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Best Hair Removal Options

From Wax To Laser, This Is How To Pick The Best Hair Removal Option For You



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Body and **facial hair** can be dead sexy or deeply unsightly. And trying to remove said hair without the right technique can also be a downright health and style disaster. That's why we've put together a list of recommendations from industry professionals on how to safely, easily and effectively (though not always cheaply) **get rid of back hair**, remove errant facial hairs, thickets of unruly pubes or wildlife-certified patches of body plumage. So whether you're Sasquatch's spitting image, a serious swimmer or just want a light eyebrow tweeze to add a little civility to your brow bush, this one's for you.

The Usual Suspects: Waxing, Shaving and Tweezing

Laser hair removal is a big deal nowadays, but your run-of-the-mill treatments are still useful, and — most importantly — cost-effective.

Waxing

Esthetician Gina Hernandez of the **G20 Spa + Salon** in Boston, MA, believes that **hair removal** is just as important as any other grooming regimen and an essential part of monthly male maintenance. The downside of shaving is red bumps, irritation, ingrown hair and razor cuts. Waxing, on the other hand, is quite practical: Hair takes longer to grow back; skin becomes smoother and more exfoliated, and there's less irritation and a better overall appearance of the skin. Because of the fact that sweating traps moisture (which causes bad odor when combined with body hair), she recommends waxing to men who exercise often or tend to sweat easily.

Summer Vasilas, co-founder of **Waxing The City**, is — of course — a strong proponent of waxing. "Waxing achieves a longer period of smoothness than shaving because the root of the hair is completely removed, [and it takes] longer for the hair and follicle to grow back. The hair follicle weakens with each wax, resulting in thinner and finer hair regrowth. Eventually, less and less hair grows back and the duration of time between [appointments] increases."

For The Eyebrow Grooming Crowd

Los Angeles-based esthetician Claudia Connelly points out that just as men appreciate when their lady looks put together, women like the same for their men. "An easy way to do this is to **shape your eyebrows**, since they frame your face", she says. "The most important thing is to look natural, so the shape is much straighter as opposed to having an arch and trying to dramatically open the eye area." Claudia recommends tweezing or a combination of tweezing and waxing, as well as the use of small grooming scissors for trimming. As you may suspect, this is a service you'll want to leave to the professionals.

Shaving Your Gents

Shaving you downstairs domain is an art. Just go for American realism, not Dali-esque surrealism, understand?

Janet H. Prystowsky, New York City-based dermatologist and president of the Dermatologic Surgery clinic, recommends using a single-blade disposable razor for **manscaping**. "General guidelines are to shave in the direction that your hair grows in, stretch your skin smooth, and use a shaving cream and an aftershave lotion. If you don't mind trimming, go for an electric razor. Cream depilatories are not a good option; you could get chemically burned or otherwise hurt yourself. While you may opt for laser hair removal, keep in mind that this area will be particularly sensitive and should only be done with an experienced laser physician. If your hair is white or very, very blonde, however, the laser approach will not work. You will need to shave or wax. If you choose to wax, keep it away from your penis and scrotum."

Sugaring

More ancient than delicious.

Berenice S. Rothenberg employs the use of a method called sugaring at her **New York City treatment center**. Sugaring paste removes hair while exfoliating the dead skin cells, protecting against dry itchiness, eczema and psoriasis, leaving the skin intact. Best of all? It's a tried-and-true trick that dates from the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece.

Lasers And Other Newfangled Treatments

Now we'll get to what you've been waiting for: A technologically advanced upgrade of your analog hair removal devices.

Mark Rose, owner of the UK-based **Renude Clinic**, says to go for a little something called IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) hair removal, which beams concentrated light into hair follicles, targeting the light-absorbing pigment. He says IPL laser hair removal is "one of the most common cosmetic procedures in the U.S."

Dr. Michael Ingber, M.D., of the MedSpa NJ clinic in New Jersey, uses the Nd:YAG laser technology — which destroys the hair follicle beneath the skin. Sounds painful, but Dr. Ingber says: "Most men describe the feeling of hair removal as a sunburn-type discomfort that lasts only a few seconds." His clients who have tried different methods consider the process to be much less painful than electrolysis or waxing. Each session is performed around six weeks apart. Typically, by the fourth to sixth session, hair removal can be complete.

Dr. Julius Few, M.D., founder of **The Few Institute** in Chicago and New York City, recommends the Vectus Laser — a technology said to perform fast, even and permanent hair reduction for all skin and hair types, which uses treatment tips with cooling contacts to protect the skin and ensure comfort. "Vectus is less painful than traditional options and cuts treatment time in half [to as little as five minutes]. Perfect for impatient guys."

Elizabeth Martir, a medical esthetician at **Trifecta 57 Med Spa and Wellness** in New York City, cautions against at-home laser hair removal treatments: "There are at-home **laser hair removal** treatments on the market. However, they are not as strong as the professional lasers and don't offer a permanent solution." She recommends the Lumenis LightSheer INFINITY, "which has a suction technology to minimize discomfort, can be used on any skin type, and delivers results."

Cosmetic surgeon **Dr. Chasin** offers treatments with the newly FDA-approved Clear + brilliant pelo laser system. This newish tech delivers a relatively comfortable, rapid treatment over a large treatment area. "In comparison to other laser hair removal technology on the market, pelo lasers are more effective, covering a larger surface area in a shorter amount of time and offering faster results with fewer visits. Men can experience up to 15 percent hair reduction per treatment."

Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D., is all about the Lumenis LightSheer DESIRE laser, which uses "rapid pulses from the laser to eliminate existing hair followed by heat that penetrates the skin and sends direct energy into the hair follicles — preventing future growth." He says the chest, neck, shoulders and back tend to be the biggest problem areas. With this treatment, hair is removed in under ten minutes without any pain or gels. The downside? A five-treatment package for back and shoulders or chest and shoulders can cost around \$3,000. Sometimes the best costs the most, no?

Tom LaVecchia, chief marketing officer of the **Lucy Peters International** hair removal clinic, is excited about the company's treatment process: Lucy Peters utilizes the badass sounding Soprano ICE laser. Designed to be safe for all skin types and pigmentations, the laser boasts a relatively quick, comfortable treatment for **permanent hair removal**. "The male aesthetic has changed, and although beards are in, men prefer to be bare underneath," he says.

Further Thoughts And Tips

*Ponder before choosing your preferred technique to deal with your **hairy chest**.*

Dermatologist Dr. **Tsippora Shainhouse**, M.D., is ok with shaving and waxing but also advises to consider the longer-term effects of laser hair removal. She cautions that lasers "cannot treat blonde, white, gray or red hair, because there is no pigment to target."

Dr. John Hamel, M.D., founder of the North Carolina-based **Complete Laser Clinic**, makes a case for laser hair removal, which "has come a long way in the last ten years".

"It used to be rather painful due to the high energy [output], but new technologies (such as rapid pulsing and low-energy lasers) have made laser treatments much easier to bear — and affordable too," he says. "It delivers a more permanent aesthetic outcome, reduces hassle, saves time, increases hygiene and reduces body odor from sweat and debris that easily becomes trapped in hair-saturated areas."

For those on a budget and/or not seduced by the allure of laser treatments, esthetician Debbie DePace of the Massachusetts **Pyara Spa and Salon** has a few tips when it comes to **waxing**:

-Keep skin hydrated before and after waxing to soothe skin and reduce **ingrown hairs**.

-Don't exfoliate for several days after waxing, it causes irritation and discomfort.

-After that, exfoliate the skin at least two to three times a week to help remove dead skin cells and prevent ingrown hairs.

-Stay out of the sun and avoid the pool or ocean for 24 hours before and after waxing.

So what's the best option for hair removal? The one that hurts (and costs) the least, lasts the longest and brings you the most satisfaction. Each professional seems to have his or her favorite, and ultimately you should choose an experienced professional that can have your trust. Though it seems lasers are the future of hair removal, techniques as old as sugaring still have their place. Purist or not, you've got options. You've already heard plenty about the efficiency of laser treatment, so we'll just leave you with some **extra reading** on their safety and potential side effects.

*Have a **grooming question**? Get it answered by AskMen's **guyQ**.*