Dr Shave’s Book of Shaving
Get The Perfect Shave

The expert guide to the world of shaving
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Introduction

Dr Shave aka Brian Mulreany
Sales Director & Co-Owner of
The Executive Shaving Company

A lifetime wet shaver, previously using Gillette cartridge blades, I began using a Merkur safety razor, shaving brush and shaving creams and soaps for the first time around 1993.

Since then I have test shaved more than 100 different razors, Merkur, Feather, iKon, Above the Tie, Timor, Muhle and a selection of vintage safety razors too as well as a few cut throats.

I’m personally responsible for the successful launch of the Executive Shaving own brand range of razors, brushes, balms, soaps and creams.

Dr Shave loves to hear directly from men who are yearning for the ‘perfect shave’ and from men who have problems getting good wet shaving results. I will personally reply to every enquiry by ‘phone or email.

In most cases simply moving from an electric shaver or multi blade cartridge razor to a safety razor will solve problems such as ingrown hairs, razor burn and excessive sensitivity. Sometimes it is poor shaving technique that’s causing the problem, either way Dr Shave has a solution.

Dr Shave knows that being clean shaven is only part way to being recognised as a ‘well-groomed gent’, other important matters to consider include dressing appropriately for the occasion, choosing the right clothes for your age and personal hygiene is of paramount importance. Few things irritate Dr Shave more than unsightly, protruding ear and nose hair, bushy, unkempt eyebrows and dirty or bitten fingernails. The worst crime is body odour, there is simply no excuse for that!
Dr. Shave’s Book of Shaving welcomes you into his world. This book will tell you everything about the world of shaving and provide the best ways of improving your shaving experience.

For many, the introduction to shaving involved watching their father slap foam on his face, painfully scrape a safety razor across it, and then go through the eye-watering ritual of applying aftershave. Keep those treasured memories but let Dr. Shave give you some better shaving advice.

If you’ve ever:

- Tried various shaving fads like a 5 blade vibrating razor with built in light, sideburns trimmer and Flexball glide technology only to be disappointed.
- Ripped your face to shreds using a cut throat or safety razor.
- Found yourself disillusioned with the vast array of shaving products that claim to take you to the promised land of ultimate shaves.
- Been overwhelmed with the amount of useless shaving advice out there.

Then it’s time to put it all behind you. Let Dr. Shave take you through his shaving process, explain the do’s and don’ts and help you to take proper care of your skin. Achieve the ultimate shave!

Let me take you through:

- **History of Shaving** – A fascinating subject but if you want to skip this and find more pertinent needs I won’t hold it against you. You can always come back to it when your partner has left you for not knowing about flint razors from 30,000 BC.

  In this history lesson I’ll tell you about early shaving tools, the reasons why being clean shaven has its advantages in the battlefield and also how it helped prevent nasty diseases and infestations.

- **Shaving Tools** – By this I mean razors, brushes, strops and everything else associated with shaving.

- **How to Shave** – Step by step guide containing the best hints and tips for shaving using various types of razors.

- **Head and Body Shaving** – A more common practice these days, so you should know how to do it properly.

- **How to Groom Your Beard and Moustache** – Look after your facial forest or neat ‘tache and style it the way you want.

- **Shaving Problems** – Serious stuff. Shaving sensitive skin, razor burn, ingrown hairs and razor bumps are all things that can be avoided with the right technique, products, care and attention. Let Dr Shave take your pain away.
Chapter 1

History of Shaving
having can be traced back to prehistoric times when early man first started to pull hairs from his face. In the following centuries various tools were employed to scrape hair from the faces and bodies of both men and women. It wasn’t until the 19th century, with the industrial revolution, that the art of shaving became possible.

**Early Days**

Evidence of shaving in prehistoric times comes from cave paintings which show that sea shells were used as tweezers to pluck the facial hairs. Flint razors have been found from as early as 30,000 BC. It is thought that shaving was done for many reasons:

- hygiene
- to avoid food becoming caught up in the beard
- minimise breeding grounds for lice and other parasites
- to avoid the beard being used as a hand hold in combat
- vanity since the beard was associated with old age and death.

**Early Tools and Creams**

Archaeological evidence shows that the next step was due to the metallurgical developments of the Bronze Age. Copper razors were discovered in India and Egypt dating back to 3,000 BC. Various other tools, creams and potions were used over the next millennia and in 500 BC the first barber shops began to appear in Rome, where the tonsors (barbers) used iron razors.

Women had to resort to using lamps to singe off their leg hairs as well as razors, creams, tweezers and even pumice stones.

**Early Fashions**

Before AD 100, the Greeks and Romans continued to shave their faces and heads, probably as a hygienic measure to minimise infestations of lice and other parasites.

In the military, shaving the head and face had the additional benefit of preventing the enemy from using hair as a hand hold.
Chapter 1 | History of Shaving

Around AD 100, when the Emperor Hadrian rose to power, it became fashionable for men to wear beards.

AD 476-1270 – during this time, the trend was for ladies to painfully remove all hair from the body including eyebrows, eyelashes, temples and neck in order to look chic.

The Twelfth Century saw radical changes to the way many societies dressed and groomed. At the start of the century nearly all French men, for example, wore full beards, but by 1400 most were clean-shaven.

In the mid to late 1700s - men and women began to remove all hair from their foreheads in order to wear artificial press-on mouse skin eyebrows.

Early Literature and Safety Razor Evolution

It is believed the honour of devising the first safety razor goes to Jean Jacques Perret (1730-1784) of Paris, France. Perret was a master cutler and famed author of Pogonotomie, au L’Art D’Apprende à se Raser Sol-Même (Pogonotomie, or The Art of Shaving Oneself) in 1769 and L’Art du Coutelier (The Art of the Cutler) in 1771. The original Dr. Shave!

Perret described a device he called a ‘rasoir à rabot’ – a plane for the beard, which he had invented in 1762. It was inspired by a carpenter’s plane, and consisted of a wooden sleeve that enclosed the blade of an ordinary folding straight razor, allowing only a small portion of the edge to protrude. Perret never patented his invention.

Early Safety Razor Improvements and Shaving Soaps

In Sheffield, England in the 18th and 19th century, they produced steel straight razors. Their main drawback was that they became dull quickly, and so had to be honed and stropped frequently to maintain a sharp edge.

In 1847 a significant invention was made by Englishman, William Henson. Henson created the first ‘hoe type’ razor with the blade perpendicular to the handle, just like a garden tool - similar to what we’re familiar with today.

This design made it easier to shave oneself, reducing the need for a barber and became an overnight success.

The earliest known soap recipe was found in the Egyptian Ebers Papyrus, a medical document from about 1500 BC,
which describes combining animal and vegetable oils with alkaline salts to form a soap-like material.

Soap making first became a commercial activity in the 19th century after a French chemist Michel Chevreul discovered the chemical nature of and relationship between fats, glycerin and fatty acids. Further advances during the industrial revolution saw soap transformed from an expensive luxury to an everyday necessity by 1850.

Shaving soaps and aftershave lotions made from cherry laurel water also appeared in the late 1800s.

The first patent for a safety razor was filed by the Kampfe brothers in the US in the 1880s. This featured a wire skin guard along one side of the razor's edge. Only one side of the actual blade was used and because it was made of forged steel it had to be removed frequently for sharpening.

Despite this the Kampfe razor was the best safety razor on the market at the time and it would take the intervention of the most famous name in shaving to change everything.

**Time for Gillette**

In 1903, Mr King Camp Gillette, together with William Nickerson launched a new concept in shaving - the disposable razor blade. Together with a modified form of safety razor designed to allow the easy replacement of the worn blade, this new innovation revolutionised the shaving market.

Gillette became an overnight success producing 90,000 razors and progressing to 2.5 million blades in the second year of trading. Continual improvements have ensured that the company he founded remains the leading supplier of shaving goods in the world today.

**20th Century**

In 1910 an American, Willis G Hockey, received a patent for the first mechanical shaver. The ‘wind up safety razor’ incorporated a pull cord to drive a flywheel that operated for a short period of time before it needed to be wound up again.

In 1915 the Wilkinson Sword Company, a manufacturer of razor blades for men, launched a campaign to encourage women to shave their armpits. This was based on the premise that it was both unhygienic and unfeminine to keep underarm hair.

Another American in 1921, Lt. Col. Jacob Schick invented a new razor called the ‘magazine repeating razor’, which had replacement razor blades stored inside its handle. Blades were purchased in clips,
which were inserted easily into the razor. Schick also began to develop his ‘injector razor’, which would become an extremely popular shaver in the years to come.

In 1927 the same Colonel invented the World’s first electric dry shaver, with oscillating blades. This became available to the public in 1929 but wasn’t met with much enthusiasm. He had to wait another two years until an electric motor had been developed that was small enough to fit into a hand-held device, yet powerful enough to cut through a beard.

In 1931, he sold his first electric razor in New York for $25 and managed to sell another 3,000 that year. Schick’s gadget caught the public’s imagination and by 1937, 1.5 million were in use. It was not long before other manufacturers, including Gillette and Remington, began to produce their own electric razors.

Another important inventor was Prof. Alexandre Horowitz, from Philips Laboratories in Holland, who invented the very successful revolving electric razor.

The Philips Company, of Philishave fame, produced electric razors in the years 1939 – 2006 under the Philishave brand and still produces them today under the name of Philips.

Modern Day

Gillette manufactured carbon steel blades up until the 1960s but in 1965, the British Wilkinson Sword Company introduced stainless steel blades that, with no tendency to rust, could be used until blunt.

Wilkinson Sword soon captured the British and European markets and Gillette were forced to switch to stainless steel to compete.

Modern carbon steel blades are still available and should not rust if rinsed in alcohol after use - top tip!

1974 - the first completely disposable razor was introduced from Bic.

Gillette’s response was the Good News disposable razor which was launched on the US market in 1976.

Now there are numerous disposable razors available, most of them designed with the emphasis on economy and not shaving performance.
Chapter 2

Shaving Creams
Shaving cream is a lubricating cream that is applied to the face and helps the razor to glide smoothly over the skin and is important in avoiding nicks, razor burn and irritation.

There is a huge range of creams available to the consumer making selecting the right cream a tough decision. However, you’re in safe hands with Dr. Shave. I’ll describe the products and state the advantages and disadvantages of each type. This way, you can make an informed decision as to which product is best for you. Trust me, I’m a Dr.

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<tr>
<td>✗ Usually alcohol based</td>
<td>✓ Almost always alcohol free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ Cheap, chemical based substitute for natural products</td>
<td>✓ Easier on the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ Often dries the skin excessively</td>
<td>✓ Softens the beard hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ Not a ‘true’ wet shave</td>
<td>✓ A true wet shave as the water used to soften the beard remains on the face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ They are full of air which means you cannot possibly get the lubrication needed for a comfortable, close wet shave</td>
<td>✓ Often contains essential oils which are kind to the skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ They use synthetic perfumes for the scent and not essential oils.</td>
<td>✓ Very easy to lather up into a rich, creamy consistency.</td>
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Shaving Creams
Chapter 2 | Shaving Creams

Shaving Creams

If you can’t get your hands on shaving cream, you could use regular facial soap in an emergency but only in an emergency.

Aerosol foams and gels are best left on the shelf - read the ingredients on these products!

The ultimate shave and correct skin care can only be achieved if moisturising shaving creams are used. Moisturising shaving cream is an ideal shaving lubrication that provides both moisturising properties and good lubrication.

Moisturising shaving creams can be used for all skin types. Normal to drier skins will reap the most benefits. These exceptionally rich and nourishing shaving creams deliver the ultimate shave.

Benefits of Shaving Cream

- It softens the beard for a close and comfortable shave
- It protects the skin from irritation and razor burn
- It leaves the skin feeling smooth and conditioned
- Shaving cream is a perfect moisturising solution for those with dry skin.

How to Use Shaving Cream

- Prior to your shave, lather up with a shaving brush dampened with warm (not hot) water and apply to the beard.
- If you don’t have a shaving brush, apply the cream sparingly with your fingertips to the area to be shaved but frankly a shaving brush is far sexier for lathering up.
- Shave as normal. Modern day shaving creams rinse away almost instantly, without a trace of residue.
- Good quality moisturising shaving creams are carefully formulated, economical to use and give an excellent lather for a comfortable shave that leaves the skin exceptionally soft.

As you may have gathered, Dr. Shave believes a good shave means using a shaving brush and moisturising shaving cream or soap.
Chapter 3

Shaving Tools
Chapter 3

Shaving Tools

Razors

Razors come in many forms and each have their advantages and disadvantages. Once you have finished reading this chapter you should be able to purchase with confidence a razor that will be the best one for you.

This is your razor. There are many like it but this one is yours.

History

Ancient Romans and Grecians used iron blades with a long handle and developed the shape of the cut-throat razor which was the only practical razor until the 19th century.

Improvements in steel manufacturing enabled cut throat razor blades to be made sharper and for the first time, they could be re-sharpened.

Advances in razor technology changed shaving habits in the 20th century.

In 1900, most men were either shaved by the local barber, or periodically at home when required, rather than regularly.

Straight / Cut Throat Razor Material

In general, the blades of straight razors are made of steel; the more recent razors have blades made from stainless steel. The manufacturer’s markings are often found engraved or etched on the blades which may include the model number or name of the razor.

The handles of straight razors are made from all sorts of different materials, including wood, rubber, horn, ivory, Bakelite, ivory, and metal. Inlays can be of mother of pearl, silver, gold, stainless steel, copper, ivory, wood and tortoiseshell.

If you opt to try out a straight razor do ensure that you receive basic instruction in its use and that the razor feels ‘comfortable’ in your hand. These days we have the benefit of YouTube.

It may take many shaves before you can consider yourself a cut-throat razor wizard.

Please note: A cut-throat razor must be used with extreme caution.
Chapter 3 | Shaving Tools

The types of razors available include:

- Straight or ‘cut throat’ razors
- Disposable blade straight razors, usually known as Shavette’s
- Double edged safety razors
- Mach 3 razors
- Fusion razors
- Electric razors.

**Straight or Cut Throat Razors**

The straight-edge razor is also known as the cut-throat razor because, if misused, it is capable of cutting the throat.

A cut throat razor has a single straight blade that is attached to a handle (the handles on cut throat razors are known as scales) by a hinge and is stored by folding it edge-first into a slot in the handle of the razor.

Shaving with a cut throat razor or straight razor is considered by many shaving traditionalists as the very best way to shave.

How to Look After a Cut Throat Razor

The cut throat or straight razor must be properly maintained in order to ensure the long life and effectiveness of this traditional men’s accessory. While straight razors made of stainless steel are less demanding, other straight razors have to be rinsed with water and thoroughly dried after each use.

Make sure your razor is thoroughly dried and aired before storing.

When not in use for longer periods, it is recommended that the blade of the straight razor be rubbed with light oil such as Mühle’s Razor Maintenance Oil.

Maintaining the Cutting Edge

Experienced cut throat users know that the facet (blade) ‘grows’, i.e. the microscopically fine ‘fin’ on the cutting edge changes during the shave but returns to its old position afterwards; it stretches and again becomes extremely fine.
The ‘fin’ will wear away at some stage and a suitable strop should then be used.

A strop is a strip of special soft leather with a hanging loop at one end used to whet (sharpen) the blade. Usually a strop will have two sides; one made from fine leather, the other from coarse leather. Other strops may have fine leather and either denim, linen or a fabric similar to car seat belt material.

If required, the fine leather side can be rubbed with an extremely thin layer of fine abrasive paste and - for a final polishing on a separate strop - with polishing paste, which is worked in with a clean cotton cloth.

Straight razors are usually whetted in the factory for use (whetting on leather by hand). If you ‘strop’ yourself, you must first ‘rest’ the razor after use.

After the razor has been carefully rinsed and dried, it should not be used again for at least 24 – 48 hours because the fine ‘fin’ on the cutting edge straightens up again extremely slowly.

If the razor is stropped too soon (or stropped incorrectly by moving it backwards and forwards without turning it over), the ‘fin’ which is necessary for a close shave breaks off.

Between four and fifteen shaves are possible without stropping in between depending on your beard growth, the quality of the razor and your stropping technique.

How to strop:

- With a flat angle lay the back of the razor on the strop
- Draw the blade along the strop, away from the body
- Turn the razor over on its back and draw it in towards the body
- Note: Changing directions without turning the razor over makes the blade become round (crowned) so that the cutting properties are lost
- In this case, only re-sharpening with a hone can help.
**Disposable Blade Straight Razors**

These are razors which are similar in use and appearance to straight razors but which use either a standard double edged blade or specially made custom blades.

Many razors of this type are referred to as ‘Shavette’s’ although this name was originally restricted to a razor manufactured by Dovo in Germany.

Disposable bladed straights have many of the advantages of straight razors without needing the stropping and honing of ordinary straight razors. Many barbers worldwide use Shavette razors for shaving customers.

**Tips**

- Store straight razors in a well-ventilated, dry environment
- Keep straight razors out of water and away from liquids as much as possible
- Do not clean with bleach, ammonia or detergents as these substances can cause damage
- Metal polishes, such as Brasso, Silvo, or Autosol should never be used
- If the blade is exceptionally dull or nicked, the use of a honing stone is recommended
- Use a leather razor strop to maintain a keen edge - you know you’re getting close when you can cleanly slice a piece of paper with your razor
- Clean the entire surface of the blade with a cotton cloth dampened with either ethyl alcohol or rubbing alcohol - this will help to de-grease the blade
- Apply a thin coat of Muhle’s Razor Maintenance Oil; let it sit for a short while (10 minutes, or so) and then wipe the excess oil off using a clean, dry cloth. This coating of oil will help prevent any further rusting
- Before you next use your razor rub the blade with alcohol or at least warm soapy water to remove the oil and again after use to clean the blade
- Use Muhle’s Razor Maintenance Oil to re-oil the blade after use, as well as after sharpening.
- Be careful not to get any alcohol or oil on the handle.
Chapter 3 | Shaving Tools

**Feather Cut Throat Razors**

These beautiful razors are made in Japan using hard grade materials; they use Feather injector blades which you replace when they dull.

These razors are very popular as they deliver a shave comparable with a traditional cut throat razor but without the need for stropping or honing.

This is 21st century shaving for those who want a close yet hassle free shave with a cut throat razor.

Dr. Shave now recommends these razors above traditional cut throat razors.

**Electric Razor**

The electric razor (also known as the electric dry shaver) has a rotating or oscillating blade. It does not require the use of shaving cream, soap or water, with the razor being battery or mains powered.

**Advantages:** A speedy shave.

**Disadvantages:** Too many to list in their entirety but here are a few:

- They don’t shave closely
- Expensive to buy
- They tend to push the hairs into the skin which can lead to ingrown hairs
- They pull and tug the hairs leading to irritation
- They often result in razor bump and razor burn
- Encourages ingrown hairs, razor bumps and razor burn.

Dr Shave is not a fan of electric razors!

**Safety Razors**

Initially, a safety razor will cost more than one of its modern Mach3 and Fusion type counterparts. However, in the long run a safety razor will prove itself to be a cheaper alternative.

A pack of four Fusion razor cartridges, enough for about a month, costs on average about three times the price of a pack of ten safety razor blades that will last over three months! On that basis it's not hard to see how safety razor shaving will benefit your pocket in the long run.
Safety Razor Shaving

Benefits the Environment

Firstly, you’ll use three times less razor cartridges by using a safety razor; therefore, there is less waste for you to dispose of. Secondly, as safety razor blades are made of a single metal razor blade, they can be easily recycled unlike today’s modern razor cartridges that are a mixture of plastic and metal.

Safety Razor Shaving Provides Better, More Consistent Shaves

Today’s modern razors and electric shavers are no match for a double-edged safety razor.

These cartridges achieve their closeness by stretching the skin with a layer of rubberised ‘micro fins’, then by lifting the hair and slicing it off at a point slightly below the surface of the skin. It is this overzealous closeness that causes many of today’s skin and shaving problems as, if shaved too closely, cut hair can grow painfully into the upper layers of the epidermis.

Once the hair follicles begin to do this, there is a high chance of causing ingrown hairs, razor bumps and razor burn.

This problem is severely reduced and even removed altogether by shaving with a good quality safety razor, leaving your skin in excellent condition every time as they cut hairs directly at the skin’s surface.

Gillette Mach 3 Shaving

The three bladed Mach 3 design was introduced by Gillette to allow for a very close shave with less pressure to the skin and with fewer strokes. The huge investment in research and development has resulted in a razor that makes the closest shave more comfortable, with less irritation, even when shaving against the direction of hair growth.

This applies to fresh blades; blades used more than 3-4 times will soon go blunt and not preform as Gillette claim.

Gillette Fusion

The Gillette fusion range represents the pinnacle of shaving and razor innovation (according to Gillette).

The problem with these blades is that they are ridiculously expensive to buy and they don’t maintain their edge for more than a few shaves. One way around this problem is to extend the life of each blade by up to 150 shaves by using a RazorPit Blade Sharpener. This cheap tool really does work and comes highly recommended by Executive Shaving.
Shaving Brushes

Dr. Shave believes that of all the items associated with obtaining the perfect shave, the brush is vitally important.

Forget using your fingers to rub in shaving cream or soap; the only decent way of obtaining a good lather, exfoliating the skin and lifting the hairs in preparation for the shave is by use of the brush.

The term shave brush or shaving brush refers to an implement with bristles set into a handle which is used to apply shaving soap or shaving cream to the face when shaving.

Luxury handcrafted handles can be made from fine materials such as ivory or even gold and can be designed to feel well-balanced in the hand. The bristles are usually made of natural or synthetic materials.

Why Use a Shaving Brush?

Shaving brushes are used by shavers for a variety of reasons, but mainly for their ability to facilitate a close, comfortable and enjoyable shave.

Fibrous bristles hold water and heat which, when mixed with the shaving soap or shaving cream, creates a rich and moist lather. Richer and moist lather translates to better lubrication, leading to less dragging and tugging which can lead to razor burn and other skin complaints.

Because a shaving brush is most often used with a glycerine-based soap, this affects applying shaving cream by hand and causes the hair to matt or raises it unevenly, so I advise against it.

So, what are the benefits of using a shaving brush?

- Creates a rich and extremely moist lather
- Exfoliates the skin
- Softens and lifts facial hair
- Allows for a closer, trouble-free shave

Now that you’ve invested in a shaving brush you’ll need to know how to look after it, to get the best from it and keep it for several years.

- Rinse it well in clean water after each use
- Remove excess water by ‘flicking’ it into the sink
- Hang the brush, hair down, in a suitable brush stand
- Avoid using HOT WATER, when leathering up or cleaning your shaving brush, warm water is fine but never, ever hot water.
Shaving Brush Bristles

A shaving brush’s value is determined more by its bristle type and density than any other factors. Prices for synthetic bristle brushes are the cheapest whilst top-of-the-range brushes made of the finest badger hair are much more expensive.

Historically, well-to-do men would generally shave with a badger hair brush, while commoners concerned with colloquially proper aesthetics would resort to cheaper versions made of boar or horse hair.

A shaving brush was known in Europe as something of a status symbol, an expensive or eccentric brush was a way of asserting one’s personality and affluence.

These days modern materials mean that some synthetic brushes actually outperform badger brushes in many respects.

Many travel shaving brushes use synthetic hair as synthetic hair dries almost immediately.

Synthetic bristles are generally cheaper and tougher than natural bristles. The ‘New Generation’ of synthetic brushes produced by Vulfix / Simpson and Muhle in particular are extremely soft on the face and do retain heat and water in much the same way a badger hair brush does. However, earlier versions and cheap import versions:

- Hold less water than natural bristle brushes
- Take longer to work up a lather
- And can feel rougher on the skin.

Synthetic/natural bristles combine boar’s hair with synthetic bristles in an attempt to improve the quality of the pure synthetic brush but this:

- Does not greatly affect the quality of lather produced
- And is often as stiff and ‘prickly’ as a synthetic bristle
- It has a higher water retention capacity than synthetic bristles
- But has a tendency to break more readily than synthetic bristle.

Badger hair bristles are the finest and most luxurious material possible for shaving brushes. Among their advantages are:

- An ideal water retention capacity
- They hold heat better than other types of bristles
- They create a superb lather
- Badger hair feels smooth on the face
- Durability has not been matched by any other synthetic or natural material.

Whilst some companies insist on using other terminology, these four grades are commonly accepted among wet shavers to best describe the quality of badger hair:

- **Pure Badger** - Pure badger is the term used to describe badger hair brushes using the most common hair from the underbelly of a badger. This hair varies greatly in softness, pliability
and colour. The hair is usually dark in colour, but fluctuates from a light tan to near-black or silvery sheen. It is generally coarser than ‘best’ or ‘silvertip’ hair due to its larger shaft. Brushes made exclusively with pure badger hair cost significantly less than ‘best’ and ‘super’ badger hair brushes.

- **Best Badger** - Best badger brushes are made with the fine and pliable hairs of the badger’s body. It is longer in length and lighter in colour than ‘pure’ badger hair. A ‘best’ badger brush is more densely filled with hair than the ‘pure’ badger brush and will produce a correspondingly greater lather.

- **Super Badger Hair** - This grade of hair is lighter in colour than Pure and Best grades as it’s taken from the back of the badger where the hair is lighter compared to the head and belly. Usually Super grade hair has a black coloured band midsection and whiter, softer tips compared to Pure and Best grades.

- **Silvertip Badger** - Silvertip grade hair comes from the back of the neck of the badger. The hair is finer than other grades and it holds heat and water better than all other grades. One way to determine if a brush bears a ‘super’ or ‘silvertip’ badger hair load is to look at the colour of the bristle tips. A true ‘silvertip’ brush has tips that are off-white. A ‘super’ brush on the other hand has bristle tips that are a more sterile, slightly greyed white. The light colour of the tips does not extend as far down the shaft of the hair. Silvertip hair is very soft on the face yet very durable too.

**Shaving Brush Handles**

The modern shaving brush may be traced back to France in the 1750s. The quality of these brushes differed greatly, as materials used to fashion the handles varied from the common to the exotic.

Historically, it was not uncommon for handles to be made of ivory, gold, silver, tortoise shell, crystal or porcelain.

Nowadays, shaving brushes are very similar in appearance, composition and function to their centuries-old predecessors.

Although a variety of different materials are still used to fashion shave brush handles, synthetic handles of nylon, urethane or plastic are the most common even amongst the most expensive shaving brush manufacturers.

The advantages of synthetic handles include:

- ✓ A lesser chance of breakage if dropped
- ✓ More resistant to damage by moisture.

Some people still prefer natural materials such as wood or exotic materials such as tortoise shell, but these articles are more difficult to obtain and will be priced accordingly.

The handle is modelled ergonomically, allowing for a proper grip on the brush and is designed to feel well-balanced in the hand.
Chapter 4

How to Shave
Chapter 4

How to Shave

Think that all you have to do to get a decent shave is to wet your face, add lather and scrape away? Well, my friend, nothing could be further from the truth. Let Dr. Shave show you the way.

To look your best and to experience the perfect shave, time and time again, you must prepare thoroughly and allow yourself enough time to do the job right.

Let’s look at the process of shaving from start to finish.

The four main stages of shaving to perfection are:

- Preparation
- Lathering up
- Shaving
- Post-shave care.

Preparation

When hair absorbs warm water it becomes softer and easier to shave and with warmth the skin and facial muscles become relaxed, making shaving so much easier.

That’s right, it’s important the water is warm:

- Soften the beard by washing your face thoroughly in warm water before shaving; or soak a face cloth in warm water and hold it to your beard for 30 seconds to help soften the hair and skin
- You may want to exfoliate using an exfoliating cream to better prepare your skin and beard for shaving
- Apply a pre shave soap or oil before shaving to soften the bristles. A pre shave oil will soften the bristles and if you follow Dr. Shave’s tip, leave a residue of lubricating oil on the face to provide additional razor glide. The Executive Shaving Company Pre Shave Oil does this very effectively
- Rinse off some, but not all of the oil, leave a residue on the face, apply your shaving cream or soap on top of this residue. This helps the razor to glide
smoothly across the face, making for a comfortable, closer, trouble-free shave

- Take your time. Rushing leads to nicks and cuts and taking the time for good preparation is essential to a quality shave.

**Lathering Up**

If you haven’t yet purchased a badger or synthetic hair shaving brush and cream or shaving soap, you clearly haven’t been listening to Dr. Shave. If you have, well done! Now it’s a question now of getting the most from them.

The cream can be applied directly to the brush or put in a shaving bowl to make a lather by rubbing vigorously with a shaving brush.

If you are using soap, then you will have to rub the brush fairly vigorously for at least a minute over the soap to ensure you obtain a good lather.

Cream and soap will help to keep the skin and beard warm and wet during the shave and will create a smooth lather leading to a closer shave. They also help to keep your skin soft and healthy.

**Tips:**

- Soak the brush in warm (not hot) water for 20-30 seconds to soften the bristles and let the brush absorb water and heat
- Apply shaving cream to the brush or lather up by brushing vigorously over the soap
- Paint the lather onto face and beard ensuring all areas are well covered. Don’t splay the hair, this will damage the knot
Shaving Techniques

Shaving with Mach 3, Fusion and Other Cartridge Razors

Make sure you use an unused or relatively new razor blade for the closest and least painful shave.

- Start shaving from the top of the beard, going with the direction of hair growth or ‘grain’ to the edge of your jaw-line in long, even strokes. This is possible with this type of razor as the head swivels with the contours of your face (unlike a fixed head safety razor)
- Shave under your chin and your neck from the bottom of your neck upwards, with the grain, to prevent razor burn and ingrown hairs. You may find that when shaving your chin you have to shave across the grain
- You may wish to pull your skin gently with your free hand for a closer shave
- To shave your upper lip, stretch it over your front teeth to tighten the skin, and shave downwards
- Feel with your fingers to find any remaining stubble
- Re-lather your face
- This time using long gentle strokes and keeping the skin semi-taut, carefully shave against the grain. Do not apply too much pressure with the razor
- Again, use your fingers to feel for remaining stubble – repeat the process if you have to, but always keep your face lathered and your blade clean
- Rinse your face with warm water to remove all traces of shaving cream and bristles.
- Rinse and dry your razor
- Rinse your shaving brush and flick it dry before hanging upside down in its holder.

Safety Razor Shaving

- Always use a sharp blade
- Follow the steps above but shave in short, light strokes of 25-35mm at a time and shave at an angle of around 30° to the face. A safety razor doesn’t have a head that swivels so you have to adjust the shaving angle as you shave to maintain the 30° angle
- Frequently swish your razor in warm water to stop the blade from clogging up
- Best results are achieved with a safety razor if you shave with the grain twice
or once with the grain then once across the grain before shaving against the grain. This is known as a ‘three pass shave’.

Safety Razors vary greatly in their aggressiveness. For example the Muhle R41 offers an extremely close shave, while the Muhle R89 is a very mild yet effective shaver.

**Cut Throat / Straight Razor Shaving**

Shaving with a cut throat razor demands a different approach.

- Apply a rich creamy lather (as described previously)
- When shaving with a straight razor you must use your free hand to keep the skin fairly taught
- Hold the open straight razor with a thumb and three fingers so that the opened holder points away from your face
- Then starting with the flat, smooth areas of the face move the razor holding it at an angle of about 30° firstly in the direction of growth of the beard and then against the direction of growth. Be careful to maintain the angle; if held too flat, the razor rips the stubble; if held too upright, it cuts the skin
  - Always move it at 90° to the cutting edge and never along the cutting edge; always draw it through evenly and hold it a little more upright at corners, dimples and at the upper lip
  - If the razors edge gets damaged by being dropped or pranged on the sink please examine it carefully for any nicks before using it again. If the razors edge has been damaged you should have the edge honed. Stropping does not help here; the razor must be re-sharpened using a sharpening stone

**Post-shave Care**

A great wet shave exfoliates, removes dead skin and cleanses the face and leaves you feeling beautiful.

Now that your face is smooth and clean it’s time to look after your skin.

After your shave, apply some type of balm or skin food. Do not use an eau de toilet or cologne as these are alcohol based fragrances that will dry your skin rather than giving it the moisturisation it needs after shaving.

If you need to apply cologne, apply it to the back of the neck, the hair and the chest, anywhere but the area you have just shaved.

A good tip is to apply cologne on the upper chest, your body heat will activate the scent which will then be absorbed by your shirt so you smell nice - Dr. Shave is always fighting off the ladies with this tip.
Chapter 5

Head and Body Shaving
Chapter 5

Head and Body Shaving

It’s not just facial hair that Dr. Shave knows everything about. I’m the top dog for everything shaving and in this chapter I’ll teach you how to shave your head, armpits and pubic areas safely and comfortably.

You may wish to use a safety razor or a cartridge type razor. Either way be sure to take note of my tips to avoid any unnecessary shaving problems due to poor technique.

For head shaving, consider using a HeadBlade head razor and HeadBlade shaving cream, after shave balm and moisturiser. HeadBlade tools are specifically designed for head shaving, they are easy to use and it’s almost impossible to cut your scalp as a HeadBlade razor uses little wheels to ride the contours of your scalp. These little head razors are compatible with other cartridge razor blades including Mach3. For safe, fast head shaving that delivers a close shave, we highly recommend HeadBlade.

**Head Shaving with a Wet Razor**

As with shaving the face, do not apply too much pressure with the razor, use a top quality brush and shaving cream, use a fresh blade, and take your time.

- Thoroughly wet the scalp
- Apply a generous layer of shaving cream with a brush or if you are using a specific head shaving cream such as HeadBlade Slick, simply put some into the palms of your hands and apply to the scalp
- Wet razor with warm water and shave in short strokes of 30-40mm at a time
- Subsequent strokes are made from this starting point cutting close to the scalp and at the base of the hair. Try to avoid making repeat strokes over the same area so as to minimise the risk of nicks and razor burn
- You can use a mirror if you like until you gain experience – thereafter you may find you can shave by touch alone
- After the shave, run your fingers over the scalp to feel for any bits you have missed. Then carefully go over the area again – always reapply shaving cream, failure to do so may lead to razor nicks or razor burn
- Rinse your head with warm water to remove all traces of shaving cream and hair and dry off
Apply after shave balm or other soothing agents. HeadBlade have a range of after head shaving products that soothe and moisturise the shaved area.

If your first head shave is not close - don’t worry - you’ll get a closer one as you become more experienced.

We know that lots of men buy travel shaving razors for head shaving, this is because these razors are lightweight and have short handles making them ideal for head shaving, these razors are available in Gillette Mach3 and Fusion and safety razor versions.

**Body Shaving**

People shave parts of their bodies for all sorts of reasons. I’m not going to judge and I’m not going to tell people what to do either - I’m only here to tell you the best way to shave. Regardless of which part of your body you want to shave the same basic rules apply to achieve a good shave and maintain soft, healthy skin.

For those who want to keep their body hair trimmed rather than clean shaven an electric trimmer is perfect for keeping things neat and tidy. It’s an extremely easy way to keep hair short, even, and neat, and the trimmer can be used over the entire area. However for a perfect, hairless look you need to wet shave.

Body shaving is best achieved if these basic rules are followed.

- Remove long hair with a hair trimmer or scissors
- Wash the skin with warm water to soften the hair, open the hair follicle and relax and cleanse the skin
- You may want to do this whilst in the bath – be sure to shower afterwards to remove all traces of soap and hair
- If you’re shaving your whole body do a little area at a time and take it slow
- Apply shaving cream to the area to be shaved
- Use a new blade
- Gently pull the skin taut - for the armpits raising the arm may be sufficient for this

- Don’t apply too much pressure with the razor!
- A light touch with a new blade will shave closely and be less likely to cut the skin
- Have someone help you shave your back and other inaccessible bits
- Try to avoid repeated razor strokes over the same areas as this will lead to razor burn and maybe razor rash
- Short side to side and up and down strokes may be necessary on the underarm, where hair grows in all directions
- Use short up and down strokes on the pubic area
- Rinse the blade often - a clogged blade is no good for shaving
- Make sure there’s still shaving lather wherever you’re shaving
- When you’ve finished the shave, be sure to look after this now very delicate and sensitive skin!
Post-shave Tips

Itching after shaving the pubic area the first couple of times is quite common and easily remedied. The itching will go away if you keep shaving, particularly if you shave often, as stubble is one major cause of itch. If the itching is persistent here are some remedies to try:

- Cool the itchy area by laying a cold flannel over it, or gently pat the irritated skin
- Rub the area with an ice cube
- Use dry skin lotion regularly on areas you’ve shaved to help reduce irritation, itching, and to soften the skin and hair follicles – this also will reduce the discomfort caused by ‘stubble’ in between shaves
- Apply a clear, unscented Vitamin E oil or baby oil
- Apply an over-the-counter cortisone anti-itch cream (this may help with razor burn and little red bumps as well)
- Dust with Wakodo Dusting Powder.

Remember, a comfortable shave that leaves your skin, healthy, soft and refreshed does not come without a degree of effort and due care and attention on your part.

Always:

- Allow plenty of time for the shave
- Good preparation is very important
- Use quality tools and creams
- Develop a good technique
- Treat your skin to the best shaving aftercare lotions
Chapter 6

How to Groom your Beard and Moustache
**How to Groom your Beard and Moustache**

### Grooming Your Beard

Most people use a beard trimmer, but if you don’t have one, follow these steps for well-groomed facial hair.

- Shave exposed parts of cheeks and neck as normal
- Wash off any remaining shaving cream
- Use either scissors or a beard trimmer to groom your beard
- Wet your beard slightly
- Clip conservatively around the beard’s upper edges
- Snip around cheeks and along the jawline
- Clip very little, reducing the beard’s volume slowly to the desired length
- Clip stray hairs until the beard is even
- Wash away clippings.

### How to Trim Your Beard and Moustache

There are many ways to groom a moustache. Decide how you want yours to look before following these instructions.

- Wet your moustache slightly
- Use a fine-tooth moustache / beard comb to brush the hair down
- Clip the hair on the outer edges of your moustache with a pair of thin scissors. Remember to clip conservatively
- Snip across the bottom of the moustache
- Trim the body of the moustache to achieve the desired evenness and bushiness, clip errant hairs

### Tips

- Beard trimmers are easier to use than scissors, as you can adjust trimmer settings to cut hair at various lengths
- Set your beard trimmer to a longer hair length if you’re new to using one - you don’t want to cut too short on your first attempt
- Wet hair is longer than dry hair, so trim a little at a time.
• Touch up the top of the moustache with a razor until you have the desired line. If you have an unusual moustache, such as a pencil-thin or handle-bar moustache, use the razor more or less as appropriate. Take care not to shave off the top of the moustache accidentally!
• Comb again with the moustache comb

Beards and moustaches can cause itching on the skin, treat this and stop it from happening with a quality Beard Wash which will also nourish the bristles and stop the dreaded ‘beard frizz.

Tips
• Work carefully, clipping even a small amount of hair can change the appearance of a moustache - drastically
• A beard trimmer is an excellent tool for reducing bushiness
• For fancier styles, use moustache wax to shape and groom.
Chapter 7
Shaving Problems
Chapter 7

Shaving Problems

Shaving Related Skin Problems

Shaving related problems usually respond well to a combination of proper shaving technique, equipment and products.

For tough or non-responding persistent shaving problems, it is always best to consult with a dermatologist. In this chapter I’ll tell you about the skin problems associated with shaving, how they are caused and what you can do to minimise or prevent them happening.

Shaving can have side effects including:

- Razor bumps
- Redness
- In-growing hairs
- Razor burn
- Nicks and cuts
- Razor rash.

Many side effects can be minimised by using a fresh blade, plenty of lubrication, avoiding shaving against the grain and avoiding pressing too hard with the razor.

Razor Bump / Ingrown Hairs

Some people have an adverse response to shaving called pseudofolliculitis barbae (PFB), or ‘razor bumps’ due to ingrowing hairs. PFB are reddish or dark coloured, sometimes painful, raised areas and are especially common with curly hair.

These hairs, after growing a little above the skin, have a tendency to curl and grow back into the skin. This leads to the reddish, swollen areas, which can become infected. Bumps occur when the hair is cut too short. Then, instead of growing back out of the skin it curls round and then grows into the skin layer.

This condition is extremely common in people of African descent, who have curly hair. The good news is that they can be mostly avoided by a proper shaving technique, indeed we have helped many men over the years who wanted to wet shave but thought they couldn’t due to PFB.

An ideal shave cuts the hair flush with the surface of the skin and avoids any undue friction or irritation to the surrounding skin. If you suffer from razor bumps, ingrown hair and shaving irritation, the chances are that you are pulling the skin too taut during the shave and the hairs are cut too short.

Don’t pull the skin tight and see if it makes a difference.
Shaving Problems

**How do I Treat Razor Bumps and Ingrowing Hairs?**

If you can see ingrown hairs, try to tease the tips of the hairs out of the skin. Soak a flannel in hot water and apply it to your skin for a few minutes. This should soften the hairs to enable you to pull the hair out of the ‘bump’ with a pair of fine tweezers. Cut the loose end with a pair of scissors.

Avoid shaving for a few days. Then cut the beard with scissors quite close to the skin. As the hair grows, it should grow slightly straighter and not back into the skin.

Remember when you continue to shave not to pull the skin too tight or shave against the direction of hair growth.

An application of Aloe Clear can reduce the condition of ingrown hair, this roll-on gel treats ingrown hairs, shaving rash, shaving bump and cools and soothes shaved skin.

**Geo F Trumper Skin Food** is another product that can be applied daily after shaving. It is effective at fighting ingrown hairs and helps calm redness associated with shaving and waxing.

**Razor Burns**

Razor burns are burning sensations and irritation more often than not caused by applying too much pressure with the razor and or, shaving with a blunt blade. When too much pressure is applied there is no effective barrier between your face and the razor.

The result is friction burns, more commonly known as razor burns.

**Preventing Razor Burn**

The first thing to do is change the blade at least once a week - a new, sharp razor blade will skim lightly over your skin without irritating it.

Be sure to let the warm water soften your skin and hair before getting started, and use plenty of moisturising shaving cream or shaving soap, not face soap, as an added cushion.

Use a pre-shave oil, a shaving brush and a good quality shaving cream or soap made from natural ingredients to avoid a reaction to harsh chemicals. Make sure you have a rich, creamy lather on your face and try not to press too hard with the razor.

**Soothing Razor Burn**

There are 100s of after shave balms available, some good, some not so good. The best ones will soothe, cool and moisturise the skin, our Executive Shaving offering is made with water drawn from a Scottish Loch, Intensive Moisturising Balm. Dr. Shave has intensely moisturised skin because of his technique and the cream - smooth.

**Shaving Rash / Folliculitis or Barber's Rash**

This is an infection of the hair follicles, particularly of the facial hair. It causes
red, painful and pus-filled blisters due to an infection of the hair follicles.

Shaving rash is more of a problem with men who have curly hair and is similar to ‘razor bumps’, the symptoms are unsightly red or darkened, painful ‘bumps’ which can lead to ‘scarring’ in severe cases. These severe cases may need treated with an antibiotic.

Hairs are most likely to grow inwards if you pull too tightly on the skin whilst shaving. The hairs raise out of the follicle when you pull the skin and after the cut, the tip of the hair retracts into the follicle and curls into the follicle as it begins to grow. This causes the shaving rash and razor bumps. To minimise any inflammation and irritation it is best to let the hair grow back until the rash is gone before you try removing it again.

**Treatment of Shaving Rash**

Shaving rash can be treated with Aloe Clear. Aloe Clear is a roll-on gel formulated to aid in the relief of ingrown hairs, razor burn/bumps resulting from shaving, waxing, electrolysis and laser hair removal.

**How to Avoid Shaving Problems**

Experience has shown that shaving with a double edge, safety razor tends to provide smooth shaves with less chance of causing shaving irritation and ingrown hairs than electric razors and multi blade cartridge razors such as Mach3 and Fusion.

Blades should be changed at least weekly, more often if skin irritation persists.

Shaving creams and soaps are important in the treatment of this condition, as a good lather will minimise the friction associated with shaving and reduce the likelihood of ingrown hairs and skin irritation.

Shaving foams and gels as previously stated are simply not up to the job and perform badly compared to quality shaving creams and soaps.

To avoid the problems associated with shaving, it is important that the proper technique be followed for shaving.

A shaving cream or soap should be used prior to shaving, to lubricate and moisten the skin and facilitate a close yet comfortable and pleasurable shave. Needless to say, the equipment used for shaving should always be clean and blades should be changed regularly.

Avoid using a dull shaving blade as it can leave your skin red and blotchy.

**What Relief is Available?**

To achieve relief from these problems first check that the skin appears to be free from infection – angry red areas or spots are symptoms – if present, treat with an antiseptic solution or cream.

**What Treatments are Available?**

Treatment of tough cases of PFB often requires prescription only remedies.
Vitamin A related products such as Retin A (tretinoin) or Differin (adapalene) may be prescribed in some cases and work by helping exfoliate skin both on the surface and around the follicles.

**Skin Food** and **Aloe Clear** is also helpful for many PFB suffers.

For most people, these over the counter products provide sufficient control of shaving related problems. For tough or treatment resistant shaving problems, it is always best to consult personally with a dermatologist.

**Help, I've cut myself!**

In the unfortunate event of ‘nicking’ yourself while shaving, apply a **styptic pencil** with its vessel constricting astringent properties to curb any minor bleeding.

Another highly recommended remedy is the fantastic alum block. You simply wet the block and rub it over your chin and neck. The alum block is a mild antiseptic; it reduces razor burn, stops minor bleeds and kills surface bacteria on the skin.

Now you have all the information you need and with good quality tools and products and a clean sharp blade you can enjoy the benefits of a perfect shave every day that leaves you looking and feeling great.

**Shaving Problems**

[www.executive-shaving.co.uk](http://www.executive-shaving.co.uk)

If you would like more information on anything in this guide you can contact us via e-mail at: info@executive-shaving.co.uk