



Shaving 101

HOW TO SHAVE PROPERLY

- 1 Throw out that foamy crap. Avoid anything with alcohol, menthol or benzocaine. "These agents close your pores, stiffen the beard and dull your blade," says barber Rick Ricci, owner of tony barbershop Truefitt & Hill in Toronto. Ricci recommends a glycerin- or oil-based shaving cream.
- 2 Shave right after showering, while your pores are open. And ease up on the cream. "You can't see what you're doing with a lot of cream," cautions Ricci.
- 3 Don't wield your blade like a drunken samurai. Take your time, and shave with the grain. Pesky neck whiskers? Ricci's professional secret: "Pinch and pull and stretch the skin."
- 4 After shaving, splash on cold water to close your pores and apply a moisturizer or after-shave. Ricci's barbers use a balm made of lanolin and aloe vera. If you're prone to ingrown hairs, try something alcohol-based.

SMOOTH OPERATORS

Gillette M3Power, \$21.99 (\$14.99 for a pack of four blade refills)

The Mach 3 on steroids—well, batteries. The first shave was smooth, even if we kept accidentally switching off the power. But the second shave produced several small nicks, and the feeling of massaged bliss had gone. The Micro-Power pulsing action, designed to raise the hair from your skin, mostly generates noise. **Five o'clock shadow:** Hardly a shade when you're on your first blade...

Bottom line: ...but get ready to spend to stay sharp.

Philips Sensotec HQ8894, \$369.95

This top-shelf electric did the job with breakneck speed but left the face red. Philips says it can take up to three weeks for your skin to get adjusted, and things did improve. (The Personal Comfort Control dial, which offers "sensitive" and "normal" skin settings, was no help.) Still, this fella has trouble on the jaw line and neck, and you'll never get a blade-close shave.

Five o'clock shadow: Uneven and the bushiest of the bunch.

Bottom line: The best quick cleanup, but barely passes the nuzzle test.



Schick Quattro, \$11.99 (\$15.49 for a pack of four blade refills)

The world's first four-blade razor gave a snug shave with minimal skin damage. Did the extra cutter make a noticeable difference? Just enough to convert us from the Mach 3. But, as with the M3Power, be prepared to pay the price for planned obsolescence—the Quattro's disposable blades die after three uses. **Five o'clock shadow:** Less than those triple-bladed punks.

Bottom line: Best combination of value, ease-of-use and results.

Dovo Ebony Handled Straight Razor, \$110 (U.S.), www.menessentials.com

Unsheathing this high-carbon steel beauty was sheer male joy. Learning to use it demanded nerves and pure patience. The manual recommends starting with your cheeks before working up to the dreaded Adam's apple, but even on safe turf, this old-school blade felt dangerous.

Five o'clock shadow: More practice required (gulp).

Bottom line: We're leaving it in the bathroom cabinet to show off.



STUBBLE TROUBLE

The Art of Shaving Pre-Shave Oil (60 ml)

\$32, [Holt Renfrew](http://HoltRenfrew.com) or www.theartofshaving.com
Clove and black pepper warm your skin and open your pores

Kiehl's "Close-Shavers"

Squadron Ultimate Brushless Shave Cream—Green Eagle (150 ml) \$20, Kiehl's, 1-800-KIEHLS-2
Peppermint oil acts as a cooling, menthol-alternative antiseptic

Aveda After-Shave Balm (100 ml) \$20.50, Aveda, 1-866-823-1425
Camomile, aloe, bergamot and lavender won't make you reek like you just stepped out of a distillery

