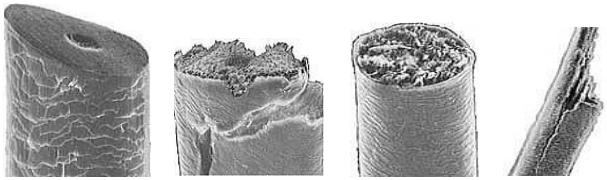
MASTER SHARPENER KAZU SETO

RIGHT THINGS RIGHT WAY



I believe a hair stylist's job is not just to style a person's hair, but also to maintain the health of each client; a doctor for hair. Therefore, I am certain that the condition of the shears, which directly come in contact with hair, is the most important aspect in a hair stylist's professional attitude. Therefore, although it may seem like the shears are cutting properly, whether it is actually performing optimally becomes a very important factor. Helping you to maintain shears that can do this is my first priority. I consider the characteristics of the shears used (the natural characteristic of the iron used, the shape of the shears, etc), the condition (how much the frame may be strained, rust, damage obtained by other sharpeners, etc), and the cutting style of each hair stylist (dry cut, slide cut, etc) to aim for an effortless clean cut. Maintaining your shears is much like brushing your teeth. There isn't any one that doesn't brush their teeth after getting a routine check up, and even if you religiously brush your teeth doesn't mean you don't need a check up. If you slack on brushing your teeth just because you are expected to go for a check up, the result will end up hurting you. When the condition of the shears are poor, it is not only the hair stylist suffers. It is the client who came and paid for the haircut, trusting in the knowledge and work of the hair stylist. To maintain the life and health of your client's hair, please have regular maintenance on your shears.

The Precision of a Sharpening for Serious Scissors Users

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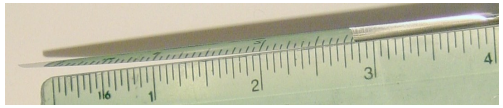
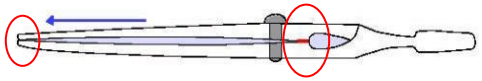
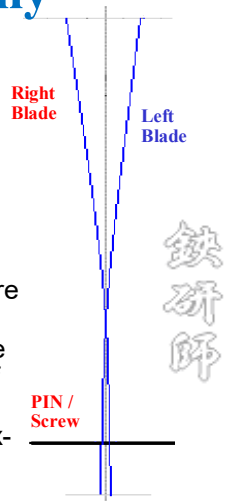
Master of Arts in *Sharpening*

Master Sharpener Kazu Seto

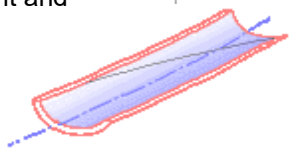
Scissors' Anatomy



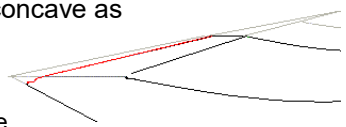




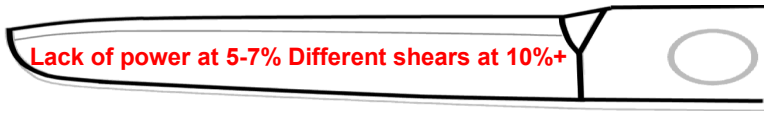
The frame of shears is slightly concave as shown in the picture above. When the 2 blades come together as shown in the figure above, there will be a slight gap when the shears are closed. The only 2 contacts are at the tip of the blades and the right side of the screw (pivot point). When the blades are open all the way, there is no contact except where the screw is and the blades open in opposite directions to the right and to the left.



The above picture is that of the inside of shears. While it seems flat, it is concave as shown in the picture to the right.



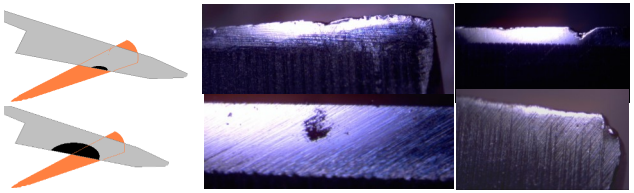
The drawing to the right shows the diagram of the blade. It is with the inner side pointing up. There is a red line on the blade, which shows wear and has rounded from its contact with the other blade. This is the condition of shears after few months into sharpening. This is what is happening when shears do not grasp hair properly.



*How long have you been using your shears?
*How many times have they been sharpened?
*How many times have the damages been repaired?

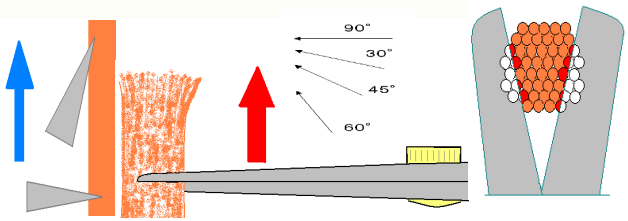
When the width of the blades becomes 5% thinner, you should be able to feel a clear difference in the way it cuts. When it gets even thinner, even after some sharpening, it will feel heavy and like there is no power towards the tip of the blade. The drawing above expresses how the width of the blade has a direct impact on the strength of the blade. It is difficult to cut a hard object with a fruit knife. Please understand that there are physical limitations. Don't drop your shears and damage it or distort the frame in any way. It is also important to choose a sharpener who can keep repairs at the minimum.

The effect blades have on hair

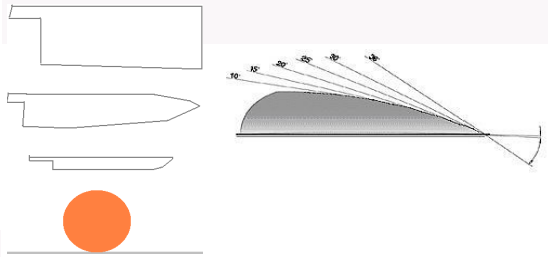


Lets say you cut a vegetable of 1 inch while cooking. If there is damage to the knife that is smaller than the vegetable, you probably won't notice anything, but how about if the damage to the knife was greater than the vegetable?

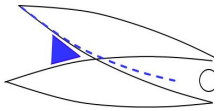
If the subject is food being made just for your family, it will probably just be a funny story. However, how about if the subject is hair and there is significant damage to the shears? On average, the thickness of one's hair is .08mm. How do feel about a .1mm sized damages that may be on your shears that may be catching hair and damaging it? How do you feel about shears that may be damaging and creating split ends on clients' hair while the clients come to hair stylists trusting and paying for the services?

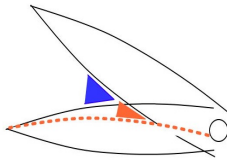


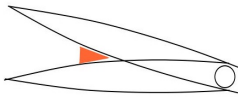
When a slide cut is done, the effect on the blades differs by the different angles the blades are placed upon hair. Rather than placing the blades on hair at a right angle, it is gentler on hair and on the blades to take a more angled approach. Also, shears are not razors; always close the shears slightly to avoid wear in one area. Additionally, by having specified shears for slide cuts, each of the shears would maintain its condition longer.



The Shapes and Uses of Blades



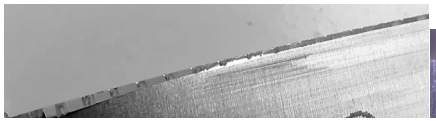


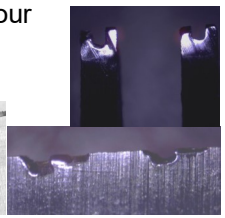


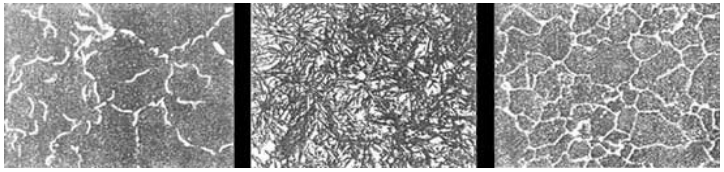
You can see many varieties of shears on the market. With so many variations of length, thickness, the shape of the handle, and other characteristics, it is difficult to choose which is the best for yourself. An important factor in choosing is the arch of the blades. (Curvature %=R)

When the shears are open, if the curve of the blades open wide, It is good for slide cuts and point cuts, but not for blunt cuts. The curved nature of the blades pushes hair out of the panel. In this way, shears are often designed for a certain type of cut. Therefore it is important to know your cutting style and choose shears in accordance with the hair design you envision.

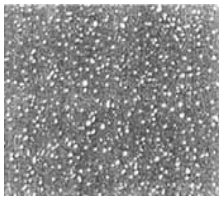
See the comb side of your thinning shears. Which shape is it most closest to in the above picture? Aside from the picture, there is a U shape, a V shape, but typically, when the groove is greater, there is a higher percentage of the hair being cut, and may feel heavier. However, you may not be able to feel much at all when you're cutting less hair. The percentage of hair being cut when using thinning shears, also depend on the amount of pins on the combing side. The less there are, the less hair it will cut, and vise versa. Structurally, the inner side of the blade and pins tend to damage easier. Therefore, even if it seems like the shears are cutting well, it requires more maintenance than your cutting shears. Checking the condition of your blades regularly is recommended.



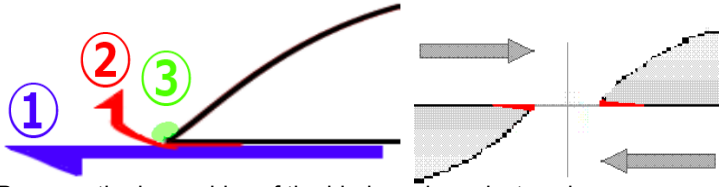




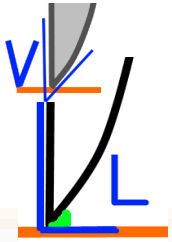
What are the differences between high-end shears and less expensive ones? One is the material. Even an expert will have difficulty seeing the difference with his naked eye, but the performance of the shears are evident. Differences range from some having foreign substances mixed with iron, some are coarse-grained, some have different sized grains. Especially common in recent days, there are poor quality shears where they mix in pure iron with recycled iron. Inexpensive shears can be purchased without much thought but if you consider the patrons that come for your services, deciding which quality shears you should purchase is obvious.



All shears do not cut the same. Know its

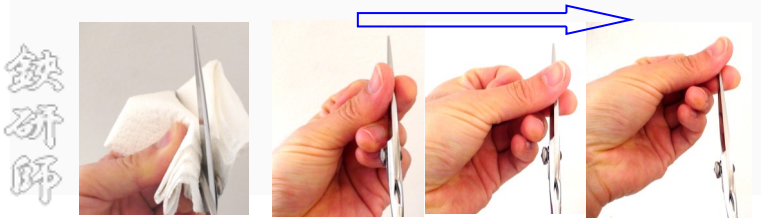


Because the inner sides of the blades rub against each other with every cut, there are very fine iron grains that are emitted. The grains mix with the cuticles, moisture, and oil, stick to the tip of the blade and harden over time. While the blades have a "V" shape, it will turn into an "L" shape when this grain mixture sticks to the blade. This causes an awkward feel,
difficulty in cutting, flipping, difficulty sliding,
and other malfunctions. This is a direct cause for split ends as well. This is also why it may feel like your shears aren't cutting well just 2-4 weeks after sharpening.



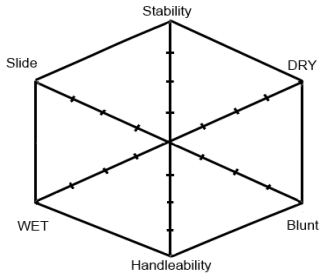
Easy maintenance for hair stylists

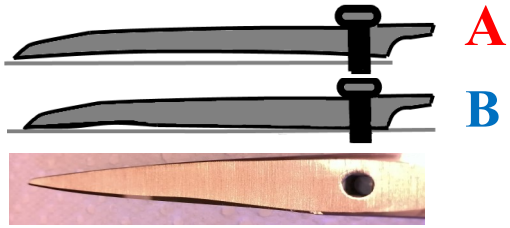
Fold a dry paper towel or a chamois a few times so **it's thick enough**, place the blade in the center and fold the paper towel/chamois. Twist your fingers slightly over the top of the blade with the paper towel/chamois ensuring you are removing the grime off the blades. Repeat twisting your fingers in the opposite direction so that you can remove the grime that you may have missed.



Know your shears' characteristics

characteristics, and cut according to its purposes, and you'll see its performance at its best. I have noticed too many times where the hair stylist is using scissors designed for blunt cuts to perform slide cuts. Other times, the stylist is troubled saying, "It won't catch hair," because he is using R scissors designed for slide cuts for blunt cuts. By understanding the nature and characteristics of your shears, you can make an efficient and high quality cut a reality.





I have already explained that the frame of shears has a slight arch. An "A" shape is the correct shape, but many malfunctions can occur when the arch is compromised by sudden impacts such as dropping them by accident. I have exaggerated the deformities in the figures above, but shears only need to be strained 0.1mm for its performance to be less than optimal. The picture above shows the uneven thickness of the blade which is expressed in figure (B).

I often hear people saying, "I've only dropped it once," or "I drop it all the time." For example, if you have an accident on the freeway, even after fixing it, the driving experience may be different due to the strain on the car. With cars, since there are so many parts, the malfunctions may be repairable. However, scissors only consist of 2 integral parts: the frame and the screw, for 1 purpose of cutting hair, so just a seemingly minor impact or shifting of the frame will cause the shears to lose its proper function. Dropping it once is equivalent to a huge car crash on the freeway. Your scissors are a high performance instrument to cut hair that is only 0.08mm. Please take care of them.