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Pro tips from a dermatologist for a better, cleaner shave

Say goodbye to ingrown hairs, razor burn and achieve your best shave yet

Jackson A. Thomas Aug 6, 2018



Photo by Wavebreakmedia

Creme de la cream

“For men, Rugged & Dapper Moisture Shield Men’s Shaving Cream is an amazing product that men love,” says dermatologist Dr. Hal Weitzbuch. “For women, Neutrogena and Aveeno make great shaving creams that fight irritation.”

“I have been using the Trader Joe’s Cream Shave for 10 years, and I love it,” says makeup artist Alison Werning. “Before we had Trader Joe’s in Colorado, I’d stock up when we were visiting other states. However, my husband prefers traditional Barbasol foam for shaving. A lot depends on if you are shaving your face or body and the frequency of shaving but most is personal preference based on texture and scent.”



It’s likely part of your morning routine to brush your teeth, put on deodorant and spray on cologne or perfume before starting your day. And because much of your grooming routine is done out of habit, it can be easy to overlook another important aspect of the getting-ready regimen: shaving. Sure, it’s a simple way to achieve a clean, professional look and get rid of unwanted body hair — whether it’s on your face, neck, legs, underarms or elsewhere. But before you lather up with gel, check out some pro tips for a smoother shave with fewer hassles.

Smooth sailing

For both men and women, always make sure to shave with a purpose, says Dr. Hal Weitzbuch, a dermatologist in Calabasas, California.

“Strokes should be slow and purposeful instead of fast, choppy and repetitive,” Weitzbuch says. “The hair should be wet and warmed.”

It’s best to shave in the shower or immediately afterward, he says, because the hydration softens the hair and allows the razor to glide more easily. And after you’ve put on shaving gel or foam, which can protect against irritation such as razor burn while you shave, check for dull blades before actually using the razor.

“Razors should be changed whenever they are no longer sharp, not giving a close shave and possibly causing cuts or irritation,” he says. “Every product is different — some should be changed after every use and some can last for weeks.”

For guys who shave their face, go with and against the grain because facial hair grows in all directions. For women who shave their legs, go against the direction of hair growth because it provides a closer shave. Also, make sure to rinse the blades often and use light, gentle strokes.

Stay cool

It’s equally important to remember to exfoliate and moisturize to prevent ingrown hairs, says Alison Werning, a freelance makeup artist and skin care expert in Boulder, Colorado.

“Using things like a bikini brush before or during a shower and before shaving will help to exfoliate dead skin cells,” she says. “Personally, I have created a home mix of Epsom salt and brown sugar that is great for a full body exfoliant for before shaving. It is important to use a gentler exfoliator on the face than on the body. ... Since men tend to be more aggressive when it comes to washing and scrubbing their face, a gentler exfoliator is best so there is no risk of damaging the skin from over-exfoliation.”

Moisturize afterward to keep the skin healthy, Werning says. “While coconut oil has been a craze lately, the molecules are too big to be absorbed into the skin, so coconut oil can in some cases cause irritation and doesn’t provide excellent hydration. Look for ingredients like shea butter or cocoa butter and avoid high levels of mineral oil since it can clog pores.”



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Quick tip

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