

Assess Your Hair Type Before Cutting or Styling

In our hurried lifestyles, often times we don't get to our stylist for that needed haircut. It's those mornings you struggle with your "bad hair day" while getting ready for work that you vow you either have to get to the salon soon or you're going to whack it off yourself! Sound familiar?

Though I'm not going to go into step by step haircutting instructions here, I will tell you that it is possible to trim your hair yourself. Well, not "whack it off" per se. But you can do a little snip here and there to get you by for another week or so until you see your barber or cosmetologist. However, before you say, 'that sounds simple enough,' or 'I'll just cut off this piece here that seems too long or sticking off,' there are things that really need going over. I cannot guide everyone with the same specific advice, as there are so many different hair types and growth flaws out there, yet these are just basics.

Growth flaws? Yes. In the business, a few of them are known as whorls or cowlicks, the latter being something you perhaps recognize. These must be addressed first. Some of you may be saying that you aren't sure if you have either of them. Simply ask yourself, if you have short hair now or ever have had it short, did you have an area that would not lay down right, stick up or out? Whorls generally occur in the crown area of your head or anywhere along the hairline; in particular - the neck and forehead area. If your hair is cut too short in either of these spots, you are going to have to invest in lots of gel or pomade to make your misbehaved locks tame down! You never want a stylist to cut that area too close and you certainly don't want to do that to yourself.

Whorls are recognized by growth patterns normally found in the crown area. Ever been in an elevator, on the subway, or standing in line and found yourself behind someone who had such short hair you could see the way their hair was growing in a whirlwind, tornado swirl? That's a whorl. It's hair that grows out in every direction in a swirly pattern. Some crowns have a part where hair grows up toward the front hairline, and on the other side of the part it grows down towards the neck as it should. They are like cowlicks, yet can curve off creating a whorl of not so perfect proportions. There are varying degrees of hair eccentricities that decide to grow in a different direction than the rest of the area around it and anyone can have one or several. Such are places you do not want a haircut flawed or short, lest you will be fighting with your hairstyle day in, day out until it grows out.

I once had a customer who had nothing but cowlicks all along his front hairline. We had to keep his hair as long as possible to combat it as he wasn't the type to go in the opposite direction and keep a military cut. No wonder so many guys keep long dos or shave their heads bald!

Now about those different hair types. This gets really involved and I will do my best to condense it. It is crucial to address this when considering even the simplest of tasks as trimming your bangs. Since I cannot assess your hair type or even ask you questions about it, I at least need to skim these different circumstances.

Hair that is curly needs to be cut gingerly. When you pull it completely straight to work with it, you cannot cut much off at all as it will spring back up more than you think it will. Those of you with tight corkscrews probably have already had your hair cut way too short before. So take heed those of you who just had a perm and are new to the curl world.

Coarse and/or super-straight hair should probably be left to the professionals. This hair shows no mercy and be forewarned; any mistake at all will be very noticeable. This type needs a trained hand/eye, patience, very sharp scissors and is definitely easier to be done by someone other than yourself anyhow. In other words, it needs precision!

Wavy hair can be dealt with all right unless we are talking really wavy, then treat it like curly hair. Never take but a little section at a time; very little when it's curly or really wavy, pulling it taut from the scalp as you would do any haircut. You can always go back and take a little more, just make sure you do the entire area before you make this decision. I recommend that you dry your hair, styling it somewhat to better decide. That little bit off may be all you needed.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of making yourself at least a little familiar with hair and the consequences one can experience if they get too brave with their haircut. With that said, I hope you have a better idea of what you are attempting to do.

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About the Author

Read more about hairstyles at <http://www.hairstyleswatch.com/>, which keeps up with the latest in hair fashion, and shares tips on how to achieve certain hairstyles.