



Shaving and Shaving Materials

HOW TO SHAVE

For the young man, especially, just beginning to shave, it is of prime importance to start right; to adopt and become accustomed at the outset to a proper method of shaving, and thus avoid much future discomfort and the likelihood of permanent injury to the growing beard.

To those older shavers who have perhaps habitually handled a razor in a more or less faulty method, or by no method at all, we offer the following suggestions for improved results:

First soften the beard thoroughly with lather made from a good shaving soap, using just enough hot water to obtain a soft, creamy lather, sufficiently thin not to dry readily on the face.

After applying the lather rather thickly over the surface to be shaved, rub it into the beard very thoroughly with the fingers, bearing in mind that time spent in this process adds materially to the comfort of shaving. Again apply a coat of lather, and after dipping the blade in hot water, adjust the razor to the hand.

Begin shaving from the highest point on the side of the face, drawing the blade downward and slightly forward toward the chin.

Always follow the general direction of the growth of the beard and avoid shaving against the grain.

To obtain the best results hold the blade nearly flat to the face and let the strokes be rather short and the edge drawn, not straight against the beard, but with a slightly diagonal cutting motion from point to heel. Do not scrape with the razor or hold it almost at right angles to the face, as you will only spoil the edge, irritate the skin, and cause the best razor to fail.

Of course if one desires a particularly close shave, it may be allowable after going over the face first with the downward stroke, to shave upward lightly against the beard; but we do not recommend this, as it is liable to irritate the skin, cause bleeding from pores, and sometimes trouble from ingrowing hair.

It is a decided advantage, however, to learn to shave with both hands, and most shavers can acquire the habit without much trouble.

To beginners, particularly, we strongly recommend the use of both hands in shaving. With the ability to do so may be eliminated, for instance, the somewhat awkward position of the hand in shaving the opposite side of the neck downward.

The hand not employed in holding the razor may assist, by tightening and smoothing the surface for the cutting edge, permitting closer shaving with lessened liability of cutting the skin.

In observing the above, not only gain in the comfort, ease and celerity of the operation itself may be attained, but also, by the avoidance of irritating conditions, the shaved part of the skin may be left entirely unharmed and in its usual healthy condition; the duty will then be looked forward to with pleasure in place of dread, the result a sense of comfort and satisfaction, instead of the not infrequent feeling of annoyance caused by unskillful effort.

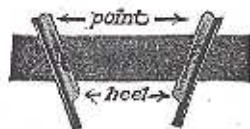
A Good Razor

HOW TO CHOOSE IT; HOW TO USE IT; HOW MANY MEN ABUSE IT

When considering the subject of a good razor, bear in mind that the steel used in a thick razor, and the care in tempering it, are exactly the same as that in the thinnest razor made. The principal expense in razor making is in the grinding. In three styles of razors—the flat, the hollow ground, and the full concave—one larger makes the same blanks for the three, and they are then taken by the temperer and tempered exactly alike. They are all then given to the flat grinder; after he is through with them, those that are to be sold at a low price are taken to the polisher and finished. Those for the concave are taken to another wheel, where the most expensive work is done, first in hollow grinding and then in concaving them. In these operations, unless the blanks are perfect in temper and perfectly forged, the work will never be completed, and it is the great number of blanks that are spoiled which makes the work so expensive.

There is no reason why a thick razor should not shave as pleasantly as a very thin one, if kept in as good edge, but it requires many times the labor to keep a thick razor in keen working order than it does a thin one. Stropping a razor might be likened to filing a saw; the emery or paste on the strop really does file down the razor edge. If the face of the razor is flat, you must file away the entire face to make any impression on it. If, on the contrary, it is hollowed out so that only the extreme edge touches the strop, it will readily be seen a few strokes will do for the one what a great deal of labor only imperfectly does for the other. Just as a man can file a hand-saw more rapidly than he can a thick mill-saw; there is less surface to file away.

In selecting a razor for individual use, it is economy of time and labor to select a thin one; but your beard should guide you in deciding how thin a blade you shall buy. There are times when one can have too much of a good thing. It does not follow because a thin razor is good, that one still thinner will be better. A man with a wiry, harsh beard has no business with an extra thin razor. The tool should be selected for the work it is intended to do. A man with a wiry beard, who shaves every day, can use a thinner razor than he who, with a similar beard, shaves but once a week.



Directions for Honing a Razor

Either oil or shaving lather may be used on what is commonly called the "Genuine Rock" razor hone. Use one or the other exclusively. Good sperm or sweet oil is the best, or any other non-drying oil will answer. The all-important consideration in honing a razor is to have the blade rest perfectly

flat on the stone, so that back and edge rest on the surface, as in position No. 1.

This is essential in order to secure a perfectly true and even bevel to the edge.

Draw the blade from heel to point, forward and against the edge, keeping the heel slightly in advance of the point, just as one would in cutting. This sets the teeth at proper angle for shaving.

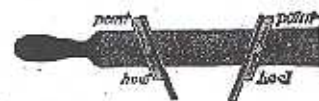
Turn the razor on the back and the blade falls into position No. 2.

Draw from heel to point, as before, then turn on the back and the blade falls into position No. 1.

The edge may be tested by being drawn lightly, with a steady hand, across the moistened finger-nail, which tends to remove the feather edge and show when the edge is free from nicks, as such defects are readily detected in this manner.

After the blade has been honed sufficiently keen, it should be wiped and then carefully stropped.

Directions for Stropping



Lay the razor flat, as in position No. 1, with edge toward you. Draw from heel to point and against the back of blade, the reverse of honing. Turn the razor on the back and it falls into position No. 2. Draw the blade from heel to point toward you. Turn on the back and the blade falls into position No. 1.

A few strokes on the dressed or prepared surface of the strop, and light finishing on the plain leather side, should be sufficient to give a very keen shaving edge to a good razor.

If the strop becomes hard or glazed, a few drops of oil rubbed on the surface will improve it, but if the leather is once cut, or becomes uneven, it is rendered useless.

A Few Plain Facts

Three points stand out clear in our experience: 1st. Men are disposed to buy too thin and too light a razor. 2d. Most razors are spoiled by too much stropping. 3d. Men will not learn that plenty of water, to soften the beard, and luts of wet lather rubbed into the skin are of far more importance than the quality of the razor.