

Parallel Layers (Male)

Step by step guide



Parallel layers: Step 1

To achieve the right haircut for your client, it is very important to look carefully at their features - the shape of their face; hair-growth patterns; quantity and quality of hair. You should check all these as part of your client consultation.

Face shape

The shape of your client's face and head are unique. Each face shape suits different types of hair cut.

Oval, round and heart-shaped faces have curved contours ranging from gentle to extreme. A softer hairstyle is more compatible with these face shapes.

Square, rectangle and triangle face shapes are angular and solid and have a chiseled look. Sharp, blunt cuts suit these faces much better than soft styles.

(For more on identifying and working with different face shapes, see the lesson on client and hair analysis.)

Hair-growth patterns

You need to take your client's hair growth pattern into consideration when you are cutting their hair because some patterns influence how a cut is carried out. The most common ones are:

- Double crown
- Nape whorls

- Calf licks
- Widow's peak

If you encounter any of these growth patterns, you should cut without using pressure to allow for the natural movement of the hair.

You may need to cut the sections of hair within the growth patterns longer than the rest of the hair. This will allow for the movement of the hair as it springs back to how it falls naturally. The hair looks level even though it has not been cut level.

Some growth patterns can affect a style so much that it would not look right. You need to be aware of these and explain to your client why the cut won't work.

Quantity and quality of hair

You should note the density of your client's hair - how much hair is on their head and how thick or fine the hair shape is. These factors are important when you are thinking about the balance and control of a haircut.

There are three types of hair texture:

- Fine
- Medium/normal
- Thick/coarse

The texture of your client's hair affects the size of the sections you take. For thicker hair, you need finer sections to make sure the guideline is visible. You need to see the guideline to know exactly where you should cut each section of hair.

Texture also influences your choice of style. Some styles that work well on thick hair do not look the same on fine hair and vice versa.



Parallel layers: Step 2

As part of your client consultation, and before you start your haircut, it is also important to check your client's hairlines. You should do this when the hair is dry and again when the hair is wet after shampooing.

Not everyone has a perfect hairline so make sure you check for uneven growth and awkward, moving shapes.

There are four areas to look at:

- Front
- Sides
- Nape
- Crown



Step By Step 3: Hairlines, Side

Sides



Step By Step 4: Hairlines, Nape

Nape



Step By Step 5: The Crown

Crown



Step By Step 6: Profile Line

Take a profile line from the front hairline to the back of the crown. This should be taken from either side of the central parting and should be about the width of your finger.

Make sure that this section is central. This will be the guideline you use for the rest of your haircut.

Your profile line determines the length of your cut. More importantly, it also determines the balance.



Step By Step 7: Layering Parallel

Take your guideline from the fringe length. Hold the hair up at a 90 degree angle to the head at all times.

Our stylist is using parallel layering.

Tip:

The length of your client's previous haircut will determine the finished look you are able to achieve.



Step By Step 8: Layering

Cutting against your profile line and holding the hair at a 90 degree angle to the head, work backwards towards the crown.

When you are layering hair it is best to stand on the opposite side to the side you are cutting. This gives you more control and allows you to see your guideline more clearly.

Tip:

The client's head should be in an upright position at all times. And remember to keep the hair wet throughout your cut.



Step By Step 9: Top Box Section

Split the top area into three box sections.

Your first box is the top box section. Take a horizontal guideline from the centre of the top box section.

Blend in your guideline, starting at the back of the crown. Hold the hair up at a 90 degree angle from the head and work in horizontal lines across the head.



Step By Step 10: Top Box Section

Work from the crown area towards the front hairline.

As you progress towards the front hairline, pull back the final front section to meet your previous section. This will maintain length at the front.

It is very important to work cleanly. If your guidelines are clear, you can follow them more easily and you will create cleaner cutting lines.



Step By Step 11: Box Section 2 and 3

To create your second and third boxes you divide the hair into two further sections.

First, split the top box area in half. This will give you your guideline for box 2.

When you have cut box 2, divide that section in half down towards the ear. This will give you your guideline for the side hairlines.

To create parallel layers, always hold the hair at a 90 degree angle away from the head.

Tip:

Creating three box sections at the front area gives you more control and allows you to see your guideline at all stages of your haircut.



Step By Step 12: Box Section 2

Using the guideline you created in the top box, blend the hair into your second box.

Keep the hair at 90 degrees from the head and make sure you are following your guideline.



Step By Step 13: Box Section 3

Using your guideline from box 2, blend the hair into box 3. Pull the hair parallel and work downwards towards the ear section. Remember:

- keep the hair wet at all times;
- follow your guideline;
- make clean, even sections; and
- ensure the client's head is in an upright position.



Step By Step 14: Box Section

As you start to blend boxes 2 and 3 together, work forwards towards your hairline.

Remember to pull back the hair at the front hairline to maintain length.



Step By Step 15: Box Section: Other Side

Repeat the same procedure on the other side of the head. Remember to:

- split the top box area in half to create box 2
- split box 2 in half to create box 3
- work forward from the crown to the front hairline
- pull back the hair at the front to maintain length



Step By Step 16: Cross Check Front Area

When you have created a style within your haircut, you need to check across both sides to make sure your cut is balanced and even.

- If you cut the hair horizontally, you must cross-check vertically.
- If you cut the hair vertically, you must cross-check horizontally.

Our stylist is checking the hair horizontally because this section has been cut vertically.

You want to take off the barest minimum of hair when you are cross-checking. If you find you are taking off a lot of hair, you did not cut the hair at the correct angle.



Step By Step 17: Blend in Crown Area

Take a semi-circular section from the front of the crown to the bottom of the crown.

This section will allow you to blend in the top section with the back area.

Dividing your haircut into sections will help you follow your guidelines and keep a check on the shape of your haircut.



Step By Step 18: Crown Area

Take your guideline from the profile line you created at the top of the crown.

Blend into the crown, working out from the centre of your section to the back of the crown.

Hold the hair at 90 degrees to the head and make parallel cuts.

Tip:

Check the crown area at the consultation stage. Some clients will have double crowns. If you cut double crowns short, the hair will stick up. (You can compensate for this by leaving more length at the crown).



Step By Step 19: Crown Area

Angle your section out from the centre of the crown towards the back of your section.

Keep the hair wet at all time and work with clean lines.



Step By Step 20: Crown Area

Repeat the same procedure on the other side of the head, paying particular attention to:

- your guidelines;
- your sectioning pattern;
- the balance of the cut;
- your standing position; and
- keeping the hair wet.



Step By Step 21: Cross-Check Crown Area

As you create a haircut, you should be checking all the time to make sure your cut is balanced and even.

- If you cut the hair horizontally, you must cross-check vertically.
- If you cut the hair vertically, you must cross-check horizontally.

You want to take off the barest minimum of hair when you are cross-checking. If you find you are taking off a lot of hair, you did not cut the hair at the correct angle in the first place.



Step By Step 22: Blend Down into the Nape

Take a profile line down the centre of the head from the bottom of the crown to the nape hairline.

Your profile can be taken either side of your centre point. It should be one finger wide.

Tip:

Your profile line must be central. It is there to help you achieve a balance between both sides of your haircut.



Step By Step 23: Back Area

Work outwards from the profile line at the bottom of the crown towards the back of the ear.

Hold the hair parallel to the head and blend in the hair from the back area, cutting it to the same length as your profile line.

Step By Step 24: Back Area



Our stylist is working down towards the nape area, holding the hair parallel to the headshape.

Pivot your sections down towards the nape area.

As you work down, the client's head should be in a slightly downward position. This will make it much easier for you to create your angle.

Tip:

When you are layering, always stand on the opposite side to the one you are cutting. You will have more control and be able to see your guideline more clearly.



Step By Step 25: Back of Ear

Our stylist started at the centre point and is working outwards towards the back of the ear.

As you do this, the fan-like sections you are creating will become more apparent.

Repeat the same procedure on the other side.



Step By Step 26: Cross Check Back Area

As you cut the second side, check to make sure your cut is balanced and even.

You should be checking the balance of your haircut regularly as you work. And remember:

- if you cut the hair horizontally, you must cross-check vertically; but
- if you cut the hair vertically, you must cross-check horizontally.



Step By Step 27: Finishing, Nape Area

Now that you have completed the perimeter, you can personalise your haircut.

With this style, you could blunt cut or point cut into the hair at the nape, side and front areas. Point cutting will eliminate excess length and give you a soft-looking result.

Tip:

No one can teach you how to personalise your haircuts. This is when you will use your own creativity and ideas.



Step By Step 28: Finishing, Side Area

Now that you have completed the perimeter, you can personalise your haircut.

With this style, you could blunt cut or point cut into the hair at the nape, side and front areas. Point cutting will eliminate excess length and give you a soft-looking result.



Step By Step 29: Finishing, Front Area

Now that you have completed the perimeter, you can personalise your haircut.

With this style, you could blunt cut or point cut into the hair at the nape, side and front areas. Point cutting will eliminate excess length and give you a soft-looking result.



Step By Step 30: Finished!

As you can see from our finished result, we have created an even weight distribution, thereby enabling the hair to move across the head, creating different finish results.



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