

The Unexpected \$30,000 Benefit of the Pandemic: Haircuts

During the early pandemic, a topic came up I never thought I would need to worry about. Who would cut my hair? My Asian hair is a bit funky where it is similar to Wolverine in X-men. After a couple weeks the sides get really pointy and uncomfortable so I would go to the barber probably every 3-4 weeks.

Since all the barber shops were closed for a couple months I managed to get really cheap scissors and a Wahl peanut corded clipper, both which were incredibly hard to come by at the time. On Youtube, I must have watched this video at least 10 times for some guidance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKbzbQQEyIY>

The video describes how to cut your own hair and was probably one of the most methodical ones out there.

Coming from an engineering background, I like to plan and design as much as possible before doing an implementation. So based off the video I created a diagram on what to do.



In my whole life I never really had a need to cut my own hair as there was always a barber around somewhere. My barber at the time also was incredibly kind as we facetimes for her to give me some tips. There are obvious, but important things she taught me as when the clipper is going over your hair, if you don't hear anything, nothing is being cut. It seems like common sense, but if you never have cut your own hair, these are important little tips.

When thinking about what I drew versus my plan, I totally deviated from my plan, (the whole numbering system, and up down didn't work), and the result wasn't bad, but definitely not great. In May 2020 as I walked around I noticed most men's haircuts were rather uneven probably from everyone cutting their own hair or asking someone inexperienced to do it.

I was pretty overjoyed when I could go to my barber in June 2020. However after that I continued to cut my hair in between a professional cut so I would now only go a couple times a year.

Gradually, and after watching many many more Youtube videos I slowly got better and then started going to my barber less. After every haircut, I took some notes on what needed to be improved (mostly fading) and I also upgraded my equipment which made it easier to cut my hair

1. I bought a ridiculous looking [umbrella haircut cape](#). I know I look like a dog in a cone of shame, but it was helpful to catch most of the hair

2. From Sallys, I bought Wahl Magic Cordless Clippers this was a huge upgrade from my Wahl Peanut as it was bigger and cordless. I read reviews on Amazon, and for some reason a lot of people would get refurbished packages so I didn't buy it from them.
3. From Aliexpress I bought Titan VG10 hair scissors and trimming scissors. I went down this rabbit hole of hair scissors, where I learned the existence of \$1,000 scissors.

2020-2024 cost savings calculation

In 2020 I went to my barber 4 times, then in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 I went to my barber 8 more times.

Below is the cost savings for the past 4 years

- $52 \text{ weeks} / 3.5 = 14.8 \text{ visits}$ (I would get haircuts about ever 3.5 weeks)
- $14.8 \text{ visits} * \$50 \text{ haircut} = \$740 / \text{savings year}$

$\$740 * 4 \text{ years} = \$2,960 - \$600 \text{ (haircuts I paid for)} - \$300 \text{ (cost of the clippers and scissors)} = \$2,060 \text{ savings for the past 4 years}$

Projected savings the next 41 years

Let's say I cut my own hair for the next 41 years it would come out to a savings of

- $\$740 * 41 = \$30,340$

This experience taught me to evaluate in life what should I do for myself versus what should I pay for? Anything you choose to do for yourself does have some upfront investment, but can potentially have long term financial savings down the line.

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