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Technique of Hair Cutting

12.1 Introduction

Hair cutting is the very foundation of hair dressing. It is an art, that requires perfection. A large variety of hair cutting styles are popular, each require special tools and special technique.

12.2 Objectives

After reading this lesson you will be able to :

- Differentiate between the different cutting techniques.
- Acquire skills necessary to use the tools for hair cutting.
- Correlate various techniques of cutting and its effect.
- Understand the use of various hair care products available in the market

12.3 Types of Cut

- (a) **Blunt cut** : The hair is cut in one length without any graduation which is apparent, although the hair length actually is shorter at the nape and longest at the top the hair is cut flat at 0° degree elevation.
- (b) **U-Cut** : If the fingers are directed upwards, upsloping styles like U, concave or rounded effects are produced.
- (c) **Boy cut** : The hair cut may be started on the sides over the ears taking a line parallel and straight in front of the ear and

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diagonal in relation to the natural hair line behind ear. The procedure here is for one starting at the nape.

- (d) **Step cut** : Cuts that differ in lengths and weights on both sides of the head. These cuts produce a comparatively softer perimeter line but still retain enough weight in the cut hair style. As against the straight cuts, small amount of graduation of upto 45° is used while cutting.

12.4 Technique of Hair Cutting

Haircutting is the very foundation of ladies hairdressing. A well cut head of hair will style more easily, retain its line and shape, and be admired by clients.

Preparation of Client and Tray

1. Before cutting, brush the hair properly.
2. Place cutting sheet around the neck properly.
3. Section the hair and secure them with setting clips.
4. Decide before giving a hair cut, whether to give a dry or wet hair cut. Remember wet hair after cutting fall together on the floor but dry hair spread here and there and also on hair dresser and if a child is getting a hair cut, hair falls on her face which looks bad.
5. Keep the tools and implements in sequence to be used

Hair Cutting Tools

The hairdresser should also have at least three combs always in perfect condition (no broken teeth). One should be narrow half-ranked type, the second a similar but very fine or thin comb for cutting hair very short in the neck, and the third a dressing comb, wide enough for combing, placing, setting, and for general use.

One should have a razor or hair shaper. Finally, a soft clean neck-brush should be readily available, to dust off cut hair ends.

Holding the Scissors and Comb

The operator should hold the scissors, preferably in the right hand

with the points directly to the left, insert the thumb in the lower handle and the third finger in the upper one. The thumb pushes forward the lower handle by pressing against its upper rim, while the third finger pulls on the back of the lower rim of the upper handle. The first and second fingers curl around the back of the scissors, crablike, holding the scissors firmly.

Holding the scissors this way requires some practical instruction and continual practice. Opening and closing them many times using a somewhat pulling or biting away movement, rather than biting forward. This is almost an imaginary movement.

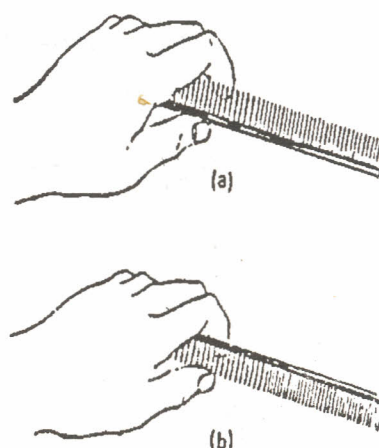
The Cutting-up Process

The student should take a conveniently narrow cutting comb, in the opposite hand, preferably the left hand. She holds it between the thumb and the first finger, with the first finger running straight along the upper top part of the comb, the other fingers at the back and under the comb. In this position it should be possible to comb the hair downward.

This holding and handling of the comb requires plenty of practice, especially to turn the comb without turning the wrist. The student should continue combing down and turning the comb over with the teeth outwards and coming away from the head.

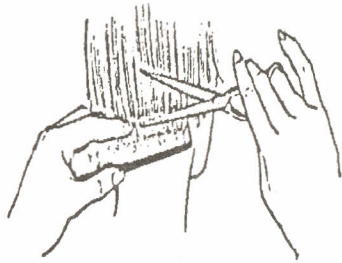
The student can practise this action by sitting with the legs crossed using the thigh to represent the head, and combing down, towards himself, turning the comb, and running up, or away, cutting as she goes.

Occasionally he should knock the scissors and the comb together, to remove any loose hair. This movement is very professional and will give confidence.



Holding the Comb

Lifting and Cutting process

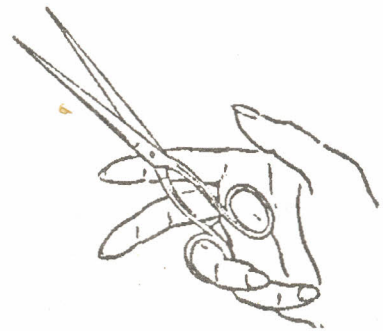


Generally speaking, this is the technique used for cutting hair short, but it must be used in conjunction with the other techniques: tapering, clubbing, leveling-out, and lining-out.

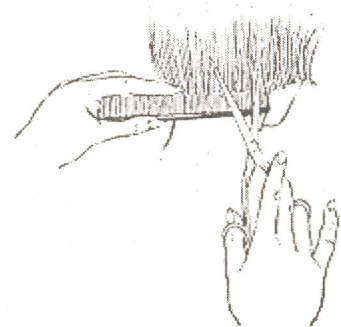
The operator starts close or tightly into the neck at the bottom or edge, if a close cut is desired, runs up briskly bringing the comb gradually away from the neck or back of the head.

Tapering

With the scissors held in the cutting position already described, with the thumb and the third finger inserted in their respective handles, the hand is turned so that the palm comes upwards, and the thumb is removed from its handle hole. Now with the scissors at rest laying across the fingers and the hand, the comb can be held comfortably in the hand.

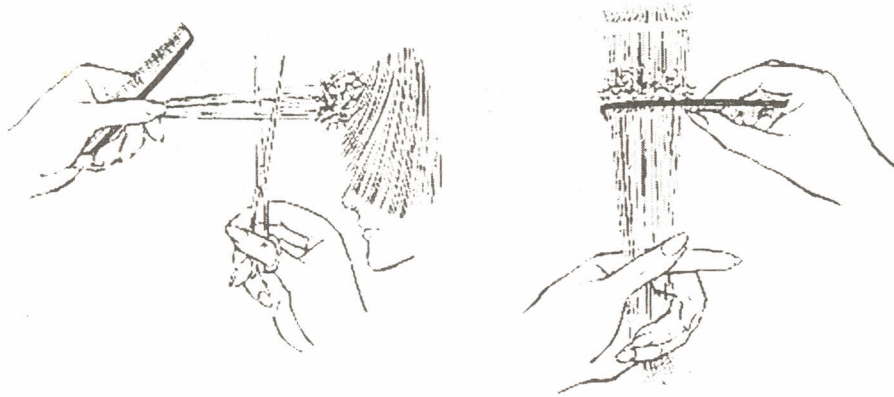


He turns the hand round with palm towards the body, holding the scissors very loosely, and half open, and waves the hand backwards and forwards from the wrist. He attacks the piece of hair, held upwards and taut in the left hand, by a gentle swinging or waving of the hand, and holding the scissors half open, brings the partly open blades under the strip of held hair. The half-open scissors slithering up and down this piece of hair, actually thin in the downward stroke.



Pushing back, or back-combing the section before tapering, will give a still further varied result. This method of cutting the longer hair by tapering produces a finished result that will hug the shape of the head.

A haircut carried out in this manner will keep and hold its shape for many weeks.



Pushing back or back combine before cutting

Point Tapering

In this technique only the very points of the scissors are used with the scissors only slightly open. Point tapering is carried out close, sharp, short, tapering or cutting away from the root, and on the upward stroke or the stroke coming away from the head, without the wrist swinging movement.

Club Cutting

As the head is round, if the hair is extended to its full length – at right-angles to the scalp — and a piece of hair is clubbed (cut straight off), it naturally becomes shorter than the piece below it even if a similar cutting is carried out on that piece. When hair is clubbed, by virtue of the fact that the shape of the head is dropping down, similar cutting throughout will give an overall tapered effect. It is very important to stress that the hair to be clubbed must be held at right-angles to the scalp.

The section of hair is then dropped, and the exercise repeated over again and around the head, and if necessary from the neck upwards or from the sides backwards. With perseverance the back of the head can be reduced down, tapered, as if it had been cut and lifted.

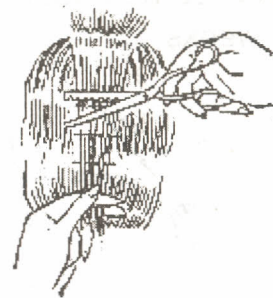
Tapering scissors

These are scissors with serrated blades, that permit bites to be made

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in a section of hair to reduce its weight. They are not considered very professional with present-day hairstyling but are simple to use. It is always wise to be familiar with them, as one never knows when they might be required.

Sometimes it is advisable to thin down a very thick bulky head of hair with these scissors prior to permanent waving so that resultant perm is of better quality.



Using Tapering scissors

Razor Cutting

Originally the open cut-throat type of razor was used for this work, but as its use requires great skill and many years of practice and experience, particularly in keeping the razors really sharp — most ladies' hairdressers prefer to use the modern hair-shaper with blades that are replaceable and are more convenient and therefore more practical.

For razor cutting the hair is kept wet (generally after it has been shampooed), to avoid any pull on the hair which can be unpleasant to the client.

Many hairdressers do finish a haircut with a little razoring on the dry hair, but the razor has to be very sharp and held at such an angle as to give a good cutting edge.

The razor is held in the one hand and a piece of hair picked up with the other and thinned or shaped to the desired weight, thinness or point.

Very careful surface razoring, lightly, following the razor with the comb, can help to finish a short haircut much more perfectly.

Razoring generally is undoubtedly an attractive way of cutting hair. One can, however, only too easily remove much more hair than originally intended, hence great care and practicing is very essential.

Lining – Out

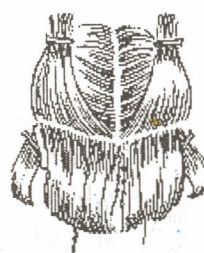
When the general thinning, tapering, clubbing, cutting, or razoring of the hair is thought to be completed, some lining-out is necessary. This must of course be according to the type of haircut desired.

Generally speaking, the comb is rested in one hand while the points of the scissors are used to level the hair, One finger from the hand holding the comb can however be rested on the blade of the scissors to help to guide it.

Bobbing hair requires a level cut straight round generally dipping a little at the back.

Sectioning the Hair for Cutting

It is often convenient to divide the hair up into smaller sections for cutting especially if it has to be shaped at the back.



Making a straight parting down the back combing the hair left or right to give a comparatively free hand often makes it easier to manage hair that requires cutting short at the back.

The hair above the neckline can be clipped up out of the way for complete comfort while working on the neckline.

Intext Questions 12.1

State whether following statements are True or False

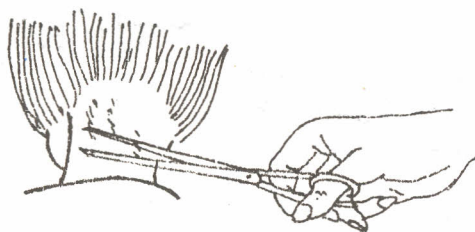
1. Cuts that differ in length on both sides is known as step cut.
2. The comb is held between the thumb and first finger.
3. The scissors is held in the left hand with the thumb and index finger.
4. The stylist should knock the scissors and the comb to remove loose hair.
5. Point tapering is carried out at the lower end of the hair.

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Removing Neck Hairs

If the hair is cut short a certain amount of hair may appear on the neck which must be removed. In the old-fashioned shingles this hair was often removed with a pair of clippers. This is to be avoided if possible and the hair should be removed with the points of the scissors, generally with the comb underneath to protect the neck, but the skilful operator will be able to remove this hair with the point of the scissors and will place the finger on the point to help control it if necessary.

It is vital when carrying out this part of the work to hold the blades of the scissors flat to the neck.



Removing Neck Hairs with Scissors
(hold the scissors flat is the neck)



Removing Neck Hairs with Clippers

12.5 Hair cutting Summary

Method Technique	Description	Effect
Tapering	Slithering movement with scissors on dry hair. Slicing movement with razor on wet hair.	Removes length and bulk. Encourages curl.
Thinning	A serrated scissors used to bite on dry hair. Razor on wet hair.	Removes bulk only.
Clubbing	Cutting straight across the hair mesh.	Removes length only. Retains bulk and discourages curl.
Graduation	Cutting the hair so that the top layers lie above the underneath layers. High layering – steep graduation. Low layering – very little graduation.	Can give a layered effect or a full effect, depending upon the degree of graduation.
Reverse graduation	Cutting the hair so that the top layers are longer or lie below the underneath hair.	Gives hair maximum volume where the ends turn under, e.g. pageboy, bob.
Bevel	Cutting the hair on a curve over the fingers.	Creates slight graduation on the ends of the hair.
Chipping in or pointing	Cutting into the ends of the hair with the points of the scissors	Reduces the bulk and weight on the ends of the hair.
Inversion concave	An inward curving shape cut into the hair in the opposite direction to the natural curve of the scalp.	Creates interesting curved shapes into various areas of the hairstyle which adds volume to the style.
Precision	Cutting the hair precisely to give a very clean line and shape.	Hair falls into a very definite shape which can be either soft or antular.

12.6 Hair Care Products

1. **Styling Gel** – Hair Gel is used for stiffening the hair, and also to hold the hair in a particular position, or to mould and script them. Hair gels are the most commonly used hair product and easily available in the market. One can choose between a wet look, a matt look, using short or long lasting product. The choice is governed by the style one wants, how crisp one wants it to stay and how long it is required to last.

A small amount (not more than the size of a one rupee coin) of the product is squeezed on to the palm and applied on damp hair. Use your fingers or a comb to style the hair. Allow it to dry and harden on its own. It can be easily reactivated at any point by using water to restyle the hair.

2. **Hair wax** – This is a thick waxy styling product, used to hold the hair in position. Unlike hair gel, it does not harden the hair, but keeps them pliable. Hair wax is also known as pomade, glue, whip or styling paste. It is better to use wax in colder months of the year as it tends to get oily when exposed to heat. A small amount is scooped and massaged onto the palms which allows the wax to grease up a bit, and then gently stroked onto dry hair.

3. **Mouse** – Hair mouse is used to add volume to hair. It is a foam and needs special technique for application. This technique is time consuming and thus is found to be cumbersome, as its application must be followed by a blow dry session. The mouse is squeezed onto the palm and then applied to the hair roots first. This is followed by running a hair dryer evenly all around, whilst brushing or combing the style into place. This is highly recommended for people with thin hair, as it adds volume, making the hair look fuller and thicker.

4. **Texturiser** – This is used to add texture to the hair, and is used to create a messy or an out of bed look. Hair texturiser is available both as a cream or spray, and can be used to give both a glossy or matt look. It is sprayed directly onto damp or dry hair. Spray it by holding it at a distance of about 3 – 4 inches. The sprayed hair can be allowed to dry on its own or by the a warm hair dryer. It can also be used to create a messy and windswept look for straight hair on a daily basis.

5. **Hair Spray** – Hair spray is popularly used to keep hair stiff or is a certain style. It is much weaker than hair gel, hair wax or glue. Hair sprays help to hold styles for a short period of time. The biggest advantage of hair spray is that it helps keep the style neat by keeping thin and wired hair strands in place. The hair is sprayed thinly after styling, from a distance of about five inches. To highlight coloured hair, colour enhancing hair spray is recommended.
6. **Hair Shampoo** – A large variety of shampoos are available in the market to suit various kinds of hair and to tackle scalp problems. A milk shampoo or frequent use shampoo is advised. Use antidandruff shampoo only if it recommended by a specialist. Never use soap to wash hair, as it tends to dry the hair out. It is good to shampoo your hair atleast 4-5 times a week. If one is using other products like hair gel or hair oil, then it is highly recommended to shampoo the hair at night. Do not sleep with any of the products on your hair. Shampooing will prevent the pores from clogging. Allowing your scalp to breathe will prevent hairfall, loss of hair quality and premature greying. Apply shampoo on thoroughly wet hair, gently build up a lather and rinse thoroughly.
7. **Hair Conditioners** : Hair needs conditioning regularly after shampooing. Hair conditioners instantly soften the hair and help restore moisture and nutrients in the hair. Conditioners are used after shampoo, and massaged into wet hair and left in for a few minutes. It needs to be rinsed off well with water. Always use the conditioner of the same brand as the shampoo. This combination has been observed to work better.
8. **Hair Colour** – Hair colouring kits are easily available, and fairly simple to use. Hair can be coloured at home or at the saloon. If colouring at home, follow the instructions of the manufacturer. Colour normally lasts for 30-45 days. Brown and Black are favoured in India for both men and woman. Streaking and highlighting are undertaken by some but this is generally a personal choice. Use a good conditioner after colouring. It is best to use products that are specifically formulated for coloured hair.

Intext Question 12.2

Match the following

- | A | B |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. Reverse graduation | (1) To give definite shape |
| b. Clubbing | (2) Creates slight graduation |
| c. Precision | (3) Remove bulk |
| d. Thinning | (4) Give volume to hair |
| e. Bevel | (5) Discourages curl |

12.7 What have you learnt

In this lesson you have learnt

- To differentiate between boy cut, blunt cut, U-cut and step cut.
- To hold and use the comb and scissors while cutting hair.
- Advantages of point tapering, razor cutting and club-cutting.
- The techniques of hair sectioning and removing hair from the neck with clippers.
- The use of various hair care products available in the market.

12.8 Terminal Questions

1. Explain the sectioning of hair with the help of a diagram.
2. List 6 hair cutting techniques and their effects.
3. Differentiate between hair styling gel and hair wax.

12.9 Answers to Intext Questions

12.1

1. True 2. True 3. False 4. True 5. False

12.2

- a) (4) b) (5) c) (1) d) (3) e) (2)