

## Teaching Your Son to Shave: Tips for Single Moms

From the clinical grooming experts at Amenity, LLC. [www.getamenity.com](http://www.getamenity.com), 888-357-7550



When a boy enters manhood, it is a parent's responsibility to teach him how to shave properly. If this responsibility is left to a single mom, this father/son rite-of-passage can seem daunting and awkward.

Teaching your son to shave is a sit-down that a young man needs as he enters adolescence, much like the "birds and the bees" and "say 'no' to drugs" talks you've certainly had by now. When it's left to you – the single mother – you may find you need some help explaining the tricks of the trade, like shaving in the shower, splashing your face with cold water and using soothing moisturizer. Just as a single father might need tips to teach his daughter how to apply makeup or how to cope with menstruation, you may find you need to know the basics of proper male grooming.

This "how to" guide is meant to provide single moms just that – so that your sons can learn the right way, from the beginning.

### **Visible peach fuzz? It's time to buy him a razor!**

If you see it, he sees it too! Peach fuzz can be an embarrassing pre-adolescent look. At a time when kids are hyper-sensitive about puberty, it's easy for young men to know who is shaving and who has armpit hair. The peach fuzz must go if your son is going to maintain his self dignity.

### **Five blades? Battery operated? Which one is right for him?**

Stock a variety of razors and let your son choose, over time, which he prefers. Selecting the right razor at this early stage is impossible. If he has thick, coarse beard hair, he probably needs a five-blade, battery-operated razor to give him the closest shave possible. If he has a light beard with thin hair, use a three-blade, non-battery razor.

### **What's the deal with electric razors?**

Thirty percent of America men use electric razors. For the most part, men choose electric razors because their Dads use them, because they have an exceptionally thick beard (think five o'clock shadow at noon) and they need to shave multiple times a day, or because their dermatologist has

recommended it to them as a solution for ingrown hairs on the neck. If you feel so inclined, throw an electric razor into the mix; just don't waste your money. Buy a \$30 unit with three circular blades at your local drugstore.

**Shave cream, shave gel, shave oil, etc. Just don't buy him foam!**

This is possibly the most important decision you need to make. The ideal shave lubricant will work to keep your son's skin moisturized and clear while helping to prevent razor burn, redness and ingrown hair. In the old days, prior to shave gel or cream, men applied a pre-shave oil to increase beard lubrication to avoid the painful burning sensation of a razor running against the face. Today, a quality shave cream has enough lubrication so you don't need this extra step.

Shave foam offers little lubrication and dries out the skin. Check out [www.detailsformen.com](http://www.detailsformen.com), [www.groominglounge.com](http://www.groominglounge.com), or [www.skinstore.com](http://www.skinstore.com) for a selection of fine quality products.

**Give him all of the information once (and take yourself out of the picture)**

Let's face it – he's not looking forward to having this conversation with his mom. This is guy stuff, so think of your role as the “cool mom who gives him the goods and quickly explains the basics.” Your son will have questions, so give him a note card with the websites above so he can see what's out there for him. These sites also have education sections to answer common questions. If you want to be the coolest mom on the block, give him a gift card for \$100 to one of these sites so he can order his own products. You can encourage him to buy an aftershave face moisturizer and a face cleanser on his own (shaving properly, moisturizing daily, and cleansing daily are the three steps dermatologists most commonly recommend for teenage men). It's best to purchase these products from the same company because the high-quality, dermatologist-developed product lines have products that are meant to work together. He's a teenage guy, and a razor, a shave lubricant, and a few key tips may be about as much as he can absorb at one seating.

**The moment of reckoning has come ...**

Each of the 13 single moms that contributed their experience and advice to this guide said that as much as they were uncomfortable about having the conversation, their sons were even more so. Their advice? Keep it casual, fact-based, and short and sweet.

Katie, a mother from Tulsa, Okla., had what she described to be a “bonding mother and son experience.” Katie gave her son three bags: (1) razors (2) shave lubricants (3) a one-page print-out of tips and the gift certificate. “I couldn’t have been more direct. I told my son that boys start shaving around his age and that these bags contained everything he needed to get started. I told him to look through everything on his own time and he did.”

Many men look back at this time in their lives and recall being hungry for information. Many will tell you they would have read every package and every piece of material if their moms or dads had taken this approach with them. Katie’s instructional sheet included the following information:

#### **Use Warm/Hot Water**

Hot water is the foundation to a good, effortless shave. Shaving after a hot shower is best because of the hot water and steam opens the pores and ensures a closer, cleaner shave.

#### **Protect Your Mug: Foam vs. Cream**

A good shave is impossible without a rich and protective shave cream. Choose a product that is thick and lubricating to soften hair and protect the skin from the sharp razor.

#### **Keep it Sharp, Use it Right**

Use a high-quality, sharp razor. DO NOT apply pressure - shave gently (to avoid taking off too many layers of skin and causing redness). Rinse razor frequently with hot water.

#### **Shave with the Grain**

Shave in the direction the beard hair grows (aka “shave with the grain”). If you don’t know which way your hair grows, run your hands across your beard in different directions - if it’s coarse, you are moving your hands against the grain.

#### **Follow-up with an Aftershave Moisturizer**

Splash your face with cold water and pat dry. Apply a good post-shave moisturizer (should contain ingredients to cool and calm the skin and to reduce shaving rash). Dermatologists agree that a clear complexion is best achieved by washing your face twice daily, moisturizing your face twice daily, and shaving properly.

### **Conclusion**

If all this seems like overkill, you can always buy the products and give them to your son. The following week, take him to a local barber shop and treat him to a straight-edge, hot lather shave by a professional. By that time, he will have a good familiarity about what all this shaving talk is about. Call ahead and request a barber that has kids and who can explain what he's doing as he's doing it. We recommend moms do not watch, as the straight-edge blade can be scary. But it is the ultimate accessory for the manliness grooming ritual around. After all, you're the coolest mom that got it for him.

The Company's award-winning *Clinical Grooming* products were introduced in October 2006.

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