

3-2. Hair and fingernail standards and grooming policies

Note: This paragraph is punitive with regard to Soldiers. Violation by Soldiers may result in adverse administrative action and/or charges under the provisions of the UCMJ.

a. Hair.

(1) General. The requirement for hair grooming standards is necessary to maintain uniformity within a military population. Many hairstyles are acceptable, as long as they are neat and conservative. It is the responsibility of leaders at all levels to exercise good judgment when enforcing Army policy. All Soldiers will comply with hair, fingernail, and grooming policies while in any military uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty.

(a) Leaders will judge the appropriateness of a particular hairstyle by the appearance of headgear when worn. Hairstyles (including bulk and length of hair) that do not allow Soldiers to wear the headgear properly, or that interfere with the proper wear of the protective mask or other protective equipment, are prohibited. Headgear will fit snugly and comfortably, without bulging or distortion from the intended shape of the headgear and without excessive gaps.

(b) Extreme, eccentric, or faddish haircuts or hairstyles are not authorized. If Soldiers use dyes, tints, or bleaches, they must choose a natural hair color. Colors that detract from a professional military appearance are prohibited. Therefore, Soldiers must avoid using colors that result in an extreme appearance. Applied hair colors that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, purple, blue, pink, green, orange, bright (fire-engine) red, and fluorescent or neon colors. It is the responsibility of leaders to use good judgment in determining if applied colors are acceptable, based upon the overall effect on a Soldier's appearance.

(c) Soldiers who have a texture of hair that does not part naturally may cut a part into the hair. The part will be one straight line, not slanted or curved, and will fall in the area where the Soldier would normally part the hair. Soldiers will not cut designs into their hair or scalp.

(2) Male haircuts. The hair on top of the head must be neatly groomed. The length and bulk of the hair may not be excessive or present a ragged, unkempt, or extreme appearance. The hair must present a tapered appearance. A tapered appearance is one where the outline of the Soldier's hair conforms to the shape of the head (see scalp line in figure 3-1), curving inward to the natural termination point at the base of the neck. When the hair is combed, it will not fall over the ears or eyebrows, or touch the collar, except for the closely cut hair at the back of the neck. The block-cut fullness in the back is permitted to a moderate degree, as long as the tapered look is maintained. Males are not authorized to wear braids, cornrows, or dreadlocks (unkempt, twisted, matted, individual parts of hair) while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty. Haircuts with a single, untapered patch of hair on the top of the head (not consistent with natural hair loss) are considered eccentric and are not authorized. Examples include, but are not limited to, when the head is shaved around a strip of hair down the center of the head (mohawk), around a u-shaped hair area (horseshoe), or around a patch of hair on the front top of the head (tear drop). Hair that is completely shaved or trimmed closely to the scalp is authorized. (See figs 3-1 and 3-2.)

(a) Sideburns. Sideburns are hair grown in front of the ear and below the point where the top portion of the ear attaches to the head. Sideburns will not extend below the bottom of the opening of the ear (see line A of fig 3-1). Sideburns will not be styled to taper, flair, or come to a point. The length of an individual hair of the sideburn will not exceed 1/8 inch when fully extended.

(b) Facial hair. Males will keep their face clean-shaven when in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty. Mustaches are permitted. If worn, males will keep mustaches neatly trimmed, tapered, and tidy. Mustaches will not present a chopped off or bushy appearance, and no portion of the mustache will cover the upper lip line, extend sideways beyond a vertical line drawn upward from the corners of the mouth (see lines C and D of Figure 3-1), or extend above a parallel line at the lowest portion of the nose (see line B of Figure 3-1). Handlebar mustaches, goatees, and beards are not authorized. If appropriate medical authority allows beard growth, the maximum length authorized for medical treatment must be specific. For example, "The length of the beard cannot exceed 1/4 inch" (see Training Bulletin Medical (TB Med) 287). Soldiers will keep the growth trimmed to the level specified by the appropriate medical authority, but are not authorized to shape the hair growth (examples include, but are not limited to goatees, "Fu Manchu," or handlebar mustaches).

(c) Wigs and hairpieces. Males are prohibited from wearing wigs or hairpieces while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty, except to cover natural baldness or physical disfigurement caused by accident or

medical procedure. When worn, wigs or hairpieces will conform to the standard haircut criteria, as stated within this regulation.

(3) Female haircuts and hairstyles. The illustrations provided in figure 3–3 are intended only to clarify language regarding authorized hair lengths and bulks. The requirements for hair regulations are to maintain uniformity within a military population for female Soldiers while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty, unless otherwise specified. Female hairstyles may not be eccentric or faddish and will present a conservative, professional appearance. For the purpose of these regulations, female hairstyles are organized into three basic categories: short length, medium length, and long length hair.

(a) Short length. Short hair is defined as hair length that extends no more than 1 inch from the scalp (excluding bangs). Hair may be no shorter than 1/4 inch from the scalp (unless due to medical condition or injury), but may be evenly tapered to the scalp within 2 inches of the hair line edges. Bangs, if worn, may not fall below the eyebrows, may not interfere with the wear of all headgear, must lie neatly against the head, and not be visible underneath the front of the headgear. The width of the bangs may extend to the hairline at the temple.

(b) Medium length. Medium hair is defined as hair length that does not extend beyond the lower edge of the collar (in all uniforms), and extends more than 1 inch from the scalp. Medium hair may fall naturally in uniform, and is not required to be secured. When worn loose, graduated hair styles are acceptable, but the length, as measured from the end of the total hair length to the base of the collar, may not exceed 1 inch difference in length, from the front to the back. Layered hairstyles are also authorized, so long as each hair's length, as measured from the scalp to the hair's end, is generally the same length giving a tapered appearance. The regulations for the wear of bangs detailed in paragraph (a), above, apply. No portion of the bulk of the hair, as measured from the scalp, will exceed 2 inches.

(c) Long length. Long hair is defined as hair length that extends beyond the lower edge of the collar. Long hair will be neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned, except that bangs may be worn. The regulations for the wear of bangs detailed in paragraph (a), apply. No portion of the bulk of the hair, as measured from the scalp, will exceed 2 inches (except a bun, which may extend a maximum of 3 inches from the scalp) and be no wider than the width of the head.

(d) Additional hairstyle guidelines. Faddish and exaggerated styles, to include shaved portions of the scalp other than the neckline, designs cut in the hair, unsecured ponytails (except during physical training), and unbalanced or lopsided hairstyles are prohibited. Hair will be styled so as not to interfere with the proper wear of all uniform headgear. All headgear will fit snugly and comfortably around the largest part of the head without bulging or distortion from the intended shape of the headgear and without excessive gaps. When headgear is worn, hair should not protrude at distinct angles from under the edges. Hairstyles that do not allow the headgear to be worn in this manner are prohibited. Examples of hairstyles considered to be faddish or exaggerated and thus not authorized for wear while in uniform, or in civilian clothes on duty, include, but are not limited to, locks and twists (not including French rolls/twists or corn rows); hair sculpting (eccentric directional flow, twists, texture, or spiking); buns or braids with loose hair extending at the end; multiple braids not braided in a straight line; hair styles with severe angles; and loose unsecured hair (not to include bangs) when medium and long hair are worn up.

(e) Devices. Hair holding devices are authorized only for the purpose of securing the hair. Soldiers will not place hair holding devices in the hair for decorative purposes. All hair holding devices must be plain and of a color as close to the Soldier's hair as is possible or clear. Authorized devices include, but are not limited to, small plain scrunchies (elastic hair bands covered with material), barrettes, combs, pins, clips, rubber bands, and hair/head bands. Such devices should conform to the natural shape of the head. Devices that are conspicuous, excessive, or decorative are prohibited. Some examples of prohibited devices include, but are not limited to: large, lacy scrunchies; beads, bows, or claw or alligator clips; clips, pins, or barrettes with butterflies, flowers, sparkles, gems, or scalloped edges; and bows made from hairpieces. Soldiers may not wear hairnets unless they are required for health or safety reasons, or in the performance of duties (such as those in a dining facility). No other type of hair covering is authorized in lieu of the hairnet. The commander will provide the hairnet to the Soldier at no cost to the Soldier.

(f) Braids. Medium and long hair may be braided. Multiple braiding (defined as more than two braids) is authorized. When worn, multiple braids will be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (approximately 1/4

inch), show no more than 1/8 of an inch of scalp between the braids and must be tightly interwoven to present a neat, professional, well groomed appearance. Foreign material (for example, beads and decorative items) will not be braided into the hair. Braids must continue to the end of the hair in one direction, in a straight line, and can be worn loose per medium hair length guidelines or secured to the head in the same manner as described for medium or long length hair styles. Ends will be secured only with inconspicuous rubber bands. If multiple braids are worn, they must encompass the whole head. When braids are not worn loosely and braided close to the scalp, the braids must start at the front of the head.

(g) Twists. Twists are defined as twisting two distinct strands of hair around one another to create a twisted ropelike appearance. Although some twists may be temporary, and can be easily untwisted, they are unauthorized (except for French twists). This includes twists formed against the scalp or worn in a free-hanging style.

(h) Dreadlocks. Dreadlocks are defined as any matted, twisted, or locked coils or ropes of hair (or extensions). Any style of dreadlock (against the scalp or free-hanging) is not authorized. Braids or cornrows that are unkempt or matted are considered dreadlocks and are not authorized.

(i) Cornrows:. Cornrows are defined as hair rolled (not twisted using two strands) or braided closely to the scalp producing a continuous, raised row of hair. When worn, cornrows must be of uniform dimension, small in diameter (approximately 1/4 inch), show no more than 1/8 inch of scalp between the cornrows and must be tightly rolled or braided to present a neat, professional, well-groomed appearance. Cornrows must start at the front of the head and continue in one direction in a straight line and end at a consistent location of the head. Only one cornrow style (braided or rolled) may be worn at one time.

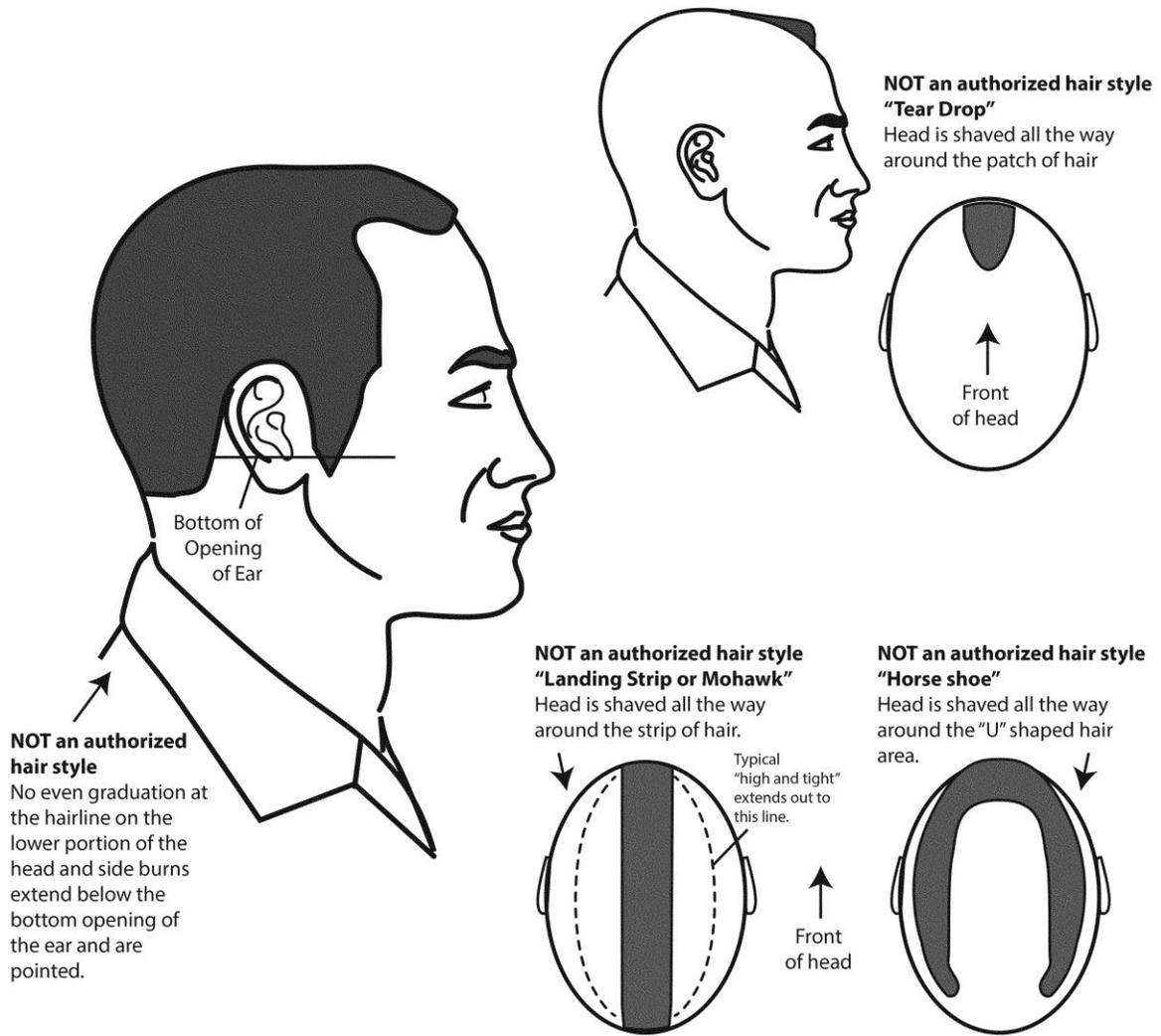
(j) Hair extensions. Hair extensions are authorized. Extensions must have the same general appearance as the individual's natural hair and otherwise conform to this regulation.

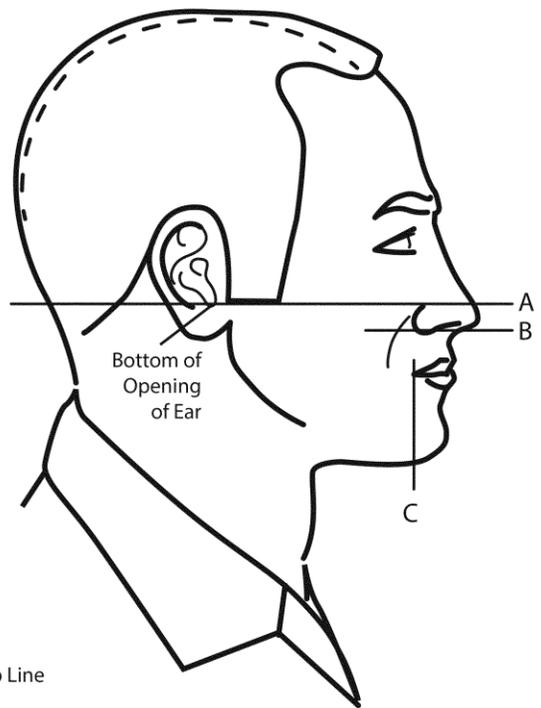
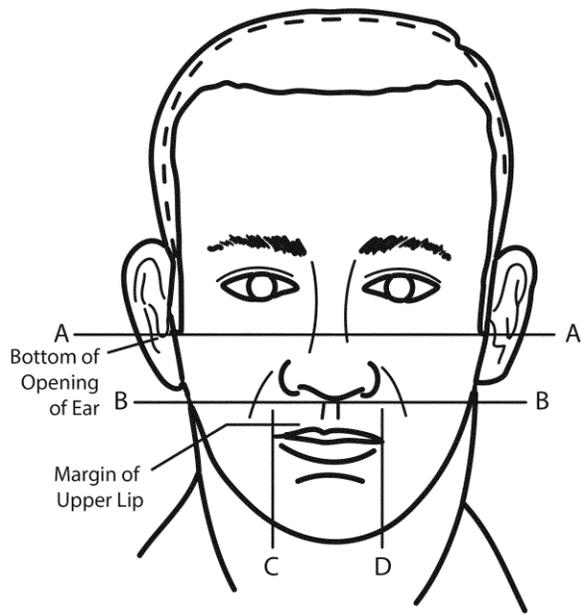
(k) Wigs. Wigs, if worn in uniform, must look natural and conform to this regulation.

(l) Physical training. Long length hair, as defined in paragraph 3-2a(3)(c), may be worn in a pony tail during physical training. A single pony tail centered on the back of the head is authorized in physical fitness uniforms, except when considered a safety hazard. The pony tail is not required to be worn above the collar. When hair securing devices are worn, they will comply with the guidelines set in paragraph 3-2a(3)(e). Examples of hair accessories not authorized for securing hair during physical fitness are bows, ribbons, and claw or alligator clips.

(m) Physical training in utility uniforms. Pony tails are authorized using guidelines set forth in paragraph 3-2a(3)(l), above, while conducting physical training in utility uniforms. However, if the helmet is worn during physical training, hair must be secured using guidelines in paragraph 3-2a(3)(a) through (k).

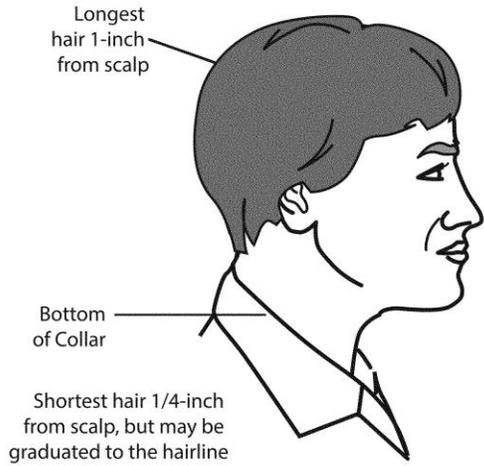
Figure 3-



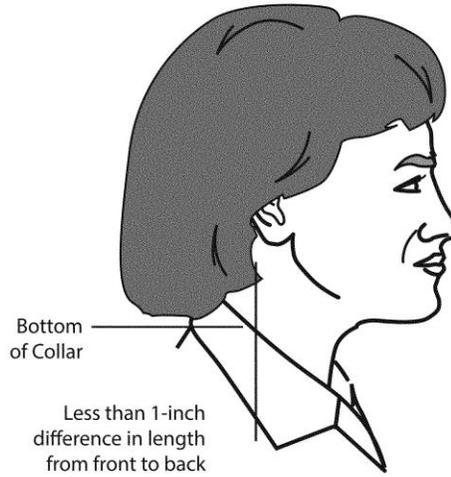


----- Scalp Line

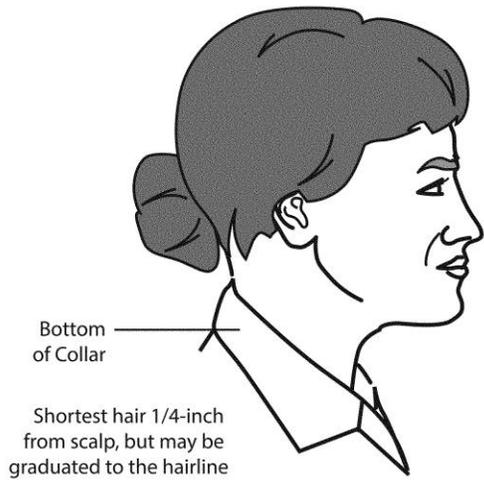
Short Hair Length



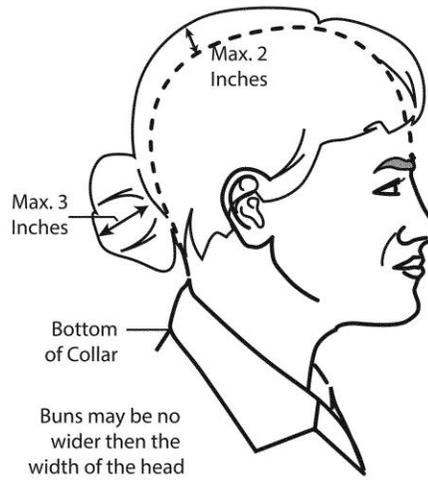
Medium Hair Length



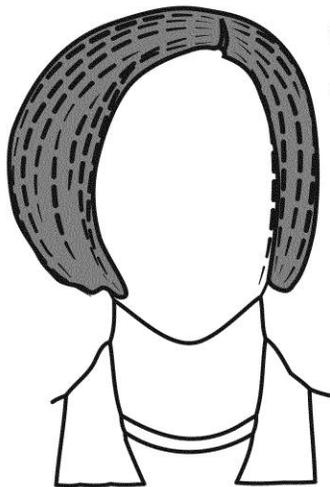
Long Hair Length



Bulk of Hair



Braids or fashionable styles must conform to all hair and appearance standards



Less than 1-inch difference in length from front to back

Bottom of Collar

