Basic principles of haircutting

Anatomy of the skull

*Head form:* The shape of the head or skull.

*Reference points:* The points on the head that mark where the surface of the head changes or the behavior of the hair changes. These points are used to establish design lines that are proportionate.

- **Parietal ridge:** the widest area of the head, starting at the temples and ending at the bottom of the crown.
- **Occipital bone:** the bone that protrudes at the base of the skull.
- **Apex:** the highest point on the top of the head
- **Four corners:** corners of the top of the head

**Area of the head**

- **Top:** area above parietal ridge in the front of the head
- **Front:** area in front of the line connecting the apex to the back of the ear
- **Sides:** all hair from the back of the ear forward and below the parietal ridge
- **Crown:** area between the apex and the back of the parietal ridge
- **Nape:** the back part of the neck and consists of the hair below the occipital bone
- **Back:** area behind the line from the apex to the back of the ear, above occipital bone
- **Fringe:** is the triangular section that begins at the apex and ends at the front corners

**Lines:**

- **Straight:** horizontal lines build weight, vertical lines remove weight and diagonal lines create stacking and to blend short layers to long layers
- **Curved**

**Angles:** used in elevation and cutting line

*Elevation:* the angle or degree at which a subsection of the hair is held, or elevated, from the head when cutting

*Section:* the hair is parted into uniform working areas for control

*Subsections:* each section is further divided into smaller parts

*Cutting line:* the angle at which the fingers are held when cutting and ultimately the line that is cut

**Guideline:** (a guide) is a section of hair that determines the length the hair will be cut. Two basic guide lines are stationary and traveling

- **Stationary guideline** is a guideline that does not move. All other sections are combed to the stationary guideline and cut at the same angle and length. (blunt haircut)
- **Traveling guideline** is a movable guideline. It moves as the haircut progress (layered haircut)

*Overdirection:* is a unique action that can best be understood by comparing it to elevation

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