYI

The position of the clipper blades relative to the skin and the hair's density and texture will determine the length of the hair that is left after cutting. Remember that angling the clipper blades toward the scalp or out toward the hair ends will produce different results.

clipper is switched to the left hand while cutting hair sections from a different direction.

2. An alternative method is to place the thumb on the left side of the unit and the fingers on the right side, with the blades pointing up (Figure 61). Like the holding position in Figure 60, some may find this a comfortable position for tapering around the hairline.
3. Figure 62 shows an alternative underhand position that may be used when working the top section of a haircut from a side-view position.

Razors

As the sharpest and closest cutting tool, razors are used for facial shaves, neck shaves, finish work around the sideburn and behind-the-ear areas, and haircutting. The razor of choice for professional barbering is the straight razor; safety razors should not be used to render professional services in the barbershop.

There are two types of straight razors: the changeable-blade straight razor and the conventional straight razor, which requires honing and stropping to maintain its cutting edge.

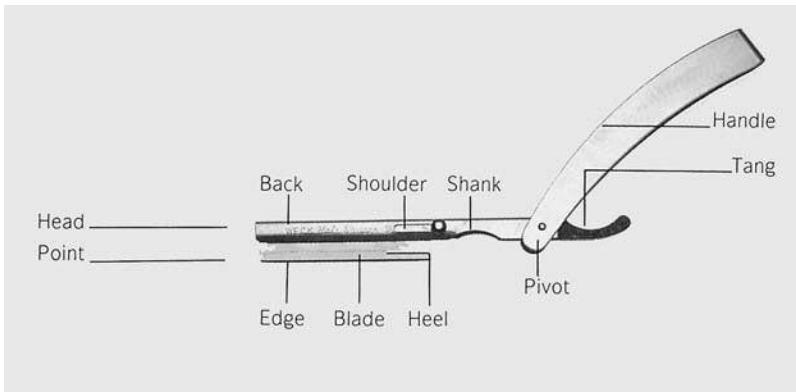


FIGURE 63 | Parts of a razor.

Both may be purchased with a razor guard. The razor guard is an attachment that is used in razor-cutting the hair. The changeable-blade razor generally looks the same as the conventional straight razor and is used in the same manner. The benefits of using the changeable-blade straight razor are the easy replacement of blades from one client service to another and the maintenance of sanitation standards in the barbershop. Also, it is usually lighter and saves time because it eliminates the need for honing and stropping. The structural parts of both conventional and changeable-blade straight razors are the head, back, shoulder, tang, shank, heel, edge, point, blade, pivot, and handle (Figure 63).

Changing the Blade

Always follow the manufacturer's directions for inserting a new blade or removing an old blade from a changeable-blade razor. Some razor models are designed with a screw mechanism that releases the blade; others require a sliding motion for blade insertion and removal. The following guidelines explain the sliding motion method of blade replacement, as illustrated in Figures 64 and 65.

1. Hold razor firmly above the joint of the handle and shank. Use the teeth of the razor guard to catch the

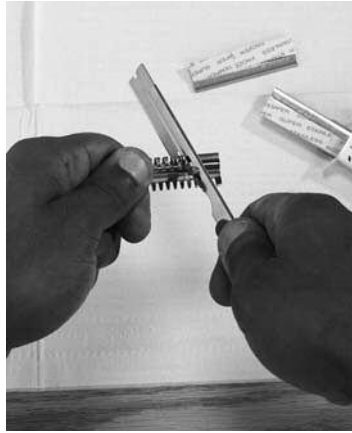


FIGURE 64 | Removing the blade.



FIGURE 65 | Correct blade insertion.

blade and push it out of the razor (Figure 64). Always store used blades in a sharps container until ready for disposal.

2. To insert a new blade, position the end of the blade into the razor groove. Use the teeth of the razor guard to slide the blade in until it clicks into position (Figure 65).

NOTE: Some razor blade packaging is designed to act as a blade dispenser. The razor groove is slid over the top of the blade from the side of the dispenser until the blade is in place.

Holding the Changeable-Blade Razor

There are several methods of holding the razor, depending on the service being performed. Some of these will be covered later in this book. Others are covered in the shaving portion of *Professional Services for Men: Facial Massage and Hair Design*. However, you should practice and become familiar with the basic holding positions as follows:

1. The ball of the thumb supports the razor at the bottom of the shank between the blade and the



FIGURE 66 | Holding the razor properly.



FIGURE 67 | Alternate method of holding.



FIGURE 68 | Palming the razor and comb.

pivot. The handle is angled up, allowing the little finger to rest on the tang. Place the index finger along the back of the razor for control, with the two middle fingers resting comfortably along the top of the shank (Figure 66).

2. The razor is also held in a straightened position with the finger placement, as shown in Figure 67. This holding technique may also be used during haircutting services.
3. To palm the razor, curl in the ring finger and little finger around the handle. Hold the comb between the thumb, index, and middle fingers (Figure 68).

Lather Receptacles

Lather receptacles are containers used to hold or dispense lather for shaving. The most basic and commonly used types are the electric latherizer, the press-button-can latherizer, and the lather mug with paper lining. *Electric latherizers* are sanitary, convenient, and easy to operate (Figure 69). The sanitary and pre-heated lather coming from these modern machines impresses most clients favorably. For satisfactory performance, follow the manufacturer's instructions on their proper use and care. *Press-button-can* latherizers are convenient and sanitary, but they are not as professional as electric latherizers. *Lather mugs* are receptacles made out of glass, earthenware, rubber, or metal. When the lather mug is used, shaving soap and warm water are mixed

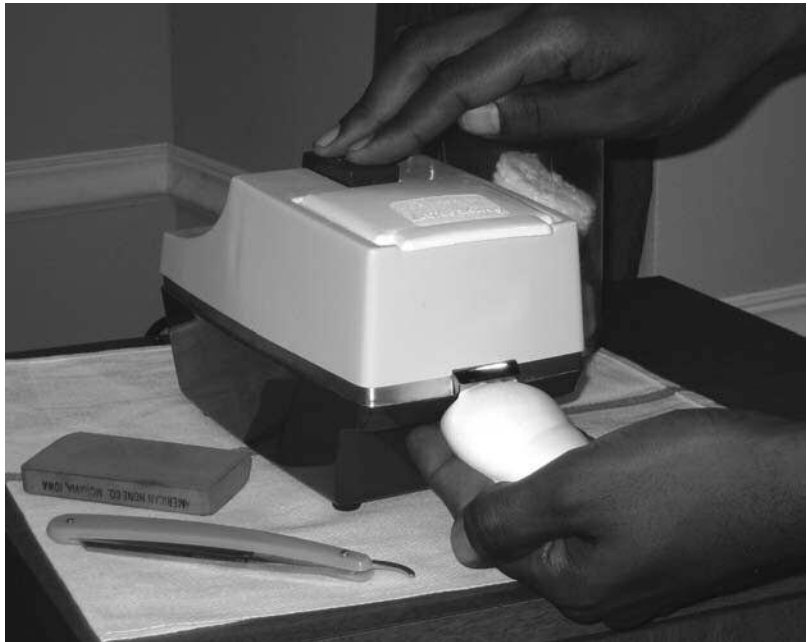


FIGURE 69 | The electric latherizer is far superior to other lather receptacles.



STATE BOARD REGULATIONS

Check your state barber board rules and regulations concerning the use and disinfection of lather mugs and brushes.

thoroughly with the aid of a lather brush. Because the lather mug is exposed and collects dirt easily, it requires thorough cleansing and disinfection after each client.

Hair Removal

Hair removal methods have changed over the years. The neck duster, once a traditional implement in barbershops, is no longer a safe and sanitary option for hair removal unless sanitized after each use. Because a number of states have forbidden the use of hair dusters, other methods are now used to remove loose hair. Some methods that are in compliance with state and local health codes include:

1. A paper or cloth towel folded around the barber's hand can be used to dust off loose hair.
2. Paper neck strips can be used, but may not facilitate a very thorough dusting.

3. Small electric hand vacuums and air hoses are other options being employed.

NOTE: The electric hair vacuum provides quick cleanup service after a haircut. It can remove hair clippings and loose dandruff, and is particularly suitable for going over the forehead and around the neck and ears. Be sure to sanitize the nozzle applicator after each use and empty the container as hair accumulates within it.



HAIRCUTTING TECHNIQUES

There are several different ways to cut hair. These procedures are classified as fingers-and-shear, shear-over-comb, freehand clipper cutting, clipper-over-comb, razor-over-comb, and razor rotation. It is important to note, however, that almost every haircutting procedure requires the use of a combination of techniques and tools. The most important factors that determine the tools chosen to achieve the haircut are the client's desired outcome, the texture and density of the hair, and the barber's personal preference. As a professional barber you should be comfortable and skillful with using all the tools of the trade described thus far.

Practice the following techniques and procedures to become familiar with different methods of using your tools.

The Fingers-and-Shear Technique

The fingers-and-shear technique may be used on many hair types, from straight to curly. Three basic methods exist for using the fingers-and-shear technique: cutting on top of the fingers, cutting below the fingers, and cutting palm-to-palm.

NOTE: The blades of the shears should rest flat and flush to the fingers for these positions. Angling the shear blades may cause injury.