

4 HRS HAIRCUTTING REFERENCE

Introduction

Haircutting is the single most important service you must master as a professional cosmetologist. Why? Because a good haircut serves as the foundation of most every other service offered in the salon. Compare it to building your dream home. You envision the finished product. You imagine the style you will use to furnish it. You then hire an architect (the stylist) to create the floor plan. Then you contract with a builder (the stylist) to construct the home. Now, if the builder establishes a weak foundation made of sand or clay, the home will not stand. A solid foundation, however, like the haircut, will serve as the sound base for the beautifully created home (or hairstyle)!

In addition, every member of the family avails themselves to regular haircuts. Therefore, it is a tremendous source of revenue and repeat business. You will begin with the basics in haircutting. You will need to learn the purpose and safe use of each haircutting implement. There are some basics in the anatomy of the head that will impact your skills in haircutting as well. Also, a review of some of the basic elements of design, including form, balance, and wave pattern, will be beneficial as you design a haircut.

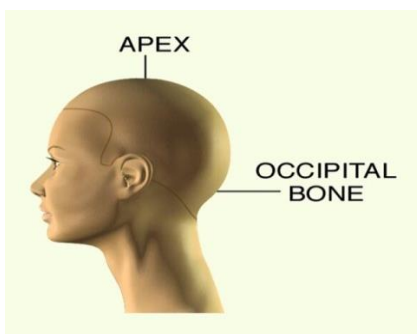
If a quality, well-blended haircut is not achieved, you will have difficulty in completing other services such as styling or chemical texture services. So it will serve you well to master your haircutting skills before entering the salon.

As with any other service, the client's desires, personality and lifestyle will all impact the techniques used and the end result of the haircut.

PRINCIPLES OF HAIR DESIGN

You need to develop an understanding of the important steps of the haircutting process. Those principles include sectioning, combing, elevating the hair, and cutting the hair ends which all essentially represent the physics (for every action or technique used, there will be an expected and predictable result) of hair.

ANATOMY OF THE SKULL

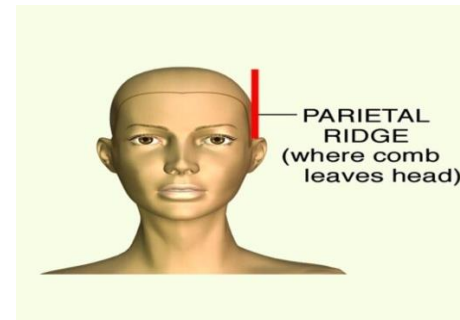


Reference Points

Understanding the reference points will help ensure balance within the design; allow you to re-create the haircut again and again; allow

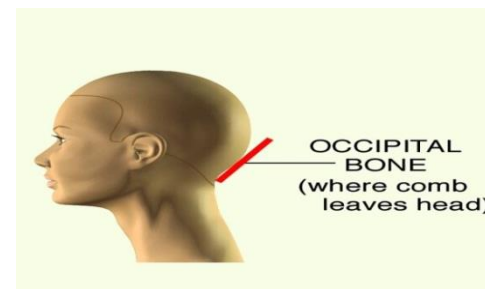
you to know where and when to change technique to make up for irregularities, such as a flat crown.

Parietal Ridge

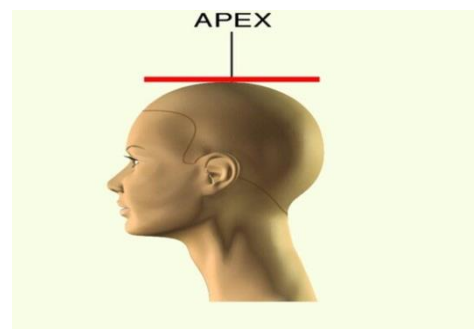


The Parietal Ridge is the widest area of the head, starting at the temples and ending at the bottom of the crown. It is found by placing a comb flat on the head at the sides. Where the head starts to curve away from the comb is the parietal ridge. This area is also referred to as the crest area.

Occipital Bone



The Occipital Bone protrudes at the base of the skull. This area is found by feeling the skull or placing a comb flat against the nape area to observe where the comb leaves the head.



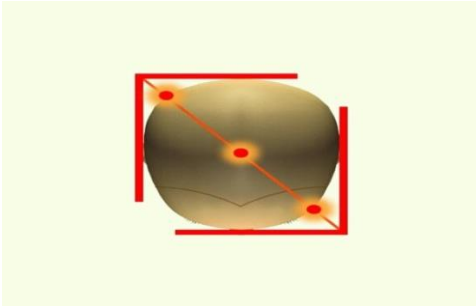
Apex

The Apex is the highest point on the top of the head. It is located by placing a comb flat on the top of the head. It will rest on that highest point.

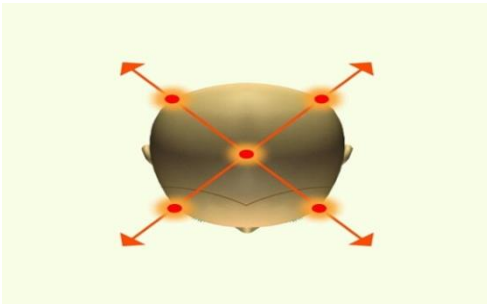
Four Corners

This area can be located in two ways.

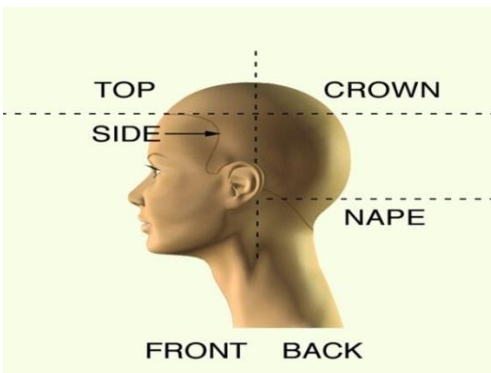
(1) Place two combs flat against side and back, locating the back corner at the point where the two combs meet.



(2) Make two diagonal lines crossing the apex of the head, pointing directly to the front and back corners.



Areas of the Head



Top- Locate the top by parting the hair at the parietal ridge, continuing all the way around the head. The hair in the top area lies on the head while hair everywhere else hangs due to gravitational pull.

Front- Locate the front by parting from the apex to the back of the ear. The hair that falls in front of the ear is considered to be the front (some side hair will be included here).

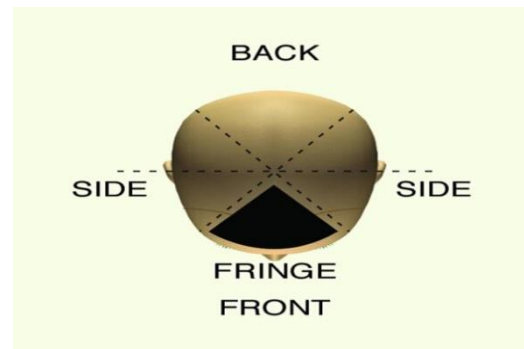
Sides- The sides include all the hair from the back of the ear forward, and below the parietal ridge.

Crown- The crown is the area between the apex and the back of the parietal ridge.

Nape- The nape is the area at the back of the neck and below the occipital bone. This area can be located by taking horizontal parting across the back of the head at occipital bone.

Back- This area is located by parting from the apex to the back of the ear. The hair that falls naturally behind the ear (located at the same time you locate the front section).

Fringe- This is also called the bang area. It is a triangular section that begins at the apex and ends at the front corners. This area can be located by placing a comb on top of the head so that the middle of the comb is balanced on the apex.



The spot at which the comb leaves the head in front of the apex is where the fringe begins. When combed into a natural falling position, it falls no farther than the outer corners of eyes.

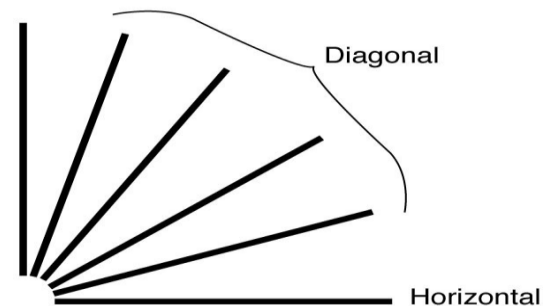
LINES AND ANGLES

A **Line** is a thin, continuous mark used as a guide.

An **Angle** is the space between lines or surfaces that intersect at a given point.

Straight Lines can be broken down into three types:

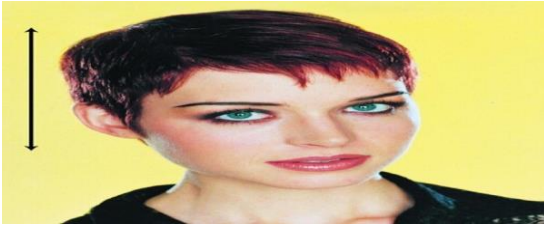
Vertical



Horizontal lines are parallel to horizon or floor. They are level and opposite of vertical. They direct the eye from one side to the other. Horizontal lines are used in one-length and low-elevation haircuts. They build weight. Consider the following:



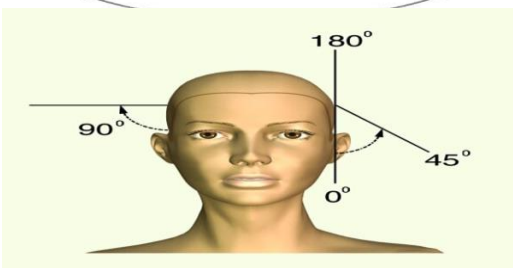
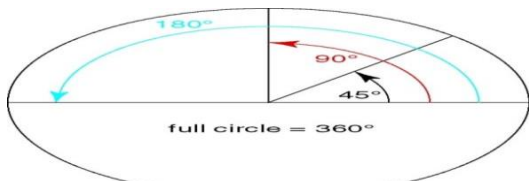
Vertical Lines are up and down rather than left and right. They are perpendicular to the floor. These types of lines are used to create graduated or layered haircuts and used with higher elevations. They remove weight. Consider the following example:



Diagonal Lines are between horizontal and vertical lines. They have a slanting or sloping direction. They are used to create beveling (a technique for creating fullness by cutting the ends at a slight taper). Diagonal lines are used to create stacking and to blend long layers to short layers as the following demonstration shows:



Angles- Basic geometry is important to haircutting because this is how shapes are created. Angles are important in elevation and cutting line



ELEVATION

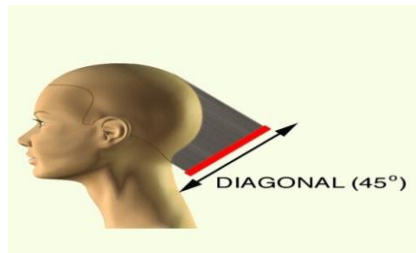
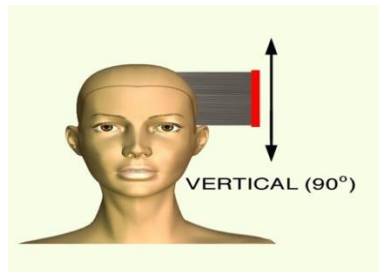
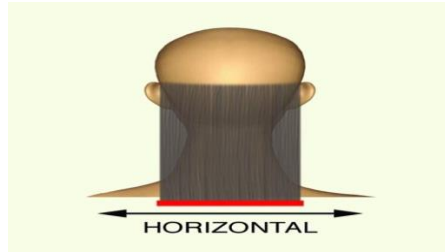
Elevation represents the angle or degree at which a subsection of hair is held, or elevated, from the head when cutting. It creates graduation and layers and is usually described in degrees. The more you elevate the hair, the more graduation you create.

Elevation below 90 degrees builds weight.

Elevation above 90 degrees removes weight or layers the hair.

CUTTING LINE

This is the **ANGLE** at which the fingers are held when cutting the actual line of hair that is cut. It's also called *finger angle*, *finger position*, *cutting position*, *cutting angle*, and *shears angle*.



GUIDELINES

Also called a *guide*, this is the section of hair that determines the length the hair will be cut. It is located at either the perimeter (outer line) or the interior of the cut. It is usually the first section cut.

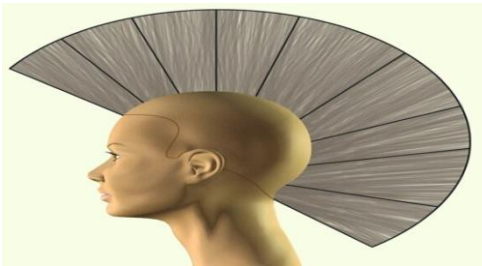
Stationary Guide- This guide does not move.



All other sections for the stationary guide are combed to this guide and cut at the same angle or length. A blunt cut is an example:



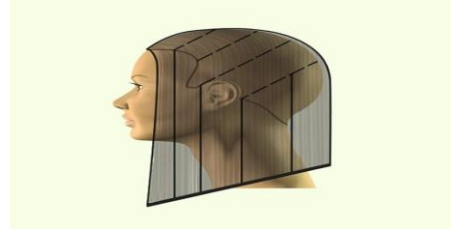
Traveling Guide- Also called a movable guide, this guide moves as the haircut progresses.



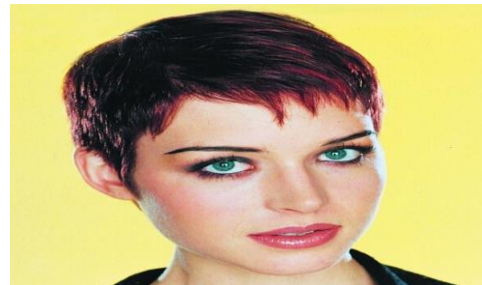
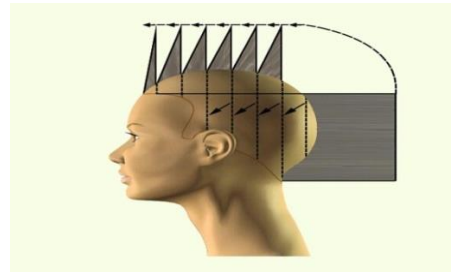
When using this type of guide, you take a small slice of the previously cut section and move it to the next subsection where it becomes the new guide. This guide is used often in layered and graduated haircuts.



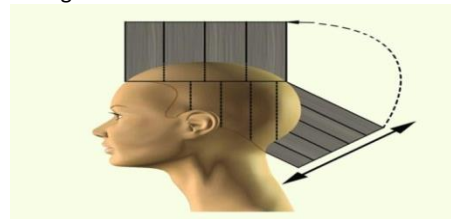
ELEVATION EXAMPLES:



Blunt/One-Length Cut



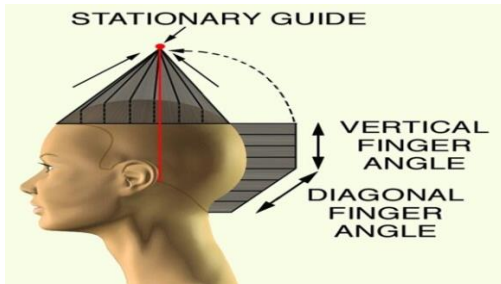
90-Degree Elevation



45-Degree with 90-Degree

OVER DIRECTION

OVER DIRECTION occurs when hair is combed away from its natural falling position, rather than straight out from the head, toward a guide. It's used in graduated and layered haircuts.



Client Consultant

A great haircut always begins with a great consultation. Often, when clients come to you, they are feeling that there is a lot at stake. They may be preparing for an important event, such as a party, a business event, or a wedding. They may be in the market for a new look, or wanting to change their appearance and, by extension, how they feel about themselves. Always perform a complete consultation on the client before beginning the haircut to ensure that both of you are in accord and that the haircut is suitable.

A consultation is a detailed conversation between you and your client during which you find out what the client is looking for, offer suggestions and professional advice, and come to a decision, about the most suitable haircut. The purpose of the consultation is to open the lines of communication, have a clear understanding of what the client wants, ensure that the client understands what you would like to do, and together determine the end result. Together you may share thoughts about the best haircut for the client's face shape and can discuss the nature of the client's hair whether it is thick or thin, fine or coarse, or straight or curly. If the client has a particular look in mind, the two of you can discuss whether that look will be appropriate.

It can be difficult when a client asked for something that you know will not look best for that person. This is when you will want to draw a line on skills such as gentle persuasion and positive reinforcement. A true professional can offer alternative suggestions that will work with the client's hair texture, face shape, and lifestyle. It is within the framework of the consultation that you will target those skills that led you into this people-oriented profession in the first place.

The Desired Look

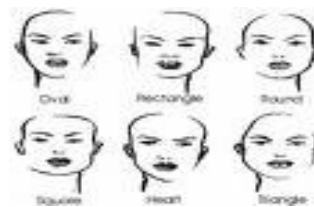
A great place to start with the consultation is to ask the client what she wants. Sometimes, she may not be able to answer that question and may ask you for some suggestions. Either way, this is the first step in the consultation.

There are several focal points to focus on here:

1. How much time is the client willing to spend on her hair every day?
2. What is her lifestyle?
3. Does she want something classic or trendy? For example, if a client with naturally curly thick hair is asking for a haircut that is primarily designed for straight hair, will she be willing to take the time to blow-dry it straight every day?

This is also the time you will want to analyze the hair density and texture, growth patterns, and hairline. If the client has hair that grows straight up in the nape and is requesting a short haircut that is soft and wispy at the hairline, you know the hairline will not lie down, so you may need to suggest other alternatives that will work with that kind of hairline.

Face Shape



Another part of consultation is analyzing the face shape.

A great haircut is not only technically sound, but also it suits the client's face shape. To analyze the shape of a client's face, pull all the hair away with a clip, or wrap the hair in a towel. Look for the widest areas, the narrowest areas, and the balance of the features.

A quick way to analyze a face shape is to determine if it is predominantly wide or long. Look at the features that you want to bring out, and those you might want to de-emphasize.

Wide Face Hairstyle

By analyzing face shape, you can begin to make decisions about the most suitable haircut, or shape, for the client. An important thing to remember is that weight and volume draw attention to an area. For example, if a client has a wide face, a hairstyle with fuller sides makes the face appear wider, whereas a narrower shape will give length to the face. On the other hand, if the client has a narrow forehead, you can add visual width by increasing volume or weight in that area. In order to balance out face shapes or draw the eye away from certain areas, you need to add or remove weight or volume in other areas.



Narrow Face Hairstyle

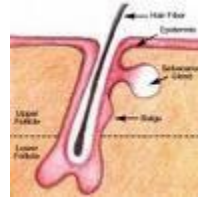
Another important point to consider is the client's profile, or how she looks from the side. Turn the chair so you can see your client from the side in the mirror. Pull the hair away from the face and away from the neck. What do you see? Look for features to emphasize, such as a nice jaw line or lovely neck; or features to draw attention away from, such as a prominent or a receding chin, a double chin, or a prominent nose. The haircut you choose should flatter the client by emphasizing good features and taking attention away from features that are not as flattering. For example, if a client has a prominent chin, you will want to balance the shape by adding volume or weight somewhere else. If the client has a prominent nose, you can balance the shape from the profile by adding weight in an appropriate place.



Style for Client with Prominent Chin

Style for Client with Prominent Nose

Hair Analysis



There are five characteristics that determine the behavior of the hair

- ✓ Density
- ✓ Texture
- ✓ Wave pattern
- ✓ Hairlines
- ✓ Growth pattern

Hair Density

Hair density is the number of individual hair strands on one square inch of scalp. It is usually described as thin, medium, and thick. Hair density is different from hair texture in that different individuals with the same hair texture can have different densities. Some individuals with the same hair texture can have different densities. Some individuals may have coarse hair texture (each hair has a large diameter), but low hair density (a low number of hairs on the head). Others may have fine hair texture (each hair has small diameter), but high hair density (a high number of hairs on the head).

The average hair density is about 2,200 hairs per square inch. Hair with high density (thick or dense hair) has more hairs per inch. Hair with low density (thin hair) has fewer hairs per square inch. The average head of hair contains about 100,000 individual hair strands. The number of hairs on the head generally varies with the color of the hair. Blondes usually have the highest density, and redheads tend to have the lowest.

Hair Texture

Hair texture is the general quality and feel of the hair. It is based on thickness or diameter of each hair strand, usually classified as coarse, medium, and fine. A fine hair strand is much "skinnier" than that of a coarse hair strand. A client may, in fact, have a fine texture of hair with a thick density, meaning the individual hairs are fine, but there are a lot of them, or a client may have a coarse texture but a thin density, meaning the individual hairs are "fatter" but they are spaced further apart, or the client may have a coarse texture and a thick density, which translates into a substantial amount of hair.

Why is density and texture important? Different hair types respond differently to the kind of cutting they receive. Some hair types need more layers; some need more weight.

For example, coarse hair tends to stick out more, especially if cut to short, whereas fine hair can be cut to very short lengths and still lie flat.

However, if a client has fine (texture) and thin (density) hair, cutting too short can result in an unflattering look, with the scalp showing through.

Coarse hair texture has the largest diameter. It is stronger than fine hair, for the same reason that thick rope is stronger than thin rope. Coarse hair also has a stronger structure. It usually requires more processing than medium or fine hair and may also be more resistant to processing. It is usually more difficult for hair lighteners, hair colors, permanent waving solutions, and chemical hair relaxers to penetrate coarse hair.

Medium hair texture is the most common and is the standard to which other hair is compared. Medium hair is considered normal and does not pose any special problems or concerns.

Fine hair has the smallest diameter and is more fragile, easier to process, and more susceptible to damage from chemical services than coarse or medium hair.

Hair texture can be determined by feeling a single dry strand between the fingers. Take an individual strand from four different areas of the head: front hairline, the temple, the crown, and the nape. Hold the strand securely with one hand while feeling it with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand. With a little practice, you will be able to feel the difference between coarse, medium, and fine hair diameters.

Wave Pattern

The wave pattern, or the amount of movement in the hair strand, varies from client to client, as well as within the same head of hair. A client may have stick-straight hair (no wave), wavy hair, curly hair, extremely curly hair, or anything in between. Wave pattern is the result of genetics and racial background. Although there are exceptions, as a general rule, Asians tend to have extremely straight hair, Caucasians tend to have straight to wavy hair, and African Americans tend to have extremely curly hair. However, straight, curly, and extremely curly hair occurs in all races. This means that anyone of any race, or mixed race, can have hair with varying degrees of curliness from straight to extremely curly. It is also true that within races, individuals have hair with varying degrees of curliness.

The wave pattern may also vary from strand to strand on the same person's head. It is not uncommon for an individual to have different amounts of curl in different areas of the head. Individuals with curly hair often have straighter hair in the crown and curlier hair in other areas.

Several different theories seek to explain the cause of naturally curly hair, but there is no single, definite answer that explains why some hair grows straight and other hair grows curly.

The most popular theory claims that the shape of the hair's cross-section determines the amount of curl. This theory stated that hair with a round cross-section is straight, hair with an oval cross-section is wavy, and hair with a flat cross-section is curly.

Although it is true that cross-sections of straight hair tend to be round and curlier hair tends to be more oval, modern microscopes have shown that a cross-section of hair can be almost any shape, including triangular. The shape of the cross-section does not always relate to the amount of curl.

Although it is still only a theory, it is now believed that natural curl is the result of one side of the hair strand growing faster than the other side. Since the side that grows faster is slightly longer than the slower growing side, tension within the strand causes the long side to curl around the shorter side. Hair that grows uniformly on both sides does not create tension and results in straight hair.

The hair's wave pattern is independent of its other properties. Hair has different diameters from fine to coarse, regardless of its wave pattern. All hair, straight to extremely curly and everything in between comes in different texture and densities.

Imagine the same haircut cut at the same length on different types of hair; fine thin hair, thick coarse hair, and medium curly hair.

Hairlines and Growth Patterns

Both the hairline and the growth patterns are important to examine. The hairline is the hair that grows at the outermost perimeter along the face, around the ears, and on the neck. The growth pattern is the direction in which the hair grows from the scalp, also referred to as natural falls or natural falling position. Cowlicks, whorls, and other growth patterns affect where the hair ends up once it is dry. You may need to use less tension when cutting these areas to compensate for hair being pushed up when it dries, especially in the nape, or to avoid getting a "hole" around the ear in the one-length haircut. Another crucial area is the crown (on many people there are some wild things going on up there!)



Uniform layered cut on fine, thin hair.



Uniform layered cut on thick, coarse hair.



Uniform layered cut on medium, curly hair.

Posture and Body Position

Posture, which is how you stand, and body position, which is how you hold your body when cutting hair, are important habits to be aware of. As a working cosmetologist, you will be spending many hours on your feet. Good posture and body position will help you avoid back problems in the future and ensure better haircutting results. The correct body position will help you move more efficiently through the haircut and thereby maintain more control over the process.

- ✓ Position the client. Not only is your body position important, but your client's is also. Make sure your client is sitting up straight and that her legs are not crossed. Gentle reminders as the haircutting progresses may be necessary. Remember, you can move the client by turning the chair, which give you the option to either keep your body in the same place or angle the client's chair so you can see what you are doing in the mirror.
- ✓ Center your weight. When working, keep your body weight centered and firm. Stand with your knees slightly bent, rather than locked. Instead of bending at the waist, bend one knee if you need to lean slightly one way or the other.
- ✓ Stand in front of your section. When cutting hair, a general rule of thumb is to stand directly in front of the area you are cutting. By doing this, you keep your body weight centered, and you will automatically find yourself moving around the head during the haircutting service. If you wish to stay standing in the same place, or want to be able to view what you are doing in the mirror, you may choose to move the chair.

Hand Positions for Different Cutting Angles

As a rule, always stand in front of the area you are working on, and position your hands according to the cutting line.

- ✓ Cutting over your fingers. There are some situations in which you will be cutting over your fingers or on top of your knuckles. This hand position is used most often when cutting uniform or increasing layers. In this case, you will usually stand to the side of the section on which you are working.
- ✓ Cutting below the fingers. When cutting a one-length bob or a heavier graduated haircut, it is customary to use a horizontal cutting line. In this case, you will be cutting below your fingers, or on the inside of your knuckles.
- ✓ Cutting palm to palm. When cutting with a vertical or diagonal cutting line, cutting palm to palm is the best way to maintain control of the subsection, especially with regard to elevation and over direction. Cutting palm to palm means that the palms of both hands are facing each other while cutting. This is different from cutting on the top of your fingers or knuckles. Cutting palm to palm also helps to prevent strain on your back as you work.

General Haircutting Tips

- ✓ Always take consistent and clean partings, which ensure an even amount of hair in each subsection and produce results that are more precise.
- ✓ Take extra care when working in the crown and neckline, which sometimes have very strong growth patterns.
- ✓ Another danger zone is the hair that grows around the ear or hangs over the ear in a finished haircut. Allow for the protrusion of the ear by either keeping more weight in that area of cutting with minimal tension.
- ✓ Always use consistent tension. Tension may range from maximum to minimum. You can maintain light tension by using the wide teeth of the comb and by not "pulling" the subsection too tightly. Whatever tension you are using, it should be consistent with in the area on which you are working.
- ✓ Pay attention to head position. If the head is not upright, it can be hard to judge elevation and over-direction.
- ✓ Maintain an even amount of moisture in the hair. Dry hair responds to cutting differently than wet hair, and may give you uneven results in the finished haircut.

- Always work with your guideline. If you cannot see the guide your subsection is too thick. Go back and take a smaller subsection before cutting. Taking too large a subsection can result in a large mistake. By using smaller sections, if a mistake is made, it is small and therefore easier to correct.
- Always crosscheck the haircut; Crosscheck is parting the haircut in the opposite way, from which you cut it, to check for precision of line and shape. For example, if you use vertical partings in a haircut, crosscheck the lengths with horizontal partings.
- Use the mirror to see your elevation. You can also turn the client sideways so that you can see one side in the mirror while working on the opposite side. This helps create even line and maintains visual balance while working.
- Always check that both sides are even by standing in front of your client as well.

Remember that curly hair shrinks more than straight hair, anywhere from ½ to 2 inches. Always leave the length longer than the desired end result.

Haircutting Tools

There are several tools that are indispensable for haircutting. Understanding these different implements or tool and the different results you can get is vital to creating a great haircut. To do your best work, buy and use only superior implements from a reliable manufacturer. Use them properly, and take good care of them.

- Haircutting shears-** mainly used to cut blunt or straight lines in the hair. May also be used to slide cut, point cut and for other texturizing techniques.



- Thinning shears** mainly used to remove bulk from the hair. Sometimes referred to as texturizing shears, tapering shears or notching shears. Many different types of thinning shears are used today, with varying amount of teeth in the blades. A general rule of thumb is that the more teeth there are the less hair is removed.

Notching shears are usually designed to remove more hair, with larger teeth set farther apart.



- Straight razor or razor shaper-** mainly used when a softer effect is desired on the ends of the hair. Razors can be used to create an entire haircut, to thin hair out, or to texturize the hair in certain areas. Razors come in different shapes and sizes, with or without guards.



- Clippers-** mainly used when creating short tapers, short haircut, fades and flat tops. Use cutting guards at various length or in the clipper-over comb technique. Clippers can be used without a guard to shave hair right to the scalp.



- Edgers-** a smaller version of clippers mainly used to remove excess or unwanted hair at the neckline and around the ears, mostly on haircuts for men and very short haircuts for women.
- Wide tooth comb-** mainly used to detangle hair. Rarely used when performing a haircut.
- Section clips-** these come in a variety of shapes styles and sizes and can be made of plastic or metal. In general two types are used jaw clip and duckbill clips. Both come in large and small sizes.
- Barber Comb-** Mainly used for close tapers in the nape and sides when using the shears over comb technique. The narrow end of the comb allows the shears to get very close to the head.
- Styling or cutting comb-** also referred to as all-purpose comb, used for most haircutting procedures. It can be 6 to 8 inches in length and has fine teeth at one end, wider at the other.

