



A clean shave has become desirable in many social situations, workplaces and even clubhouses. (New York Yankees, anyone?) And if you're shaving frequently, it's important to have a good routine. Robert Stuart, veteran groomer and stylist at Salons by JC, shares some expert tips on getting a flawless shave and—perhaps more importantly—how to clean up if your razor gets away from you.

“If you feel like the razor is pulling against your stroke, it's because the blade is dull,” says Stuart. “Generally speaking, you should replace your blade after four to five shaves.”

1. Know your razor's lifespan. Make sure to shave with a clean, sharp blade. When a blade gets dull, it won't move as smoothly across your face, which can cause you to apply more pressure, resulting in cuts, irritation and razor burn! “If you feel like the razor is pulling against your stroke, it's because the dull blade is dragging against your hair and cutting it in weird, jagged directions,” explains Stuart. “Generally speaking, you should replace your blade after four to five shaves.”

2. Stop the bleeding. Seeing red? The best way to clot the cut is with a styptic pencil, which you can get at any drugstore. The stick is anti-hemorrhagic, meaning it closes blood vessels. “If you don't have one on hand, put some of your deodorant on a Q-tip and hold it on the wound,” says Stuart. “Deodorant also contains aluminum chloride, which clots cuts.” Not so keen about sharing a product between face and armpit? Stuart recommends dabbing a little lip balm on the cut as an alternative sealant.

3. Rinse thoroughly. Finish up your shave and rinse your entire face with cold water, being careful not to reopen your cut. “Cold water will close your pores, which helps prevent dirt from getting in,” says Stuart. (That means fewer pimples... and more ladies!) Pat—don’t rub—your face dry and apply a drop of antibiotic lotion or aloe onto the cut to prevent infection and scarring.

4. Apply lotion. Moisturizing after a shave is the key to keeping your skin fresh, clean and hydrated. “Read the label on the bottle and make sure you pick a face lotion that doesn’t contain any alcohol,” says Stuart. “Anything with alcohol will dry out your skin.” Coat your entire face thoroughly with the moisturizer, and gently rub it in. Your final move of the morning? Replace that razor, stat!