

Cutting Hair.

The Perimeter line

The perimeter line determines the overall length and shape of the chosen hairstyle.

The perimeter line can in general be

- a. longer than the natural hairline.
- b. on the natural hairline.
- c. inside the natural hairline
- d. a combination of these.

Even so, the perimeter line is the **line beyond which no hair must fall.**

A perimeter line may in general be cut in two different ways.

- a. Blunt. ('One length')
- b. Graduated. (Hair appears shorter step by step)

The Internal Shape.

- Layering, or its absence, gives the style its 'look' or 'feel'.
- The principles of layering are symmetry i.e. the finished cut must not be lop-sided.
- Directionality, i.e. the direction in which the hair is pulled determines the distribution of the weight. For instance, if weight is required on the fringe but less weight on the crown then the hair should be drawn back towards the crown as it is cut, and vice versa.

Although the amount of hair cut is the stylist's judgement, achieved through client consultation, the distribution of weight should be progressive and any transitions achieved smoothly without sudden steps or snatches. This is the principle of **connection**. Sections of hair that do not follow a smooth transition are said to be **disconnected**.

Incidentally, layering may of course be asymmetric, but the principle of smooth transition should still hold true.

Smooth transition may of course not be desired, but even so it should be deliberately accomplished by the competent stylist, and in no way accidental.

Fig 1. Longer than the Natural hairline.

1. In fig.1 the perimeter line is cut longer than the natural hairline.
2. The actual length of the style is agreed between the client and the stylist, it could in fact be very long or very short but the hair will hang below the natural hairline.
3. It may either be cut blunt as in a bob style or graduated as in a wedge style to reduce the overall weight internally. (Layering will also have an effect on the end result in terms of weight).

Cutting the hair blunt below the hairline may result in the traditional 'bob' style, as in any bob the perimeter line may get longer or shorter towards the back, and the line may be graduated for a softer effect. 'Bobs' may of course be layered, but not so 'heavily' that they compromise a strong perimeter line.

In figure 1. However, the perimeter shape is longer at the back than the sides, the actual shape and length determined through consultation with the client, they may for instance want their ears covered, either partially or completely, whilst the length at the back is again personal preference.

The Internal Shape

The internal shape is determined by the amount and direction of any subsequent layering.

In figure 1, the hair is layered through the top in a straight line parallel to an imaginary line drawn through the eyes to the occipital bone. Since the skull curves from the top down to the front hairline, and from the top down to the occipital bone, the length of the hair will increase towards these two points. Allowing a longer fringe, and a build up of weight towards the crown, so that the hair will not 'stick up'.

Each section is pulled toward the centre parting, so weight will build up towards the perimeter, this weight can again be trimmed, depending on personal preference in order to achieve the desired style. But as long as care is taken to comb the hair to the same central line then the cut will be symmetrical, with an even distribution on both sides.

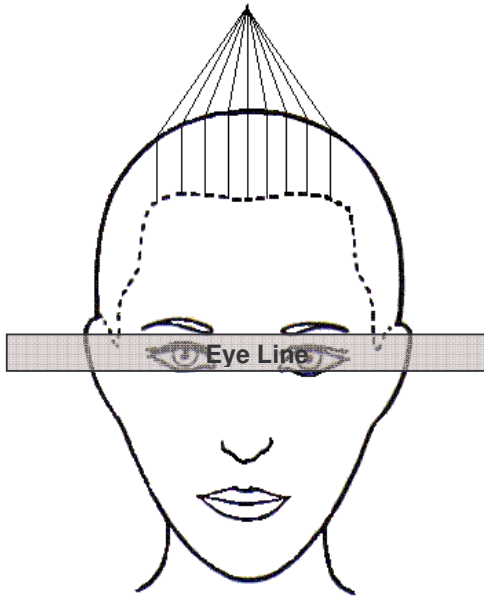
The actual length of the layering can be determined from the length of the fringe, which can be used as a guideline, if a guideline is taken from hair at the very front of the hairline, then the layering will be short, and the fringe will be light and soft. If a guideline is taken from hair further back from the front hairline the layering will be correspondingly longer and the fringe will be heavier.

In figure 1 the back has also been layered, sections are taken towards the center and cut in a line parallel with an imaginary line drawn straight down the spinal column, once again, since the skull curves away toward the crown and away toward the hairline, more weight will be distributed in these areas. These 'corners' can of course be trimmed later when 'personalising' the style.

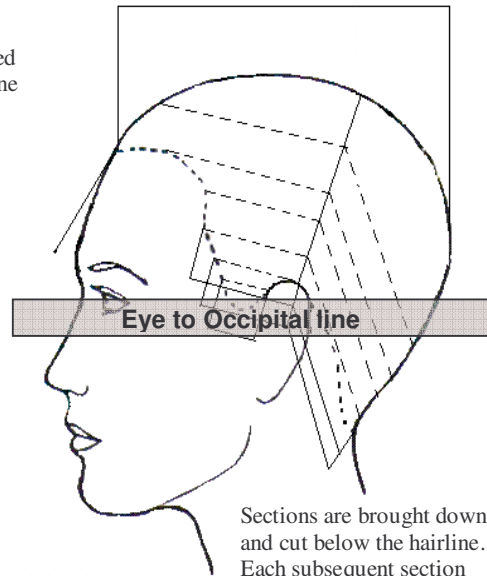
Figure 1. Hairstyle with the perimeter below the natural hairline.

All sections brought to centre parting. Building up weight towards the corners.

Top section cut parallel to a line drawn between eyes and occipital bone, curve of skull gives weight to fringe and crown.

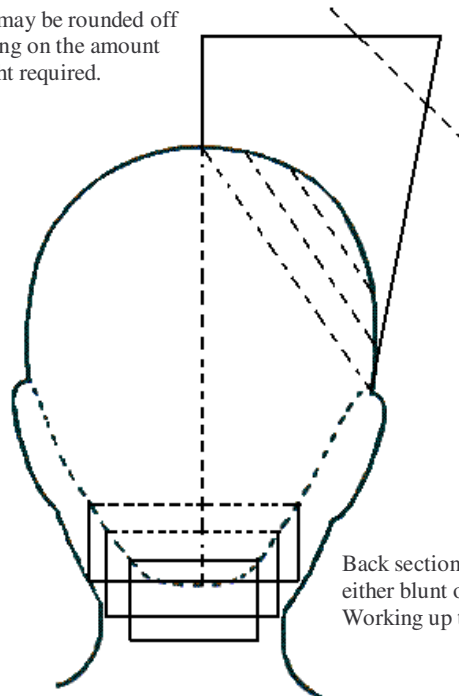


Fringe used as guideline for top section.



Sections are brought down and cut below the hairline. Each subsequent section may be lifted in order to "graduate" the perimeter. The angle of lift determining the amount of graduation.

Corner may be rounded off depending on the amount of weight required.



Back sections cut in straight line, either blunt or graduated. Working up towards the crown

Fig.2 On the natural hairline.

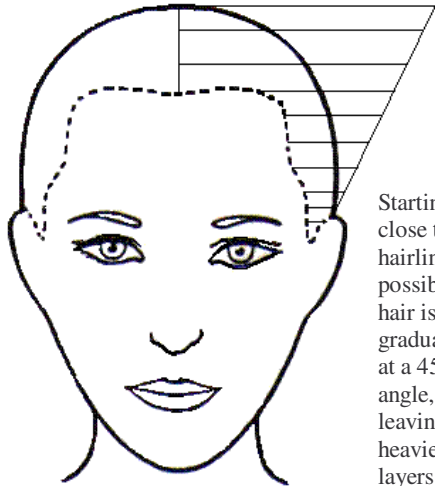
In fig.2 the natural hairline is used as the perimeter for the chosen hairstyle, again it could be blunt cut on the actual hairline or graduated from the hairline to produce a softer effect, once again layering will have an effect on the eventual distribution of weight, as will the angle of graduation. But the overall length is determined by the natural hairline.

The Internal Shape

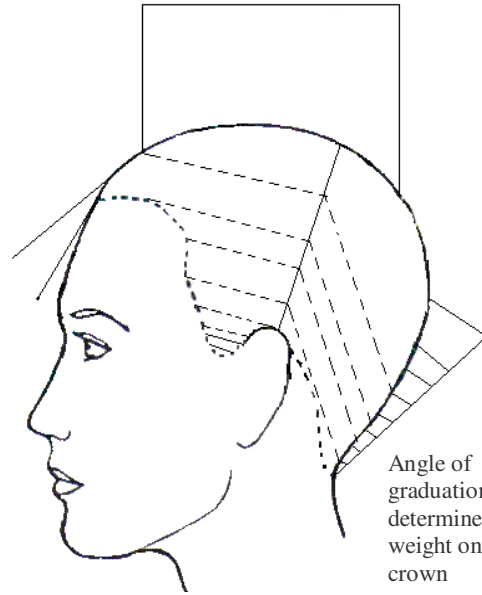
In figure 2 the hair has been slightly layered using the fringe as a guideline, to give a traditional 'short back and sides', using the same layering techniques as in figure 1. It is of course not always necessary to layer this style, if the perimeter shape has been strongly graduated then it can be left in a wedge like style, or if the perimeter has been cut more bluntly the it will give a more sixties 'Beat' style. Once again small changes in length will give a dramatically different look and feel.

Figure 2. Hairstyle using the natural hairline as the perimeter shape

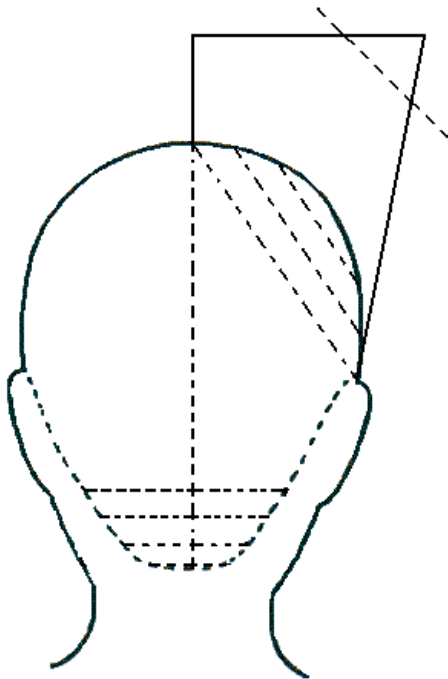
Guideline taken further back from hairline which will give a heavier fringe and heavier layering



Starting as close to the hairline as possible, hair is graduated at a 45° angle, leaving heavier layers on top.



Angle of graduation determines weight on crown



Sections are taken as in Figure 1, except the guideline starts at the natural hairline. Clippers or scissors over comb may then be used to take the hairline shorter, or to make it 'invisible'.

Fig.3 Inside the Natural Hairline

In Fig.3 the perimeter line is cut inside the natural hairline, any hair between the natural hairline and the chosen perimeter length is shaved off, either completely or at a pre-determined clipper length. This technique is used in 'undercuts', 'steps', 'mohawks' etc. Again the perimeter line may be cut blunt or graduated, with layering having an effect on the overall result.

The perimeter line may of course be dramatically graduated using different lengths of slides on the clippers. This will give a traditional short back and sides or 'Ivy league' look.

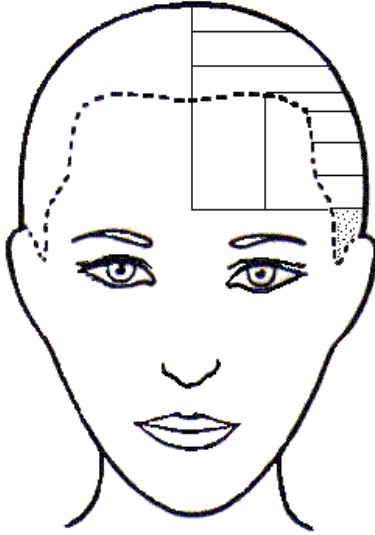
The Internal Shape

In figure 3 the perimeter shape has been cut blunt, giving a 'step' or 'bowl' cut, therefore no layering was required. It is of course possible to layer this style slightly in order to reduce the weight but care must be taken so as not to compromise the strong perimeter line.

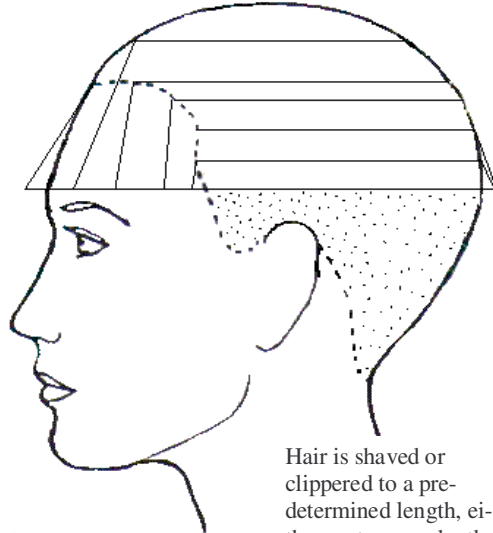
If a 'mohawk' or 'mohican' style is required. Then obviously the perimeter line will be shaved much closer to the center parting. The hair that is left may be layered depending on the required style, it may be clipped perhaps to a number 4, in the case of a mohawk, or left long and 'chipped' into if a 'mohican' is required. Either way the principles and techniques of layering in figures 1 and 2 can still be used.

Figure 3 Hairstyle with the perimeter shape inside the natural hairline

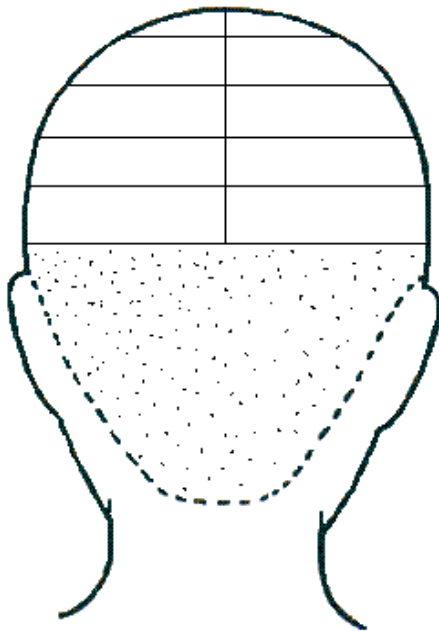
Top section is all one length, although weight may be reduced with layering or graduation.



Top section has been blunt cut above the hairline in a bowl shape. Cut using the traditional 'Bob' technique.



Hair is shaved or clipped to a pre-determined length, either up to or under the top section, creating an 'undercut' or 'step'.



Hair from hairline to 'step' may be graduated or shaved off completely depending on clients wishes. It may also be 'undercut'.

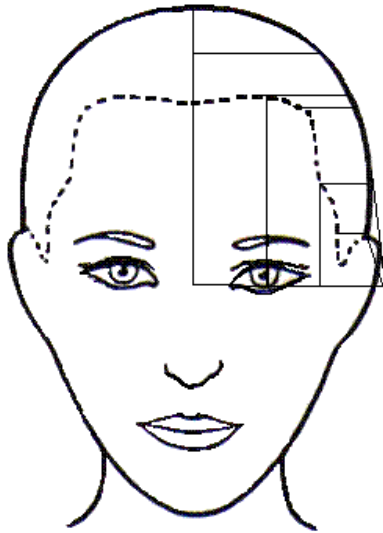
Fig.4 A combination of Perimeter lines.

In fig.4 the hair has been cut above the natural hairline at the back, whilst left longer than the natural hairline at the sides and front. Once again the perimeter line, whether above, on, or below the natural hairline may be graduated or blunt, depending on the required 'look'. Once again, layering will have an effect on the finished look.

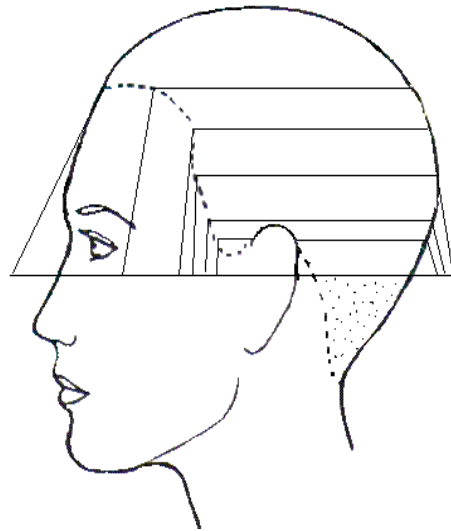
The Internal shape.

All the principles and techniques for layering given in the preceding examples may be applied here. Once again the most important factor is client consultation and personal preference.

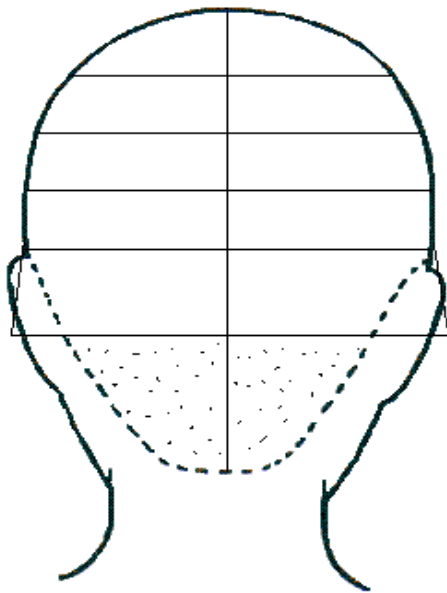
Figure 4. Hairstyle with a combination of perimeter lines



Actual length of the bowl or 'step' is dependent on client consultation and may well be shoulder length so that it could be tied back in a 'pony tail'



Hair up to perimeter line may be graduated or shaved completely. It may also 'undercut' the perimeter line, even as far as the temple if the top section has sufficient weight to cover the 'undercut'.



The Flat Top

Although the flat top is perhaps the most difficult style to achieve and perfect, the principles and techniques used to achieve it, are exactly the same as outlined in the previous examples. It only differs in terms of extremity.

The perimeter line

If a line is drawn around the widest part of the head, then everything below this line may safely be clipped off to a number 2, down to nothing at the hairline. So this widest part of the head effectively forms the perimeter line.

The internal shape

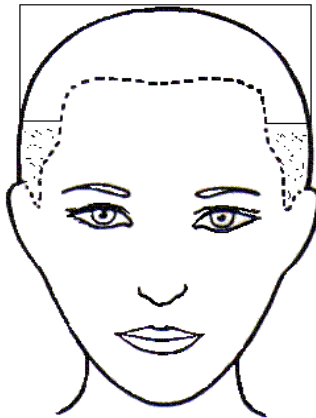
The hair above this line is then layered vertically (i.e. parallel with a line running down the spine). The top is then layered as in previous examples, using the top of the skull, which is cut to a number 2, as a guideline. Once again this leaves weight at the sides, which effectively forms the 'corners' of the flat top, and weight on the fringe area and the crown are. This can then be trimmed to 'personalise' the haircut. Obviously the hair can be of varying lengths on the top, and though the cut may be varied significantly the techniques in achieving the various looks are the same.

Once again client consultation is the key to success.

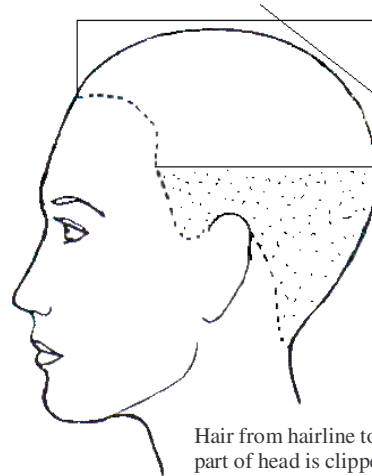
The Flat Top.

Flat topper placed parallel to line drawn between eyes and occipital bone. Pivoting on the top of the skull.

Flat topper must be held parallel to line drawn along the spine when doing the sides

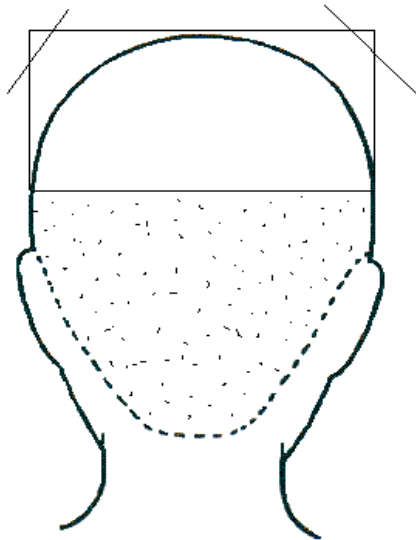


Flat topper may be angled up at the front to give weight towards the fringe, creating a more 'rockabilly' style



Corner on crown may be reduced depending on finish required.

Hair from hairline to widest part of head is clipped down to at least No. 2 and may be No.1 or shaved completely



Corners may be reduced to give a softer look and if hair is worn down will give a more 'roman' or 'Ivy league' style