

"Mantic59" and Sharpologist Presents

Get A (Much!) Better Shave In 30 Days (Or Less!)

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About The Author

Hi I'm Mark, also known as "Mantic59" on YouTube and a bunch of web forums.

You're probably here because you are interested in getting a better shave, and better grooming over-all. I think I can help you with that. This site began a supplement to my "how to shave" instructional videos found on [YouTube](#). With the help of some very web-savvy shaving converts who just happen to run a [full service digital media company](#), Sharpologist was created as a community destination for shaving and grooming. And this ebook was created to get you into that in a focused and meaningful way.

While I advocate certain products and techniques, I promise not to get too preachy.

The Sharpologist Philosophy

We all seem to be...starved...for a connection. That connection is your battlefield, and your prize. How many of us remember standing at the feet of your father in the bathroom, watching him shave? Or a leisurely chat at the barbershop with friends (or even strangers). Or the desire to have had those memories if you didn't get the opportunity. The TV's always on, the news a constant background of anxiety; the smartphone's always on, competing for your attention with statuses, streams, and feeds. And they win, every night. And you're starving, for a connection YOU want. So you go to the bathroom. And in your mind it's bright, and clean, and there's no telephone or TV (even if it's not really like that). There may be chaos at home or at work but there's a way you can spend a little meditative time to yourself, concentrate on something that shuts out the world—albeit temporarily—with something that feels good, smells good, creates a mood, and leaves you looking and feeling better.

That's the "zeitgeist" of traditional shaving for me; the Zen-like character of applying warm, fragrant lather with a brush and shaving with a single blade razor. It's a skill (yes, skill) largely lost in today's society.

Disclaimers

I'm not a barber nor a "shaving professional." Any views, reviews and commentary on this ebook should be read with that in mind. I am fairly educated on the subject of traditional shaving but any advice or recommendations should not be considered to be carved in stone.

Introduction

You are probably unhappy with some aspect of your shave. Maybe you're prone to razor burn and ingrown hairs. Or you get lots of nicks and cuts. Or you're unhappy with the cost of razor cartridges. How would you like to consider shaving as a pleasant diversion rather than a painful chore? I've written this guide to show you how to not only get a better shave, but also to get a more enjoyable shave! Then be sure to follow **Sharpologist** for more great content on shaving, grooming, and even some "guy stuff."

THE CHALLENGE PLAN

For the next 30 days I want you to devote just ten minutes per day for the challenge. You may not need all ten minutes but let's carve them out of your schedule anyway. So set your alarm so you rise ten minutes earlier than usual in the morning, assuming your shave in the morning. Or devote ten extra minutes before going to bed if you shave in the evening. If you're a morning shaver and constantly pressed for time due to work or family, consider moving to a night shave for a while. In any case, start the routine this Saturday even though you won't have anything to do just yet: I want you to get used to it.

How will you spend that extra ten minutes? It will be different each week for the next four weeks:

- Week One will concentrate on preparing for a shave;
- Week Two will discuss shave lather in all its intricacies;
- Week Three is reserved for shave technique;
- and Week Four will finish up with after the shave tips and products.

Want to speed things up? Go ahead! If you have gone through a part of the challenge and think you are ready for the next step, by all means take it!

A note about product links in this ebook. Some of the links are "affiliate" links,

where Sharpologist may receive a small fee if the product is purchased. However it does not effect the price you pay for the product, and alternates may be found with a simple query in the search engine of your choice.

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Sign up by pointing your internet web browser to <http://sharpologist.com/enjoy>

Week One - Preparation

First, concentrate on preparing for a shave. The essence of that preparation is cleaning your face (or whatever you are going to shave) correctly, with the right kind of product.

Find a gentle face-cleaning product (even if you are not going to shave the face), ideally one with a scent you find pleasant.

Prep Prep Prep

Your homework is to obtain a skin cleaning product meant specifically for the face. No "deodorant" or "body" bars here (we'll get into the reasons why later)! Look in your grocery store, drug store, or mega-mart "personal care" aisle. You will probably find a glycerin-based bar of soap or liquid wash from a number of different brands. Two widely available products in particular that get good reviews as a pre-shave wash are [Neutrogena's "Razor Defense" Face Scrub](#) and [Noxzema's "Classic Clean" face cleanser cream from the jar](#) (which has been around for ages and is widely known but a lot of men have never considered it for a pre-shave wash).

If you want to "step up your game" consider getting something like [Musgo Real Glycerin Lime Oil Soap](#), [Lucky Tiger Face Wash](#), [Pacific Shaving Pre-Shave Wash](#), [Neutrogena Men Skin Clearing Face Wash](#), or even a [Savon De Marseille](#) soap. The Musgo Real soap is a personal favorite of mine. Also, several noted shaving aficionados have suggested a do-it-yourself solution of:

- one-quarter cup Dr. Bronner's Liquid Soap (any fragrance--my personal preference is [Hemp Lavender](#). However be aware that it contains lanolin, which some people are allergic to);
- 2 tsp skin-friendly oil (such as [Emu Oil](#), [Jojoba Oil](#), [Almond Oil](#)--often used in therapeutic massage--or [Grape Seed Oil](#)). Even olive oil will do in a pinch).

Combine in a pump bottle and shake well before using.

Thoroughly wash your hands with whatever product you have selected and plenty of warm water before you do anything else! If your hands are dirty--or worse, contaminated--you are just making it that much tougher to clean the area to be shaved.

The next step in preparation is to begin rinsing the area to be shaved with generous amounts of warm-to-hot water (hot but not uncomfortable to you). If you are going to be shaving your face be sure to pay close attention to your neck area as well!

Doctors tell me it takes about three minutes to properly hydrate the skin for shaving. Spend at least one minute just rinsing thoroughly before lathering up the area with your soap.

If you want to integrate this preparation into your shower routine, feel free to do so! Don't bother drying it off the area you are going to shave.

What About Pre-Shave Oils?

I'm not a big fan of pre-shave oils as a part of preparation. They do nothing for cleaning the skin, and although they may help with lubrication during the shave, I think that if you use good products you won't need them anyway. But if you do incorporate a pre-shave oil as part of your shave preparation, apply it after cleansing.

Week Two - Lather

First, determine what kinds of scents you enjoy. Then search for shaving products that meet that scent profile. If you have taken to "old school" shaving, using a brush and lather cream or soap, this might be a no-brainer. If you have been using the typical "goo in a can" a whole new world may be opening up to you!

Fragrance 101

Even the best shave product may go unused if you don't like the scent. But how do you determine what kinds of scents you will like?

by Greg C. For Sharpologist



I never used to be one to fret too much about how I smelled, as long as it wasn't "stinky". I used to only have a single bottle of aftershave, which I used infrequently at best. And then I got into wetshaving, and realized that a lot of the soaps and creams that I thought were so wonderful had corresponding colognes and aftershaves. When I figured out that I could smell like Taylor of Old Bond Street's Jermyn Street soap all day? Yes please!

Scent is probably one of the least well understood of the five senses. In many ways, it's the least accurate of all of them. When you look at something, you're looking right at it, when you hear something, you've got a decent idea of where that sound's coming from. When you smell something... well, you're smelling it, and the sum total of the scents of everything else around you at the same time. Is that your

BO, or your date's? There might be something rotting in the fridge, but you're still going to have to go searching to find exactly what it might be.

But it's also one of the most powerful senses, as scent is very closely tied to the formation of memories, since the processing is done in the same area of the brain. That's why we hear of people recalling how, for example, the smell of some aftershaves or soaps will bring up memories of going with their grandfather to get a haircut while he got a shave, when the sight of a barberpole might not have the same effect. [It's the scent that triggers the recall of the memory.](#)

That having been said, in amongst the blend of the aromas of the stuff around us can be quite a diverse set of scents. When we smell something, that's our nose picking up on then presence of a volatile molecule that has broken off from whatever is emitting the smell and is floating around in the air, and that can be anything from 10,000 to 100,000 different types of "odorants". A slight change in the molecular structure of the odorant in question can have a significant difference in how the smell is perceived; add a pair of carbon molecules to butyl acetate, for example, and you can get butyl butyrate, and in the process you'll change the smell from one that mostly smells like apples to one that mostly smells of pineapple.

[Scientists studying scent have been able to come up with models which predict how well people might like a certain scent based upon its molecular structure.](#)

Traditionally, the fragrance industry has been a bit more "low tech" about their approach. I'm sure most of you are familiar with the concept of the colour wheel, well the fragrance wheel does something similar to group scents that people generally think belong together. It's why you might see a scent that's predominately vanilla be called "oriental", despite the fact that vanilla actually came from the Mexico.

Naturally, exactly how the fragrance wheel is broken down seems to vary by who you talk to, keeping in mind that it was developed primarily as a marketing tool, to allow retailers to suggest perfumes and colognes based upon being similar to something else someone had liked. However the original categories proposed were woody (aromatic, dry woods, mossy woods, woody oriental), oriental (oriental and soft oriental), floral (floral oriental, soft floral, and floral), and fresh (fruity, green, water/marine, citrus), and in the middle of the wheel, fougère, which can be made up of combinations of various categories.

For example, my favourite scent, the aforementioned TOBS Jermyn Street, is a fougère which contains bergamot, lemon, lime (all citrus); lavender (aromatic) and geranium (floral), neroli (oriental floral) and amber (soft oriental) resting on a

substantive base of musk (woody I think, although almost every cologne or perfume contains some musk), patchouli (woody oriental) and vanilla (oriental).

Also important is how long the individual scents in a fragrance will last. As mentioned earlier, a smell is detected by volatile compounds which have made their way into the air, via evaporation. These compounds will be released into the air at different rates, based upon their relative boiling points. Each individual scent is called a "note".

Top notes or head notes are those which first burst into the air, due to a relatively low boiling point. If you open up a bottle and give it a sniff, it's the top notes you'll primarily be smelling. They generally only last a few minutes, and are often intended both to entice someone into trying the scent, and to mask the smell of the alcohol these compounds are dissolved in. Citrus, herb, fruity and green scents tend to be top notes.

Once the top notes are gone, the next are the middle notes; they'll be sticking around from a few minutes in to hours after the fact. Here you'll see your floral scents, spicy notes.

And the last to go are our base notes, which you'll be smelling the entire time, although you might not be able to pick them out over the top notes when they're still around. There, you've got your woody notes, sweet notes, mossy notes, and musk.

Strength-wise, you'll have three main types of male fragrances: aftershaves, which have the least fragrance oil (1 - 3%) and will generally also contain some ingredients designed to soothe the skin after the shave; eau de cologne, which should contain more fragrance oil (2 - 5%); and eau de toilette, which is the strongest you'll generally be able to find (4 - 8%). Or at least that would be the case if it wasn't for the fact that most fragrance houses don't follow the labelling scheme; most stuff labelled "cologne" on the market will actually be in the eau de toilette range. There are stronger products on the market (eau de parfums), but they are few and far between.

Now, back to the wetshaving aspect, generally speaking you're not walking around with lather on your face for hours at a time, so the top notes can still be just as important to the scent of a shaving soap or cream as the middle or base notes. My main complaint with most soaps is that they don't use enough fragrance, in my humble opinion. Most will lose a lot of its olfactory power when the soap is lathered up, and it seems like most soap-makers don't want their soaps to seem to

over-powered when a customer is taking a test sniff of the puck itself, with the result that when it actually gets used, there's not enough there. But it can be difficult to adapt something that is designed to last hours to something which only gets used for minutes.

Of course, like anything else, your mileage may vary on whether or not you find a cologne or a soap overpowering, or even pleasant smelling at all.

The Mysteries Of Shave Lather

Make the most enjoyable lather with the product(s) you have selected to use. The point here is to make applying and using shave lather something that appeals to your senses of touch and scent.



Before You Lather

Be sure to prepare the area as discussed in the previous section. You may have found that you don't need all the time that was set-aside to do it, which is fine! Personally, I only need about a minute's worth of washing and rinsing, but it can take longer, depending on the person...that's OK too.

The Single Most Important Item For An Enjoyable Shave? The Shave Bush (And How To Use It)

You may think they're old fashioned or foppish but the truth is using a shaving brush can make a huge difference in the quality of your shave. Unfortunately selecting and using a shaving brush can be a little confusing to the uninitiated. So let's try to make a little sense out of the options.



Using Lathering Cream Or Soap Applied With A Brush

Here is your best opportunity to truly enjoy your shave. Not just a good shave--an enjoyable shave. Lathering cream or soap offers a huge variety of scents: woods, spices, colognes..."real" scents that can evoke memories or scenes in your mind, not just the smell of the latest body spray or underarm deodorant (ewwww...). And the bonus is you can gently warm the lather to give it an extra dimension. Does it take (a little) longer to make, compared with other types of lather? Yes, but it is worth the trouble.

The Lathering Process

There are some variations on how to make a good lather with different products, and it can take a little practice to get right, but the payoff can be a dramatically better shave. There are two general schools of thought on making traditional shaving lather, differentiated mostly on how water is integrated into the mix. The classic method of lather-making starts with minimal water on the brush, adding water until you get the lather consistency you are looking for. The other school of thought, sometimes called "creamy" (vs. "frugal") lather-making starts out with much more water on the shaving brush, letting overflow spill out unused. Neither method is "right" nor "wrong." Try both methods to see what works best for you (or discover your own method!). You may need to use most of your ten minute set-aside time to experiment if you are not versed in the art of lather-making. Don't worry though--once you get the hang of it you can cut that time way down.

(By the way, you can usually use a classic lathering shaving cream "brushless" as well. You just need to use a lot more product than you would use with a brush.)

"Classic" Lather

Making shaving lather the "classic" way starts with soaking both the brush and the cream or soap in water.

Fill a sink with warm-to-hot water and place the shaving brush in the sink. How long the brush needs to be soaked is dependent on the type of brush: boar hair, horse hair, and low grades of badger hair (such as "pure black") need to soak longer (probably several minutes) than higher grades of badger (perhaps less than a minute). Synthetic brushes do not need to be soaked at all, just thoroughly wetted.

If you are using a puck of shaving soap put it in the sink as well (or if it is in a container or bowl put the hot water in that). If you have a jar of shaving cream that has been used for a while it is probably worth pouring in a little water as well. The key point in these circumstances is to loosen the outer "skin" of the product to make loading easier. More on that shortly.

After soaking dump the water out of the container of soap or cream and shake the brush three or four times to get rid of the excess. Now you are going to load your brush:

If you have a shave soap puck or a jar of shave cream, spin the brush onto it, pressing down slightly, to coat the brush's bristles with product (an alternative for the jar is to scoop some out with a small utensil and place it directly into the center of the brush). You are looking for more than just a light foam on the bristles--you want a relatively thick coat.

If you are using a tube of shave cream, squeeze out an almond-size amount directly into the center of the brush.

Now you're going to build lather. You can do it in an empty bowl of some kind or directly onto the face. An advantage of using a bowl is that you can get a better idea of how the brush is generating lather. And if you gently heat the bowl beforehand you can get a warmed lather than can feel...well...really great. On the other hand building lather directly to the face can save some time.

Start massage the brush into the bowl or on the face using circular motions and pressing the brush down slightly. Some advocate using a painting motion vs. a circular motion but let's start off with circular. Massage for about 30 seconds then dip the tips of the brush in water and repeat. It may take a several minutes for the lather to build on the brush to the right consistency, depending on the type of brush, the type of product used, and the mineral content of the water. Whether you're building in a bowl or to the face, you are looking for a shiny, somewhat "loose" consistency (runnier than what might come out of a can or brushless tube) with soft "peaks" (like a cake batter) without any bubbles. Once again, while you are doing this, enjoy the scent of the shaving lather. Pay attention to it. Concentrate on it! Feel it on the skin.

[HERE](#) is a video on YouTube that might help.

"Creamy" Lather

Here's how Michael "[Leisureguy](#)" Ham describes making "Creamy" lather:

If you have a boar or horsehair brush, wet the knot thoroughly under the hot-water tap and let the brush stand, dripping wet, on its base while you shower. That serves to soak and soften the knot. Then:

For soap and harder shaving creams: Wet brush fully---sopping, dripping wet---and hold tub of soap over the sink on its side and brush briskly and firmly (enough so that the bristles splay somewhat) until the bubbles being formed are microscopic, at which point the brush is fully loaded.

At first, some water and some loose sloppy lather will probably spill into the sink, but pretty soon you'll see real lather. But keep brushing: the focus is loading the brush, not making lather, and you want the brush fully loaded with soap.

Brush the soap until the bubbles being formed are microscopic---creamy rather than foamy---then bring the brush to your (wet, washed) beard and work the lather up and into the stubble, taking your time. If the lather seems a little dry or a little stiff (too much soap), then run a driblet of water into the center of the brush and work that into the lather on your face. I've never had lather that's too wet with this technique, but sometimes I do need to add a little water.

Do several to practice. Try loading for shorter and longer times. Try adding little driblets of water, working it into the lather, little by little, until you can tell the lather's too wet. I.e., play around with it to get experience and try things out. (Since making good lather is a matter of experience, get as much experience as quickly as you can.)

I've found that the "microscopic bubble" indicator is the most reliable sign that the brush is fully loaded.

If the lather's still bad, suspect hard water and try a [distilled water shave](#). Hard water doesn't affect shaving creams so much. Note that hard water is not softened by using a Brita filter (which removes particulate matter, not dissolved minerals). Bottled drinking water is hard: hard water tastes better.

For soft shaving creams: If it's a firm, hard cream (like Figaro, for example, or Tabula Rasa, or Coate's Limited Edition or Dr. Selby's 3x Concentrated Shaving Cream), make lather as if for a soap, as described above. If it's a relatively soft cream (AlsShaving.com shaving cream, TOBS Avocado, Castle Forbes, or the like): wet brush well, shake it a couple of times, and twirl the tips in the tub. (If the cream's in a tube, squeeze out a little and put it on the brush or smear it on your wet beard on your cheeks.)

Then use the brush to spread the cream over your entire beard, so that your beard is coated with a thin layer of almost pure shaving cream. Run a dribble of water into the center of the brush, and brush your beard to work the water into the shaving cream. Repeat as needed until you get the lather where you want it.

Again, play around: keep adding little bits of water until the lather's too wet, testing it perhaps along the way between thumb and forefinger to see how slick it is. Slickness will increase, and then when the lather's too wet, slickness will fall off sharply.

The more you play around with test lathers, the faster you learn to make good lather.

Whatever Method You Try

Now shave as you normally have. But remember, however you build lather, making the experience enjoyable is a key point to getting an enjoyable over-all shave.

[HERE](#) is a YouTube video on tips for a more enjoyable lather.

Some Tips If You Are Having Trouble

It's safe to say everyone has experienced trouble making traditional shaving lather at one time or another. Here are 3 shortcuts to making a better, more stable lather, more quickly.

"Superlather"

Priming the brush with a shave soap then adding shave cream (AKA "Superlather") can be an effective (albeit perhaps a bit messy) way to get a stable lather. Loading a fairly wet shaving brush with shave soap (or even a gentle glycerin-based facial soap) will "trap" water and hold it where it needs to be. Then adding a shaving cream will fully hydrate the lather and also create a really slick cushion to work with. [HERE](#) is a YouTube video of the process.

"Uberlather"

A trick similar to "Superlather" is "Uberlather." Uberlather is the process of adding a few drops of pure glycerin to the shaving brush before lathering with shaving cream or soap. The extra glycerin will create a more stable, long-lasting lather. Glycerin can be found fairly easily: look for it at your local mega-mart, drug store, or large grocery store. It is usually in either the skin care or first aid area.

Distilled Water

Sometimes lather is not very good because the water is not very good, with too many minerals or contaminants (e.g. "hard" water). If you have hard water try mixing in some distilled water. Just heat some up (not to boiling!) and pour into your sink (with the stopper closed, of course).

What Is The Best Shaving Brush?

What is the best shaving brush for you? Let's try to make some sense of it all by discussing the different elements of a shaving brush then narrowing the field down to the best shaving brush in different categories. There are many, many varieties of brushes, available from small "garage" artisans and long-established companies.



What Makes Up A Brush?

The primary criteria of shaving brushes are brush size and shape. Brush

dimensions are typically expressed in millimeters and are often divided into three sections: **loft**, **knot**, and over-all **height**. The loft is the length of the actual hair from the base of the knot to the tip of the hair. The knot is an indication of the amount of hair packed into the handle (the knot dimension can be a little dodgy because hair can be packed in tightly or loosely). The length of the handle is factored in to determine the over-all height of the brush. The handle itself is usually made of resin or acrylic (i.e. plastic), though wood and metallic handles are quite common as well. More exotic materials are also occasionally seen, particularly on high-end, artisan-made models.

Two factors of brush size and shape are a little ambiguous. The first is the tips of the loft can be shaped into a fan-like shape or into a bulb-like shape. Each style has their advocates who claim one shape is better than the other but there's no real agreement about it. The second is the size and shape of the handle. Size and shape is yet another personal preference, but in the absence of knowing what you want I suggest measuring the distance from the palm of your hand to the pad of your thumb and let that be the maximum length of the handle.

Brush sizes can vary widely but I think the average loft is about 50 millimeters and the average knot is about 20 millimeters.

Shaving brushes generally come in one of four types of bristle: boar hair, horse hair, badger hair, and synthetic fiber. Sometimes you will see a "mixed breed" of hair knot, such as boar/badger or horse/badger. Boars and badgers are killed to harvest their meat and hair so if that is a concern you will want to select a brush with synthetic or horse hair. Virtually all of the badger hair used in shaving brushes come from China, where the badger is considered a pest and controlled under license.

Boar

Boar hair brushes—often called “natural bristle” brushes--are the most commonly seen in mass market outlets such as drug stores and groceries. Most of these brushes are not very well constructed and tend to require more work to get a decent lather out of as well. However that is not to say that all boar hair brushes are substandard! Quite the contrary; a well-made boar hair brush can provide years of service and work quite well after a break-in period.

Boar hair retains less water than badger hair: selecting a boar hair brush with a higher loft will help compensate for lower water retention.

Horse

Brushes with horse hair have returned to the market after an anthrax scare around World War 1. Material for horse hair shaving brushes are simply cut from the horse's mane and/or tail: unlike other animal bristle brushes, the animal is not harmed. Many users find horse hair shaving brushes to perform better than boar hair and less "scratchy" than many "pure" grade badger brushes.

The price for horse hair shaving brushes is usually quite reasonable given their performance and build quality. The downside here is availability: they are not found quite as easily as other brushes, though it is getting better.

Badger

Badger hair brushes are generally regarded as the preferred material for shaving brushes: they can generally make a lather more quickly, and retain more heat and water, than brushes of other types. However there are a number of different hair grades, and there is no standardized grading process between manufacturers. But there are some general guidelines.

The lowest grade of badger hair is generally referred to as "pure." This grade is characterized by a dark color and thick, stiff, coarse-looking hair. Some manufacturers bleach the hair to give it the look of a higher grade but the hair itself will still look coarse.

The next step up is usually called "super" or "fine." These brushes are generally better constructed overall and the hair is finer-looking, softer, and lighter in color. These brushes retain water and heat noticeably better—sometimes dramatically better—than lower grades, and can make a better lather more quickly.

The highest grade of badger hair is generally labeled "silvertip." These brushes are usually made to the highest standard, often with hand-crafted workmanship and commanding the highest prices. Silvertip hair is often cream colored on top with darker bands of color below and very fine but still fairly flexible hairs. These brushes will retain even more water and heat than super badger brushes, though less dramatically.

Synthetic

Finally there are synthetic brushes. These can range from brushes with nylon bristles those with more specialized synthetic material. Their price and performance usually fall between those of boar and badger brushes, though the

latest generation is competitive with very good badger brushes in both performance and cost.

There are some distinct advantage--and disadvantages--to synthetic hair shaving brushes. Advantages:

- **Strength.** Synthetic fiber is stronger than the natural fiber.
- **Consistency.** If you have two brushes with the same knot, handle and loft, there is almost no variance whereas natural hair will have variance even with the same hair grade.
- **Temperature range.** Synthetic fiber will withstand hotter (though not extremely hot or boiling) water than would damage natural hairs.
- **Drying.** Synthetic fiber will dry much more quickly than natural hair.

Disadvantages:

- **Water retention.** Synthetic hair does not retain water like natural hair, so you must modify your lather development to accommodate the lack of retained water.
- **Heat retention.** Synthetics will lose heat faster than naturals, so if you like warm lather throughout the shave a natural hair bristle may be more your preference.
- **Feel at the tip.** Good synthetics are soft at the tip but they do not "feel" the same as a natural badger hair brush.
- **Backbone variation.** Synthetics have one backbone feel whereas you can vary the backbone in a natural brush by the amount of time you soak the brush in water.

Travel Brushes

Travel brushes are a specialty item, brushes (with generally smaller lofts) that can be stored in an integrated container. There are several different schemes for protecting the brush including screwing the knot into the container which then becomes the brush's handle.

Of course, you might be able to take your regular kit if it will fit into your luggage. One way of keeping everything in one place is to put it in a large prescription pill container. Just remember to drill a few holes in the container for air circulation.

If you're more of a visual learner, here is a video about how to buy a shaving brush:

Criteria For The Best Shaving Brush

With so many options and variables, how can the best shaving brush be determined? Like the other "best" lists, I think we can use some parameters (albeit somewhat arbitrary). Heaviest weighting first to narrow the field:

1. Reputation and popularity: my experience and the experiences of others reported on blogs, forums, and vendor sites
2. Over-all value
3. Availability and length of time on the market: there are many fine artisans but they tend to come-and-go from the market so this list gives more weight to established sources.
4. Available in different sizes: some brush lines have different loft or handle sizes to accommodate larger or smaller hands
5. Handle material available in other than wood: wood tends to degrade more quickly over time and use (remember, a high moisture environment!) and while some brushes are carefully sealed against water other materials may be longer-lasting.

As with all products, *caveat emptor* and "your mileage may vary." This list is not sponsored: I did not get paid to mention any of these products (although in some cases *Sharpologist* may receive a small advertising fee if an item is purchased. It does not effect the price paid for the item though). I plan to update this post as products change, enter, and leave the market.

What Is The Best Shaving Brush?

Best Low Cost Shaving Brush: [Omega Pro 48](#). The classic "barber brush" that has been around for years (Proraso often bundles [this brush](#) under their own label). Some prefer the [Omega Pro 49](#) which is slightly shorter and slightly less expensive. **Honorable Mentions:** [Omega Boar/Badger mix](#) and the [Vie-long 04312](#) Horse Hair brush.

Best Value Shaving Brush: Parker shaving products typically have a great "bang for the buck" and the [Parker Pure Badger](#) shaving brush is no exception. It is also very popular. **Honorable Mention:** [Edwin Jagger Best Badger](#) and the [new Sterling badger brush](#).

Best "Popular" Shaving Brush: The [Edwin Jagger Super Badger](#) brush (and it comes with a matching stand) has an excellent history and reputation.

Honorable Mention: [Vulfix 2236S](#)

Best Travel Shaving Brush: the [Frank Shaving Travel Synthetic](#) brush combines a good travel design and an excellent synthetic fiber that dries quickly.

Honorable Mention: [Parker Travel Brush](#)

Best Synthetic Shaving Brush: The [Muhle 39k257](#) Synthetic shaving brush uses the latest generation of synthetic fiber in a classic form factor. For an upgraded, more deluxe version take a look at the [Muhle 31M89](#). **Honorable Mentions:** [Frank Shaving Pur-Tech](#), and the [Kent Infinity Silvertex](#)

Best High Performance Shaving Brush: [WSP "Monarch"](#) in high-density, high mountain white badger hair--a rare combination for an exceptional price.

Honorable Mention: [Kent BK8](#)

Best "Price-Is-No-Object" Shaving Brush: the [Kent BLK12](#) in silvertip is regarded as one of the finest luxury shaving brushes on the market. A very large brush as well (smaller versions include the BK8 mentioned above and the [BK4](#)).

Honorable Mention: [Simpson Chubby 3](#) in super badger.

What Is The Best Shaving Cream?

What is the best shaving cream? There is a lot of it out there--the good, the bad, and the ugly. And shaving cream can be pretty important: it can make using a blade a pleasant, fragrant diversion or a painful, bloody chore.



Anatomy Of Shaving Cream

[HERE](#) is a Sharpologist article that goes into the ingredients of a good shaving cream, but here's the condensed version: the typical ingredient list on a high end shaving cream includes aqua (water), stearic acid, myristic acid, potassium hydroxide, coconut acid, glycerin, triethanolamine, parfum (fragrance) and sodium hydroxide. The word cocoate, usually preceded by sodium or potassium, may be found replacing coconut acid to indicate that saponification has occurred.

Saponification literally means “soap making” (from the root word, “sapo”, which is Latin for soap), and is a chemical reaction used to produce fatty acids from triglycerides. Triglyceride consist of three fatty acid molecules joined to a glycerin molecule, which is also released during saponification. Triglycerides are the preferred molecules used by living organisms to store fats and their constitution is unique for a particular species but varies from one species to another.

In addition, shaving creams often contain other ingredients including: botanicals, essential oil derivatives (e. g. citral, farnesol, geraniol, geranial, myrcene, limonene, linalool, etc.), chelators, preservatives and other chemicals. Besides modulating performance, these ingredients can add antiseptic qualities, serve as skin toners, increase shelf life, etc., but more importantly, they make each formulation unique.

Criteria For The Best Shaving Creams?

So what are the “best” shaving creams? To be sure, there are a lot of good shaving creams, but what rises above the rest? Let me propose my set of criteria for determining which may be the best shaving cream for men (women can use them too, but some of the scents may be unappealing. Heaviest weighting first):

1. Superior performance (based on my own experience and the reputation on review sites and forums)—with both “cushion” and “lubrication” better than most.
2. Ease of applying and using under a variety of water mineral content conditions (in other words it works well with “soft” water and “hard” water).
3. Available in a variety of scents (you won’t use even the best cream if you don’t care for it’s smell) or no scent at all.
4. Availability (from more than just a single artisan website).
5. Time on the market, and price.

Admittedly these criteria are somewhat arbitrary but I want a way to narrow the field down. An "Honorable Mentions" list of products that I think deserve attention but don't meet all the criteria above is also included. **I have a separate chapter about the best shaving soaps.** Since most of Sharpologist's readers are in the United States I will concentrate on products available there. Remember, “Your Mileage May Vary” (YMMV) with these recommendations! Although there is a large majority that like these creams there will always be some for which a product does not work as well.

Mass Market Shaving Cream

Let's first look at mainstream products you might find in your local supermarket, "big box" retailer, or drug store chain. Unfortunately, most of the mainstream shaving cream products are, relatively speaking, ghastly performers (all other things being equal). Most are in pressurized cans and filled with chemicals that try to compensate for the skin drying effect that propellants have. If you have no other choice than to use a mass market shaving product, at least use one that comes out of a squeeze tube if you can.

Only three brands in this category rise to the "best shaving cream" level in my opinion:

- **Cremo Cream** - Available in four scents (the [original](#) scent with sort of a pina colada vibe, one for [women](#), a [Peppermint, Menthol and Tea Tree Oil](#) version that I think is particularly excellent for the summer, and a new [Coconut Mango](#) scent), Cremo Cream is reasonably widely available, found in many national drug store chains (such as Walgreens) and grocery stores, and it's beginning to show up in "big box" outlets like Target and Walmart though usually in just the original scent. [HERE](#) is Sharpologist's review of Cremo Cream but you should be able to find a number of confirming reviews with a simple internet search.
- **Kiss My Face** - Although perhaps not as commonly available as other mainstream products, you will generally find Kiss My Face "Moisture Shave" creams in the "natural" or "organic" areas of supermarkets and some specialty stores. It is available [in a variety of scents](#) and fragrance-free.
- **Pacific Shaving**. Becoming more widely available, Pacific Shaving was originally known for their [Shaving Oil](#). They later added a shaving cream (one targeted to [men](#), the other for [women](#)). However the star is their [Caffeinated](#) shaving cream. Sharpologist [reviewed](#) it a while back and it is great stuff.

By the way, most people find that the performance of these products improve noticeably when used with a shaving brush.

Traditional Lathering Shaving Cream

Here I think you will find most of the best shaving creams available. They are designed to be lathered with a shaving brush, though they can be used "brushless" as well (you just have to use a lot more product). Some traditional shaving creams are *light years* ahead of mass market products and provide an excellent sensory experience as well. Don't let the cost of these products put you off. They are so concentrated that a tub will last for months and months of daily use. I think some of "the best of the best" shaving creams include:

- **Castle Forbes** - Available in [Limes](#), [Lavender](#), and [Cedar/Sandalwood](#). Castle Forbes shaving creams have a reputation of being strongly-scented: I like to say that using their Limes cream is like getting smacked in the face with a key lime pie :) . Without a doubt a luxurious product with outstanding performance (and commensurate price).
- **eShave** - Available in White Tea, Orange Sandalwood, Verbena Lime, Lavender, Cucumber, Almond, Floral, and Fragrance Free. eShave seems to be paying attention to both the male and female traditional shavers with their scent mix. The all perform very well, though it seems like White Tea gets most of the "buzz."
- **New York Shaving Company** - Available in [Elizabeth Street](#), [Tonsorial](#), [Old St. Patrick's](#), [Lavender](#), [Lemon](#), [Rose](#), [Sandalwood](#), and [Unscented](#). NYSC creams just barely make this list because they are available from more than just a single website, though still not widely available. I am glad they are though because the performance is right up there with the big boys. Their scents are a mix of classic European, "old timey" American, and natural scents. They also have a [sample pack](#)! The "[Tonsorial](#)" shaving cream is a favorite of many (including me).
- **St. James Of London** - Another British brand now in the US, St. James of London. I call their scents "traditional with a twist:" [Mandarin & Patchouli](#), [Cedarwood & Clarysage](#), [Black Pepper & Lime](#), and [Sandalwood & Bergamot](#). I was lucky enough to score a tub of the Black Pepper & Lime from the first batch produced and I was duly impressed with the quality.
- **Taylor of Old Bond Street** - Available in [Sandalwood](#), [Jermyn Street \(for sensitive skin\)](#), [Lavender](#), [Mr Taylor's](#), [Grapefruit](#), [Coconut](#), [Natural](#) (preservative & fragrance free), [Lemon/Lime](#), [Almond](#), [Rose](#), [Avocado](#), [Eton College](#), and [St. James](#) scents. Taylor's creams have a wide variety of both classic and modern scents but are a bit inconsistent in my mind. Some are outstanding performers (here is my review of [Grapefruit](#) a while back, and Sandalwood is a consistently listed as a favorite shaving cream on Amazon) while others are less so. They also tend to have a slightly runnier consistency compare to other top-shelf creams. So while I think might be at the bottom of the top shelf, they're still on the top shelf!
- **Truefitt & Hill** - Available in [1805](#), [Almond](#), [Grafton](#), [Lavender](#), [No. 10](#), [Rose](#), [Sandalwood](#), [Trafalgar](#), [Ultimate Comfort](#), [West Indies Lime](#) scents. There's a good mix of "natural" and cologne-like scents here, some popular with younger men (1805, Ultimate Comfort) while others are more classic (Trafalgar is one of my all-time favorite scents, though some consider it--as well as Grafton--an "old man" scent). The No. 10 cream is meant to be used brushless but is very "brush friendly" anyway. For myself Truefitt and Hill creams may be ever-so-

slightly less cushioning than other creams in this category but I think the difference is subtle. Most agree the performance is excellent.

- **Trumper** - Available in [Coconut](#), [Sandalwood](#), [Rose](#), [GFT](#), [Violet](#), [Almond](#), [Limes](#), [Eucris](#), and [Spanish Leather](#) scents (Eucris and Spanish Leather are only available in small containers). Trumper's scents tend to stay in the classic, conservative realm. Some scents even seem a bit foppish but you might be surprised how downright masculine a Rose or a Violet scent can be. In any event, almost everyone considers these shaving creams as superior in their performance.

Honorable Mentions - The Best Of The Rest

There are a number of shaving creams that are excellent but don't pass the criteria I have set for the best shaving cream. I think they still deserve some love though, so here are "the best of the rest."

- **Jack Black Supreme** - Available in a single scent but can be used either with a brush or brushless, Jack Black Supreme consistently gets excellent reviews.
- **Lucky Tiger** - Lucky Tiger's "Liquid Shave Cream" is reasonably widely available, in a single (mildly citrus) scent. As the name implies it is less firm than many other creams (I think it has a consistency of an aftershave balm) but the performance--with or without brush--is a stand-out among its peers.
- **Nancy Boy** - Available in several different scents from a single source, Nancy Boy shave creams consistently get rave reviews from those who have tried them (their "Signature" cream is a particular stand-out). Though it can be used with a shave brush it is a low-lathering product, so don't expect the luxurious experience you might get with other creams. The performance makes converts though.
- **Speick** - Reasonably widely available but in a single scent, Speick is an excellent German-made lathering shaving cream. Its unique, spicy scent is appreciated by most who have tried it. And it is inexpensive to boot!
- **The Art of Shaving** - Available in [Unscented \(for sensitive skin\)](#), [Sandalwood](#), [Lemon](#), [Lavender](#), and [Ocean Kelp](#) scents. Some may say it deserves to be on the regular list, while others will say it should not be on the list at all (though mainly for more emotional, "part of a giant conglomerate company" reasons I think). My personal opinion is their shaving cream performance may not be quite as good as it used to be before a reformulation a couple years ago, but I think Art of Shaving creams are solid performers and their wide availability makes it a great "gateway drug" into good shaving!
- **William Neumann** - Another artisan shave cream with a number of creative

scents like "Old Fashioned Soda" and "Heartwood," Wm. Neumann shave creams are among the best I have ever tried--with or without a brush. Another fairly "liquid" consistency cream, it is dispensed from a convenient pump bottle and can be used with or without a brush.

What Is The Best Shaving Soap?

It seems like the old-school shaving world has been buried in soaps lately. It used to be easy to tell which were the great ones and which ones left something to be desired. But now that they are everywhere how can you tell good from bad? Let's take a look at what goes into a good shaving soap and see which ones come out ahead of the others.



Anatomy Of A Really Good Shaving Soap

[Wikipedia](#) says shave soaps..."differs slightly from normal bath soap in that both

potassium hydroxide and sodium hydroxide are used as saponification agents rather than just sodium hydroxide alone. Traditionally, tallow has been a popular ingredient in shaving soaps and is still in use in some traditional products. *Other oils such as coconut oil, palm oil, and olive oil are often used in shaving soap, but such oils are thought among shaving traditionalists to often produce an inferior product.*" (emphasis mine)

Wow, citation please?

Ingredients

The fact is, shaving soaps are traditionally thought of as tallow-based or glycerin-based. And the old school conventional wisdom says tallow-based shave soaps are superior. But that's just not the case anymore. There are tallow-based shave soaps that are nowhere near "best" (*cough*WilliamsMugSoap*cough*). And there are glycerin-based soaps that are excellent. And vice-versa. It all depends on the mix of ingredients, their ratios, and their quality. The fact is that various oils such as shea butter, palm oil, olive oil, and coconut oil--*in the correct proportions*--can improve the performance of a shaving soap. More recently, kokum butter and argan oil have been introduced successfully in shaving soaps.

Processes

Another variable in the making of shaving soap is the way it's processed. Supposedly "top shelf" shaving soaps are usually *triple-milled*, making it much more dense than a normal soap. Triple-milling does make a soap last longer but the process itself does not make a soap "best" (or even "good"). A hard soap can be either tallow-based or glycerin-based; it's just part of the manufacturing process. Similarly, soft soap (sometimes called "Italian style" soap) has a putty-like consistancy but is not necessarily indicative of the quality of the product.

Check some of the related posts listed at the end of this article for more information on ingredients and processes in soap-making.

Shaving Soap Recommendations

So what are the "best" shaving soaps? To be sure, *there are many excellent shave soaps, mostly from [artisans](#) making small batches with quality ingredients.* Unfortunately artisans tend to "come and go" and their formulations tend to change more often. Let me propose a set of criteria for determining what rises to the top:

1. Superior performance (based on my own experience and what I have read on review sites and forums)--with both "cushion" and "lubrication" better than most.
2. Ease of lathering using water with a variety of mineral content (in other words it works well in "soft" water and "hard" water).
3. Available in a variety of scents (you won't use even the best soap if you don't care for it's smell) or no scent at all.
4. Availability (from more than just a single artisan website).
5. Time on the market, and price.

Remember, "Your Mileage May Vary" with these recommendations: although there is a large majority that like these soaps there will always be some for which a soap does not work as well. Please note that some links may be to affiliate partners where *Sharpologist* may receive a small fee if the product is purchased through the link. However it does not effect the price you pay and alternative outlets for all these products can be found with a query in your favorite search engine.

What Is The Best Shaving Soap?

DR Harris

The original [DR Harris line of shave soaps](#) are triple milled, tallow-based, and available in bowl or stick. This may be among the last of the "old school" tallow-based shaving soaps from one of the long-established wet shaving brands. There is enough scent variety to please most anyone: **Almond** (with a scent that has been described as a somewhat weak almond fragrance with "warm" and "woody" notes), **Arlington** (a somewhat strong mix of citrus and fern. [Arlington is a favorite of mine](#)), **Lavender** (a somewhat weak scent that some--though not all by any stretch--have said has a bit of an "artificial" element to it. No one complains about the performance though), **Marlborough** (many expect this to be a tobacco-like scent because of its name but it is really a mix of woods, particularly fern and cedar), and **Windsor** ([Sharpologist has talked about Windsor](#) before, described as a "nice citrusy, leathery scent with a bit of pepper and vetyver, and patchouli").

Stirling Soaps

Based in rural Arkansas, [Stirling Soaps](#) has risen to a well-respected artisan whose products are now more widely available. You can find their soaps at vendors like [West Coast Shaving](#), [Luxury Barber](#), and [Badger Shaving Co](#). They have a wide variety of scents (two of which, [Ben Franklin](#) and [Port au Prince](#), were reviewed on *Sharpologist*) and an active "laboratory" cranking out updates on a fairly regular

basis. The performance of Stirling Soaps is excellent.

Soap Commander

[Soap Commander](#) has "commanded" a loyal following over the past few years with scents like "Confidence," "Integrity," and "Wisdom" ([HERE](#) is a listing of the scents and their fragrance notes. Some are fairly strongly scented, which is a good thing for guys like me who have a poor sense of smell). And now their shaving soaps are becoming more widely available from places like [Luxury Barber](#), [Maggards](#), [West Coast Shaving](#), and even [Amazon](#)! All are top-notch performers. The Wet Shaving News podcast, hosted here on *Sharpologist*, [interviewed](#) Soap Commander last year.

Mama Bear

Mama Bear is an artisan who has been around for a while and is now branching out her distribution! You can now find her soaps at places like [Amazon](#) and [Shave Nation](#) in addition to [her own site](#). Mama Bear shaving soaps come in a WIDE variety of scents like Sandalwood Vanilla, "Ye Olde Barbershoppe," and British Leather, among many others. Some shaving aficionados say that glycerin-based shaving soaps cannot perform as well as tallow-based shaving soaps. Mama Bear proves them wrong.

Martin de Candre

Insanely expensive, difficult to get, and often out of stock, [Martin de Candre](#) shaving soap is at the top of many shaver's "best" list. Originally available in only a single scent they have now branched out with some additional scents. In the US, [Old Town Shaving Co.](#) is probably your best bet for finding it.

Barrister and Mann

[Barrister and Mann](#) (B&M) is an artisan with an excellent reputation but I had kept them off the "best" shaving soap list for some time because their soaps didn't work as well in "hard" water. With the introduction of their "[Latha](#)" line of shave soaps that concern has largely been eliminated. B&M soaps are [reasonably widely available](#) now too (some even available on Amazon).

Honorable Mentions

[La Toja](#) is sold as a shaving stick it's scent has been described as "freshly-cleaned laundry," woody, powdery, and soapy. Performance is almost always described as

excellent.

No "best soap" list would be complete without mentioning [Mitchell's Wool Fat Shaving Soap](#)*. Widely available but only in one (mild) scent, some consider it the only shave soap they will use. However, since it contains lanolin, some with sensitive skin may have trouble with this soap.

Similarly, [Tabac Shaving Soap](#) is another shaving soap that is very popular and widely available but only in a single scent. Although it has a reputation of a top-shelf performer, its tobacco flower scent usually gets a "love it or hate it" reaction.

[Institut Karite](#) is a shaving soap that has been around for a while, albeit "under the radar." Those that have tried it love its performance. The single scent is generally regarded as "mild" and "powdery" and predominantly "soapy" though some have said there are notes of licorice or floral in the mix.

Arko is reasonably widely available and ridiculously cheap, though in a scent many describe in less-than-glowing terms. Still, it performs almost as well as much more expensive products. Available in a [Soap Stick](#) and a more traditional [Bowl](#).

[Cella](#) (AKA "Cella Crema da Barba All'Olio Di Mandorla") is a single-note scent (almond) soft shave soap that has gotten very high marks among those who have tried it, including Sharpologist's own [Andy Tarnoff](#).

Week Three - Razors & Technique

Now we go into razors and shave technique! Before we tackle that however I want you to carefully map the direction(s) the hair grows in the area you are going to shave, and review the razor you are now using and determine whether it is right for you. We won't go into straight razors right now...that's another book!

Cartridge Razors - Which Is Best?



Sharpologist, with a little help from [Razorpedia](#), took a look at the Gillette Fusion Proglide and seven competitors (for our purposes we're taking a look at razors primarily targeted to the US. Yes, we know there are some good cartridge razors in other parts of the world--we're looking at you, Raz*War and King Of Shaves--but this article will concentrate on the US market).

The Gillette Fusion is a five-bladed razor released in 2006. The Fusion cartridge has five blades on the front, and a sixth blade on the rear for trimming. There are a number of variations (with some handles incompatible with each other) but the latest incarnation is the Fusion Proglide. The Proglide features a lower-resistance coating on thinner blades. It is generally acknowledged that the Proglide design

improves on previous Fusion models. And for most of us the Proglide does provide very good shaves--better than the previous versions of the Fusion--and by most accounts they have a respectable cartridge life that degrades gracefully, which lowers the per-shave cost (we do think that a cartridge lasting an entire month, as their marketing campaign claims, is a stretch. But two weeks seemed to be easily achievable).

Cartridge prices are easily the highest in the industry: \$5 per cartridge (in a four cartridge pack) down to a slightly-more-manageable \$3 range for a bulk pack (14-16 cartridges) from a warehouse like Sam's or Costco. You may be tempted to try the steeply-discounted cartridges found on various internet auction sites but be aware there are counterfeits on the market.

Schick, the perennial number 2 of the razor wars in the US, released their Hydro line in 2010. They have both a three blade cartridge and a five blade cartridge: we'll stick to the five blade for this article. They distinguish themselves by having a "lubrication reservoir" on the cartridge and "skin guards" between the blades to reduce friction. Our testing suggests that the shave is better than their previous Quattro four blade razor (which had a notorious reputation of an overly-aggressive blade angle), though not as good as the Fusion. It has a very good cartridge life--maybe better than the Proglide's--with most of us getting a solid two weeks per cartridge (and a couple of us managed three weeks). However, many reported an unpleasant "gooey-ness" of the lubrication system when using certain types of gels and creams, and particularly traditional lathering soaps or creams.

Cartridge prices ranged from \$3.37 per cartridge in small quantities at retail outlets to \$1.87 per cartridge in bulk (15 carts).

[Harry's](#) is going for style. One of the co-founders of the trendy [Warby Parker](#) eyeglass retailer, Jeff Raider, wants to do for razors what Warby Parker does for glasses: make a razor for a "more discerning" consumer with both style and a lower price than the dominant players, Gillette and Schick. And we think their handles (initially two, "[Truman](#)" and "[Winston](#)") are certainly more stylish than the typical handle--they look more like a custom pen than a razor. Both handles take the same kind of 5 blade cartridge. The cartridges can be purchased in packs of four, eight, twelve, and sixteen (with a cost-per-cartridge ranging between \$2 plus shipping and \$1.56 with shipping).

Our testers got a fine shave, though perhaps not quite as close as some others on this list. And the cartridges had a durability that could only be described as average--a week or so.

[My Shaving Club](#) offers a razor with 5 blade cartridges via subscription. You can get two cartridges per month or per alternating month for \$5.99; or three cartridges per month or alternating month for \$8.49. That amounts to a range of \$3 to \$2.83 per cartridge with shipping.

Our testers thought the shaves from My Shaving Club razors were excellent: close and comfortable, with a graceful blade degradation and a very good cartridge life (most testers got at least 10 days out of a cartridge).

[ShaveMOB](#) boasts "save 70% on premium shaving razors." No membership, no subscription. They offer three, four, or six-bladed cartridges. The six blade cartridges have a version with a trimmer on the back and one that doesn't. If we look at the most expensive version (six blade with trimmer) the cartridge prices range from \$3.25 to \$1.67 depending on quantity (all include shipping). Of course, different cartridges in their line will be lower cost.

Once again our testers got excellent shaves out of the ShaveMOB razor, and the cartridges lasted over a week and degraded gracefully.

[Dorco](#) razors are also used by [Dollar Shave Club](#) ([HERE](#) is our review of DSC). Of course, DSC works on the subscription model and will send you four, six-blade cartridges per month for \$9 (including shipping). That works about to \$2.25 per cartridge. Dorco's 6 blade cartridge have trimmer and no trimmer versions: the trimmer version is slightly more expensive. Per-cartridge prices range from about \$1.69 to \$1.22 depending on quantity.

Our testers found the Dorco shaves to be very comfortable but just adequately close. A cartridge typically lasted 7-8 shaves but then degraded quickly.

We suspect that Dorco is the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of some of the other razors on our list.

So Which Is Best

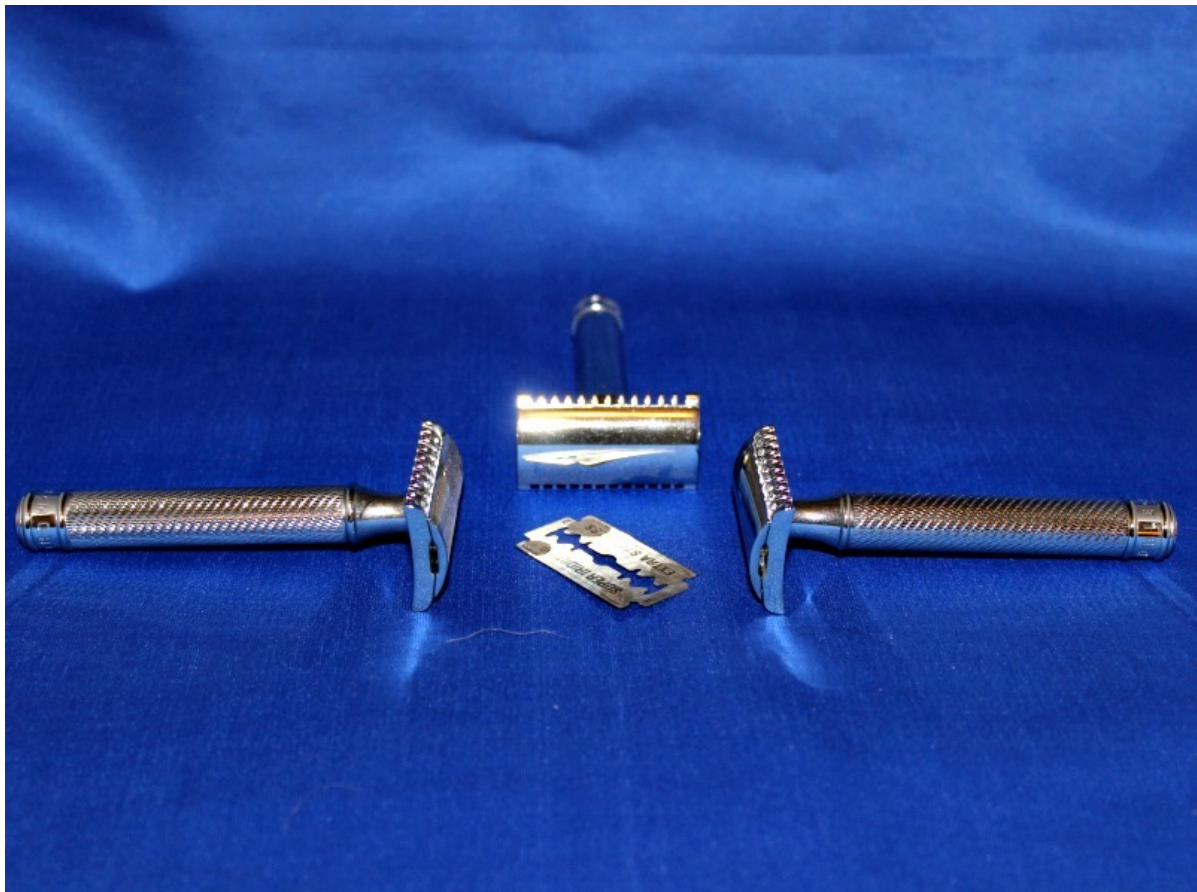
Well...that depends. :) If you're looking for bottom-dollar, Dorco has the lowest cartridge price (in quantity), with Harry's and ShaveMOB coming in not too far behind. But remember that the number (and quality!) of shaves you get from each cartridge affects the per-shave cost so don't judge by price alone. If you want to buy your razor cartridges under a "set it and forget it" subscription, [myshavingclub.com](#) offers flexible terms.

The bottom line here is we think the shave quality of all these alternatives will get

very close to that of the Proglide--close enough that you probably won't have a problem trading shave for cartridge price. But is a cartridge razor really what you want to use?

Safety Razors - Which Is Best?

Shaving with a DE razor is not quite like shaving with a modern pivoted cartridge razor--you can't just take mindless swipes at your face and expect a good shave. You have to learn a new skill set (and possibly unlearn some bad habits) to use a DE razor properly. It's not a terribly difficult skill to pick up but there is a learning curve. And like learning to ride a bike or play a musical instrument some will pick it up more quickly than others. Luckily, I have a few videos to help you out!



What is the best double edge safety razor?"

I get the question all the time. Unfortunately there's no easy answer. Unlike razors with multi-blade, pivoted cartridges that come from a few large multi-national companies and manufactured to a very narrow set of specifications, double-edge (DE) razors (and blades) have a wide variety of options to choose from. **Lets look at some of the variables and see what stands out.** These are not the only products of course--I'm listing the most popular razors that many people say may be "best" in a particular category--so if you know of a good DE razor not listed here be sure to mention it in a comment! All the prices here are in U.S. dollars and approximate.

Price Range

Probably the most obvious factor is going to be price. There's no sense looking for something you can't afford. I have seen new DE razor prices range from under \$5 to well over \$200.

There are some acceptable inexpensive DE razors. They probably will not become heirlooms for the grandkids but they should be acceptable to get started with if you are on a budget. Sharpologist ran a post a while back about a couple [inexpensive razors](#) for under \$15. The \$15 to \$30 range offers some additional alternatives, including the all plastic Wilkinson Sword, the mostly-plastic [Feather Popular](#), and the all (light) metal [Weishi](#). [Maggard razors](#) are also well-regarded and inexpensive.]

The \$30-\$50 price range is where you will start seeing the more popular, better-made razors. Probably the most recognized models in this range are the Edwin Jagger (EJ) [DE8x series](#) and many Parker razors, as well as the some of the Merkur razor line (including their popular 180/23C, and 33C) will be in this range too.



This is also the range where you will find the *enormously popular* [Merkur Heavy Duty](#) (AKA "Heavy Classic" or 34C) and [Edwin Jagger DE89](#)bl.

Above this pricepoint is where you will find razors that are popular for reasons other than (or in addition to) performance. Different head styles (such as the Merkur 37C "[Slant](#)" or the [Muhle R41](#)), materials (like the Feather [All-Stainless Steel](#), special features (including the Merkur adjustable razors--[Progress](#) and [Futur](#)) or special handle designs or materials are examples of this category.

[New vs. Used vs. Vintage](#)

The next factor for finding the "best" razor is whether it is new, used, or vintage. A new razor is just that: in production, for sale, and not previously used. A used razor is one that is currently in production but has been used before. A vintage razor is one that is out of production (both used and "new old stock"). The previous section described popular new razors. You can get used versions of these same razors for probably around 75% of their new price--they generally hold their value pretty well. Vintage prices can be "all over the road" depending on condition and the seller's knowledge (or lack of knowledge).

There are a number of sources for used or vintage razors , including local antique stores and fleamarkets, internet auction sites, and buy/sell/trade (B/S/T) sections of the internet shaving forums. Maybe even a forgotten razor in an older relative's bathroom? Local stores have the advantage of having something you can see and feel--you are more likely to know to what you are getting. Internet auction sites can be useful if you know what you're doing and are looking for something very specific...though there is always the danger of seller shenanigans. The B/S/T areas on shaving forums are probably the place most likely to get a decent razor for a fair price. These areas sometimes have "PIF" offers as well: a user wanting to "[Pay It Forward](#)" by offering a razor at little or no cost to a new shaver, a member of the armed forces, or for some other reason.

Two excellent "vintage" DE razors include the Schick Krona and various versions of the Gillette SuperSpeed--see [this](#) Sharpologist post for more information. Vintage specialty *single*-blade razors such as the GEM have their fans as well.

Open Comb vs. Safety Bar



Double edge razors have heads that can be divided into two general groups: Open Comb and Safety Bar. Open Comb's have obvious "teeth" that

help guide heavy stubble and shaving cream into channels. Safety Bars have a solid (or scalloped) bar that provides some additional protection to the skin from the blade. Generally, Open Comb razors will not be as gentle on the skin as safety bar razors (the Muhle R41 notoriously so!), though there are exceptions. Most older vintage razors will have an Open Comb.

Three Piece vs. Two Piece vs. One Piece ("Twist To Open")



DE razors are typically constructed in one of three ways. **Three piece** are the "classic" (and easiest to manufacture) type, consisting of a handle, a base plate, and a head or cap. An advantage of a three piece design is that you can sometimes "mix and match" the three pieces from different manufacturers, creating entirely new razors (you'll sometimes see this referred to as a "frankenrazor" after Frankenstein's monster). **Two piece** have the base plate permanently mounted to the handle. A **one piece** "twist to open" (TTO) razor is the type most common just before the advent of cartridge razors: the Gillette SuperSpeed is the classic TTO.

Set Gap vs. Adjustable



Generally speaking, Open Comb razors expose more of the blade to the skin, making for a more "aggressive" shave. But even razors with a Safety Bar can be aggressive: **it's all about the amount of blade exposed to the skin.** The vast majority of razors have a set gap size: the amount of the gap distance is determined by the manufacturer for a particular model of razor. However "adjustable" razors can change the gap to make them more gentle or more aggressive.

New to the market is the [Rockwell 6S](#). It's not an "adjustable" in the normal, continuously-adjustable sense, but rather it has different base plates. Each plate has a different amount of blade exposure set.

Criteria

Here are what I consider the "best" razors in several different categories. This is based on:

1. My own experience;
2. the experience of other users as read on various internet forums and blogs;
3. reputation of the manufacturer;
4. length of time on the market;
5. razor's general availability and popularity;
6. razor's over-all value (quality vs. price).

Remember the old adage, "Your Mileage May Vary!"

What Is The Best DE Razor?

- **Best Low Cost Razor:** [Maggard MR1](#) - **Honorable Mentions:** [Lord L6](#) three piece safety bar, [Dorco PL-602](#) (plastic), [Utopia Care Long Handle Safety Razor](#) (often out of stock)
- **Best "Popular" Razor (tie):** [Merkur "Heavy Classic" 34c](#) two piece safety bar, Edwin Jagger [DE89 series](#) three piece safety bar (the "LBL" version seems to be the most popular).
- **Best Open Comb Razor:** Parker open comb razors, the [24C](#) and the [26C](#) (differing only in handle design. Both shave very well and are not overly-aggressive).
- **Best Adjustable Razor:** [Parker Variant](#) two piece safety bar (this is a new razor available in limited quantities right now) - **Honorable Mentions:** [Merkur Progress](#) two piece safety bar (this is admittedly a personal favorite!); [Rockwell 6S](#) (not truly "adjustable" in the normal sense, it has different base plates you can swap out for varying levels of shave).
- **Best Razor For Those With Big (or Partially Disabled) Hands:** [Merkur 40 "Barrel Handle"](#) three piece safety bar. **Honorable mention:** [eShave Long Handle](#) three piece safety bar (an aggressive razor, not for the beginner).
- **Best Razor For Travel:** [Merkur Travel Razor](#) (**Honorable Mention:** [Parker Travel Razor A1R](#))
- **Best Vintage Razor:** Gillette SuperSpeed, circa 1955 (**Honorable Mention:** Schick Krona, circa 1965)
- **Best "Price Is No Object" Razor:** [Above The Tie 7 Piece Stainless Steel Razor System](#) (**Honorable Mention:** [Feather AS-D2 All Stainless Steel](#)).
Special Mention: the [OneBlade](#) razor. Strictly speaking this is a "single-edge" (vs "double edge") razor but [it is an amazing razor](#).

A Further Caution To The Beginner: Blades

No discussion about DE razors would be complete without mentioning

blades. Many beginners think "a blade is a blade" and while DE blades may all look similar there can actually be fairly significant differences in the way a blade is made. Metallurgy (the metal or combination of metals used to make the blade), coatings, and grinding specifications (the blade's "sharpness") can all play a part in the production process. So take the time to try a number of different blade brands to find the one(s) that work best for the razor you're using (your skin, the mineral content of the water you're using, and the shave lather you're using play parts too). Even if you are already using a DE razor you may need to do some additional blade experimentation if you buy another DE. Some shaving vendors sell "sample packs" or "[blade samplers](#)"

" to make the process easier: you get a few blades of many different types. After you decide which one(s) work best you can then buy your favorites in bulk, saving a ton of money!

Shave Technique

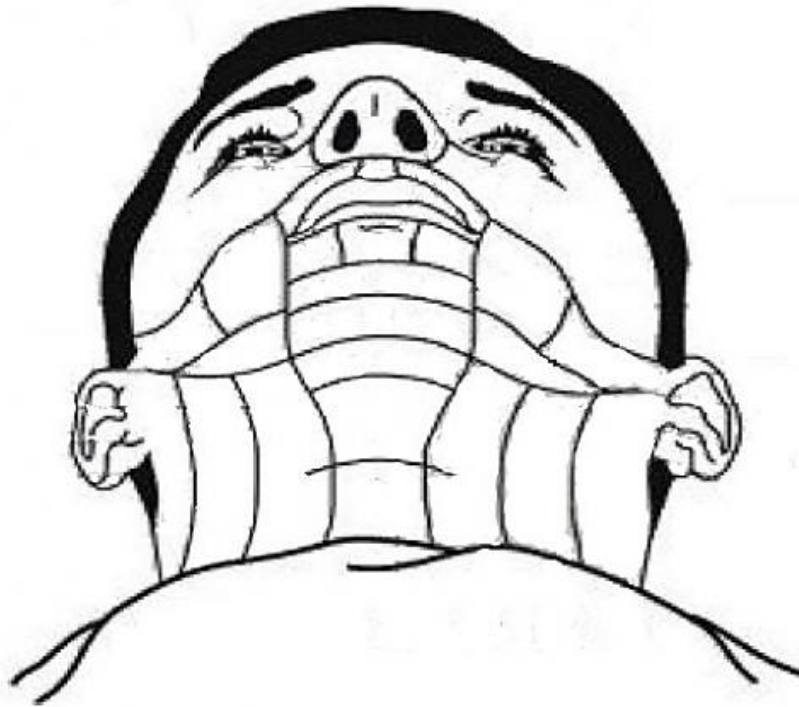
Let's assume you'll be shaving your face, though the concepts apply to shaving pretty much anywhere. Your homework was to carefully map how the grain on your skin grows and you were given a facial diagram to map with. Now it is time to put that map to work.

Essential Razor Technique #1: The Importance Of "Grain"

Knowing how the hair grows is essential to a comfortable (and hence, more enjoyable) shave because it allows you to remove more hair per stroke with less chance of irritation, providing more beard reduction more quickly. Understanding beard growth is essential when using a multi-blade razor! It is less essential when using a single blade razor but still important--more on that later.

Grain is also important to know so that if you decide to pull the skin taut to shave you can know which direction to pull. Over-stretching the skin makes the possibility of irritation or ingrown hairs much more likely.

I want you to carefully map the direction(s) the hair grows in the area you are going to shave, and review the razor you are now using and determine whether it is right for you. Assuming you are shaving your face, here is an image you can print off and use:



Let the hair grow out for a day or so then with a mirror (magnifying if possible) gently rub your fingers along the skin from different directions. The direction where the skin feels least rough is the "grain" of the stubble.

Essential Razor Technique #2: Reduction By Passes

No matter what kind of razor you use, an essential razor technique is to shave in passes, with each pass progressively removing hair more closely to the skin. Even [multi-blade razors](#) with their "lift and cut" theory (though some might say it's more like "yank and hack") follow this technique, along with the "grain."

Essential Razor Technique #3: No Pressure

Putting too much pressure on the razor creates a "valley" for the blade, not only reducing the efficiency of the blade but also making irritation more likely. Modern cartridge razors that pivot can partly compensate for too much pressure but don't rely on it. Hold the razor by the bottom of the handle, tilt your head to one side, and let the head of the razor rest on your cheek. Feel that? That's the most amount

of pressure you want to use.

Essential Razor Technique #4: Proper Blade Angle

If you are not using a razor with a replaceable blade cartridge, you will have to be concerned with the angle where the blade meets the skin. Blade cartridges set this angle for you, with some engineer (or marketer!) deciding what is best for everyone. If you are using a classic double-edge or single edge blade (including a straight razor) you must set this angle yourself.

Essential Razor Technique #5: A Sharp Blade Or Cartridge

It may seem obvious but a good, enjoyable shave needs a good, sharp blade to shave with. That means not using a blade or cartridge that is beyond it's prime.

Putting It All Together

In some ways the actual shave is almost anti-climactic, as preparation and lathering may be more important to an enjoyable shave. But part of getting an enjoyable shave is that the shave is comfortable and as close as you like, which requires a blade! Here is where you can experiment to find the intersection of close, comfortable, and enjoyable.

- Razor technique with your first pass should always be with the grain and almost leisurely in it's accomplishment. Don't worry about getting every last strand of hair or go over the same spot again and again during the same pass: your goal is to reduce the stubble, not eliminate it.

Use your ten minute schedule to try some or all of these experiments, to see what works for you:

- If you are using a single blade without a cartridge (i.e. the classic double-edge razor, a single-edge razor like the "Injector" style, or a straight razor) you might be able to "cheat" the grain a little: rest the razor head (or blade) against the cheek and slowly rock the razor downward until the blade edge just makes contact with the skin, then go just a bit more. Then lock your wrist and shave straight downward, regardless of the "grain." The angle between the blade edge and the skin should be somewhere between 30 and 45 degrees.
- Relather and repeat the first pass. This razor technique is especially useful for

those who are learning single-blade shaving.

- Reduce stubble more slowly. After the first pass relather and shave across the grain (the direction 90 degrees away from the grain). Relather and shave across the grain from the opposite direction. Relather then shave against the grain. Then on successive shaves start experimenting with the final passes (is not shaving against the grain acceptable? Do you need both across-grain passes?) and gauge its effects.
- Segment the area to be shaved into its flattest parts. Take shorter (maybe even much shorter) strokes on curved areas like the chin. Rinse the blade between segments so that you always have a "clean" blade on each part.
- Listen to the shave. Many people consider the sound of shaving to be one of its most enjoyable aspects. You may not hear much using a cartridge razor but many single blade razors produce a deep, satisfying sound and many who use a straight razor listen for a "singing" sound of the razor. In any case, with some experience you should be able to determine the sound the razor makes when it is cutting properly.

Finishing

Even multiple passes with great lather and careful razor technique may still result in small rough areas. Your first goal before going any further is to determine whether it's really hair stubble or just a rough (or loose) patch of skin. One way to find out is to simply move on to whatever you do after shaving and an hour or two later check the area. If it feels smooth it is probably because you have a loose area of skin in that area: after the skin returned to its normal muscle tone the skin smoothed out.

On the other hand, if the skin still feels rough a "finishing" razor technique might be necessary on your next shave. This might include an "oil pass," a "water pass," or using some advanced razor techniques in specific areas.

- Some advocate various blends of oils to make a very thin coating for "polishing" the rough spots. Leisureguy has an article that goes into much more detail about the oil pass, [HERE](#).
- I have seen a few people use just water for a "touch and cut" of an area. However because water is so "volatile" for shaving purposes it can easily lead to razor burn. Something a little safer to try would be a little additional shave cream applied directly to the area. Others rub a little shaving soap on the area (without lathering).

Advanced razor techniques for finishing a shave are better shown than described.

Week Four - After The Shave

Now we go into razors and shave technique! Before we tackle that however I want you to carefully map the direction(s) the hair grows in the area you are going to shave, and review the razor you are now using and determine whether it is right for you.

Aftershaves

You're finished putting blade to skin but you're not finished with the shave. Now is the time to take care of the skin.

Determine your skin type and find an aftershave appropriate for that type. How do you know what type of skin you have?

Dry skin appears rough, dull or cracked and is prone to peeling, lines and wrinkles. Be sure to use a gentle face wash and only use a facial scrub once a week. Make sure you drink plenty of water and moisturise twice daily with a good moisturiser.

Oily skin looks shiny, particularly on the T-Zone (forehead, nose and chin) and feels, well, oily to the touch. The skin appears to have large or open pores and is it prone to blackheads, whiteheads, spots and pimples, and even acne. Oily skin attracts dust and dirt so it might be useful to use a facial cleanser twice daily, a facial scrub 2 or 3 times a week and use an oil-free moisturiser.

Sensitive skin will itch, sting or break out in a rash when you use certain shaving and skincare products. You'll need to try to use products specifically made for sensitive skin.

Combination skin will have a central greasy area around the forehead, nose & chin but dry around the cheeks. It's also prone to blackheads, especially around the nose. The best way of dealing with combination skin is either to use products designed specifically for combination skin, or to simply apply the relevant products to the relevant area of your face - dry skin products for the dry areas, and oil-free products for the T-Zone.

Normal skin appears evenly-textured, smooth, clear and healthy, with barely visible pores and without blemishes or spots. To maintain clear skin use a good quality facial wash and light-weight moisturiser every day, punctuated with a facial scrub once or twice a week.

"Aftershaves"

What about after the shave? There is a surprising amount of variety in aftershave products, and many widely available aftershaves are pretty good--probably because many widely available razors and shave creams are so bad. But that wide variety of aftershave products can be confusing, especially with all the different terminology that gets spewed out without much explanation. It all kind of makes you wonder who's in charge.... So let's look at a general overview of aftershaves with some rules of thumb.

But first let's clarify "aftershave" means. because it can mean different things to different people. I'm not talking about products you might use after shaving that are mostly alcohol and some kind of scent component, almost like a cologne. I am talking about the products that are applied immediately after shaving to provide some combination of irritation relief, skin moisturizing, and protection from the elements. Select an aftershave based how that combination addresses the needs of your skin.

Aftershaves can be divided into two broad categories, balms and splashes. Balms are heavier-feeling on the skin and typically provide more irritation relief and more moisturization to the skin, particularly in cold or dry climates. Splashes are more watery feeling and generally contain a combination of toners, astringents, and hydrosols to cleanse and provide a degree of antiseptic or antibacterial protection to the skin. They're more popular with those with oily skin or in hot, humid climates. Both balms and splashes often use some kind of humectant to increase the effectiveness of other ingredients. There are also some other "cross-over" ingredients that might be used in a balm or a splash. By the way, I'm often asked whether a moisturizer is the same as an aftershave balm. No, an aftershave balm contains additional ingredients.

Humectants are ingredients used to increase the skin penetration and activity time of another ingredient. They're also used to minimize the dehydrating effect of some other active ingredient. Examples of humectants include [glycerol](#), [propylene glycol](#), [sorbitol](#), [lactic acid](#) or [urea](#).

Moisturizers are ingredients specially designed to make the external layers of the skin softer and more pliable by increasing the skin's water content. It does that not by putting water into the skin, but by reducing evaporation. A moisturizer is not a single ingredient but a combination of ingredients like oils and humectants working together

Toners and astringents are designed to cleanse the [skin](#) and shrink the appearance of [pores](#). Astringents are the strongest form of toner, containing a high proportion

of alcohol, 20-60%. Mild astringent solutions are used in the relief of minor skin irritations like superficial cuts, rash from allergies, [insect](#) bites, or fungal infections like [athlete's foot](#). They can also help heal scars. They are commonly recommended for oily skin as they are drying, but keep in mind that the removal of oil from the skin can lead to excess oil production as the skin tries to compensate and prevent moisture loss. Topically applied astringents cause mild coagulation of skin [proteins](#) and will dry, harden, and protect the [skin](#). Astringents are best applied only to problem areas of skin to prevent excessive drying.

Some common ingredients include [alum](#), [oatmeal](#), [acacia](#), [yarrow](#), [witch hazel](#), [distilled vinegar](#), and [alcohol](#). Astringent preparations include [silver nitrate](#), [potassium permanganate](#), [zinc oxide](#), [zinc sulfate](#).

Hydrosols are the product of [essential oils](#) usually obtained by [steam distillation](#) from aromatic plants. Hydrosols go by other names including floral water, herbal distillates, hydrolate, herbal water and essential water. Hydrosols are produced in the same manner as essential oils but essential oils will float to the top of the distillate where they are removed, leaving behind the watery distillate. In the past, hydrosols were considered a byproduct of distillation, but now they're considered an important co-product. The science of distillation is based on the fact that different substances vaporize at different temperatures.

Hydrosols contain diluted essential oils. Because hydrosols are produced at high temperatures and are somewhat acidic, they tend to inhibit bacterial growth but they're not sterile. Hydrosols can also help the skin get back a normal pH by being more acidic, where shaving soaps and creams may be more alkaline. The traditional hydrosols most associated with shaving are rose and lavender. Rose distillates are known to be mildly antibacterial, while lavender distillates are mildly antiseptic. By the way, it's a good idea to keep hydrosols refrigerated, like milk. They'll last longer, and they can feel nice in the heat of the summer.

[“Good” vs. “Bad” Ingredients](#)

Ingredients to look for: aloe vera, chamomile, tea tree oil, calendula, witch hazel, lavender, jojoba oil, grapefruit seed extract, rose oil distillate, and various vitamins

Ingredients to avoid: high concentrations of alcohol, camphor, or eucalyptus; grapefruit (if you're going to be outdoors a lot), and lemon oil (if you have sensitive skin).

Your goal is to find an aftershave product that is appropriate for your skin and has a scent you enjoy.

After The Shave

After you have shaved you should rinse the area well to remove any lather residue that may have been left behind. Rinse with warm water first. Some people will soak a cotton pad with Witch Hazel and wipe the area clean as an additional measure. Then rinse with cool water.

Want to "ramp up" the enjoyment of your after-the-shave routine? Try this: wet a hand towel with water, ring out the excess, and place it in your freezer. After you have shaved and rinsed grab the towel, sprinkle on a few drops of your favorite cologne, and place it on the freshly-shaved area. This has the effect of helping to constrict your pores, disinfect the area (from the alcohol in the cologne), and it smells great!

Oops!

Even the best, most careful shaver can occasionally get a nick or cut. Here are some strategies to deal with it.

Spot Treatments

The classic way to treat a shaving nick or cut is with a styptic pencil. A styptic stops bleeding by contracting skin tissue to seal injured blood vessels. A classic styptic (like this one from [Clubman](#) is made of aluminum sulfate. Aluminum sulfate is not an aluminum metal but rather a naturally occurring mineral. You wet it then rub it against the nick or cut. Yes, it usually stings. It's typically a solid though some products like [this one](#) add additional ingredients like aloe vera to make a liquid which is then applied using a roller ball. And here is set of single-use styptics in the shape of a matchbook.

Another common spot nick treatment ingredient is aluminum chloride or one of its cousins like aluminum chlorohydrate. It is again used with additional ingredients to make a more skin friendly, convenient product. [Pacific Shaving's Nick Stick](#) is also is applied with a roller ball.

A few other "in a pinch" ideas for spot treatment of nicks or cuts when nothing else is available include a bit of petroleum jelly or even lip balm. Aluminum chlorohydrate is used in commercial antiperspirants so rubbing your finger on an antiperspirant stick, then onto the nick, could help.

Full Face Treatments

What about solutions that are used on the entire face? These aren't meant specifically as a nick or cut treatment but are useful for them anyway. The classic face treatment for after shaving is using an alum block, like [this one](#). Alum block is made up of potassium alum, another naturally occurring mineral. It was primarily used for its antiseptic properties back in the day, but it is a mild astringent too so it's useful for those little shaving weepers. You wet the block and rub it all over your moist face. If you have not nicked yourself you may experience a cold tingle. As it goes over a nick you may get a bit of a sting though. Allow the face to dry briefly then rinse off with cool water--you don't want to keep the mineral on your face due to it's salty properties)by the way, Alum Blocks can also be used as an antiperspirant. And vice-versa, some of the crystalline deodorant blocks you see at the supermarket might be useful for the face. Just be sure the main ingredient is labeled as either potassium alum or potash alum).

Applying Aftershave Products

After you have addressed any "oops" issues it is time to apply your aftershave product. Aftershave products (particularly balms) are best applied onto wet skin with wet hands. It does not have to be "dripping wet" but applying this way will ensure even coverage with the appropriate amount of product. Using more than one product? Apply the product with the thinnest consistency first followed by the thicker product.

Aftershaves - What's The Best?

There is a surprising amount of variety in aftershave products, and many widely available aftershaves are actually pretty good (probably because many widely available razors and shaving creams are so bad). Let's take a look at the different types of aftershaves and see which rise above the rest.

What Are Some Good Aftershaves?

There are actually a lot of pretty good aftershaves out there. Here are some suggestions for specific circumstances. My criteria for selecting these products include:

1. Superior performance (based on my own experience and what I have researched on review sites and forums).
2. Available in a variety of scents (you won't use even the best product if you don't care for it's smell) or no scent at all.
3. Availability (from more than just a single artisan website).
4. Time on the market, and price.

Low Cost Balm: [Nivea For Men Post Shave Balm - Sensitive](#). This product is widely available and recommended as an excellent value ("best bang for the buck") for performance. [Additional Information](#).

Worth Looking For: [Pacific Shaving Company "Caffeine" Aftershave Balm](#). It's becoming more widely available and conditions the skin exceptionally well.

Honorable Mention: [Dove Men+Care Post Shave Balm](#). Available in "Hydrate" and "Sensitive" scents. [Additional Information](#).

Multiple Scent Balm: [The Art of Shaving After-Shave Balm](#). Available in [Sandalwood](#), [Lavender](#), [Lemon](#), and [Unscented](#). The Art of Shaving sometimes

takes some heat from the shaving "Illuminati" but their aftershave balms are actually pretty well thought-of. They have a lot of "good" ingredients and not so many "bad" ingredients, and works well for calming irritated skin.

Single Scent But Great Performing Balm: [Baxter of California After Shave Balm](#). Consistently highly-rated and respected.

Single Scent Splash: [Lucky Tiger Aftershave And Face Tonic](#). Sharpologist has discussed Lucky Tiger [before](#), and this splash works very well as both a cleanser to pick up any lather residue after the shave and as a moisturizer.

Milk: [DR Harris Aftershave Milk](#). Generally "below the radar" and perhaps not quite as good as it was before a reformulation a few years ago, DR Harris' Aftershave Milk still has a devoted following.

Gel: St. James Of London Aftershave Gel. Available in [Black Pepper & Lime](#), and [Sandalwood & Bergamont](#) scents. Honorable Mention: [The Art Of Shaving Aftershave Gel](#).

Want To Know More?

This ebook has layed a great foundation for an enjoyable shave. Be sure to visit Sharpologist to get tons more information on proper shaving and grooming.

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