



# Ultimate Beard Guide

How To Grow A Beard  
& 18 Styles Any Man Can Rock

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# **The Ultimate Beard Guide**

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Edition 2 – 2017

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# **A Beginners Guide to Styling & Growing a Beard**



# A Beginners Guide to Styling & Growing a Beard

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To grow an awesome beard requires patience.

You simply put away your razor and trimmer and wait.

That's all there is to it - or so most men would have you believe.

But if you're into style, which I know you are, there's a lot to learn about growing a beard.

## Introduction:

This guide is for those of you that are first-time beardsmen and who don't know what to expect.

I'll help you overcome common pitfalls and issues that arise with having a beard and after reading this e-book you should have all the tools you need to sport a beard that makes you proud.



**Eric Bandholz - The Bandholz Beard**

Since this will be the most epic, comprehensive e-book on bearding on the internet, I've broken it up into three sections:

## 1. Growing and Grooming Your Beard

## 2. The Mind of a Beardsman

## 3. Picking a Beard: The Beard Style Guide

There are any number of reasons to grow a beard:

- looking more manly
- bucking the clean-shaven trend
- hiding a weak chin
- impressing your girlfriend/family/women in general
- protecting your face from harsh weather
- cultural reasons
- it's really awesome



But ultimately the reasons you should grow a beard are totally up to you as an individual. What you shouldn't be thinking is that you're lazy and couldn't be bothered to shave - a good-looking beard takes time and effort.

Personally I've found incredible friends through beard clubs, gotten tons of compliments from random strangers and have had my career skyrocket thanks to growing and maintaining a good beard.

Your results will vary but what I can promise you is that when you grow a beard, it won't be the same old *status quo*.

## **Growing and Grooming Your Beard**

Before you get started, have a look at our "A Man's Guide to Beards" Infographic. It'll be a while before you have to worry too much about actually shaping your beard, but it does help to know where you're going with your beard.

### **Phase 1: Waiting For Your Beard To Grow**

The best thing to do when growing a beard is to put away the razor and put your patience to the test.

A beard is not actually measured in length, but in months, so one of the most impressive traits you'll gain as a beardsman is patience.

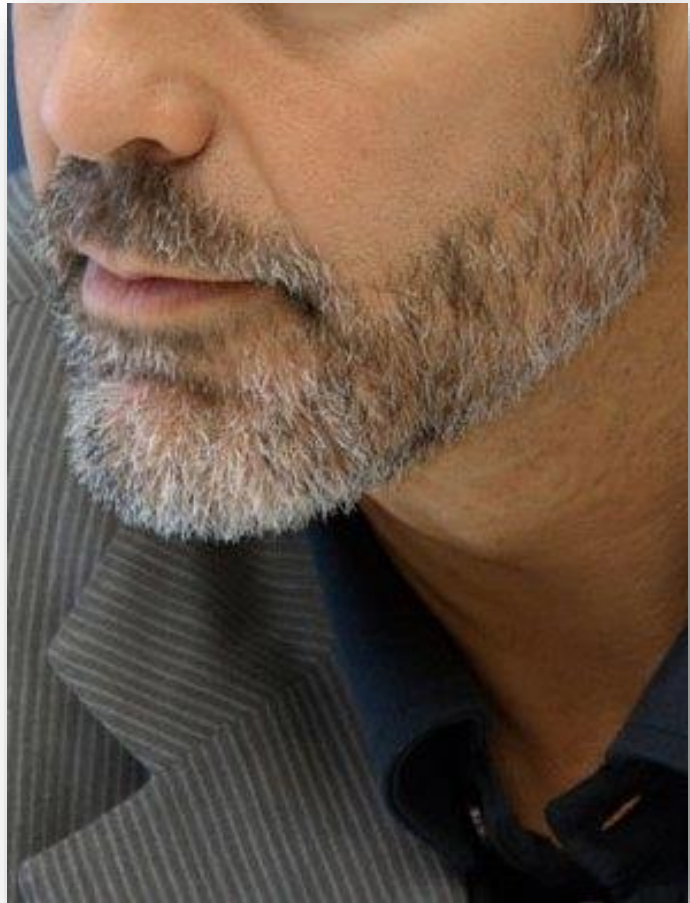
As a beardsman your regular milestones will be:

- a 1 month beard
- 3 month beard
- a yeard (year long beard)

Once you reach these lofty goals, you may be tempted to try for the holy grail of beards – the Terminal

Beard, which is the maximum length you can genetically grow.

With each length you'll be presented with slightly different challenges.



## **1. No Longer Beardless: The Itchy Phase**

As a beardless to about 2 weeks beardsman, you may notice that your beard gets pretty itchy, may appear patchy and is generally shaggy.

The reason your beard is itchy is that when you shave you're essentially creating little spears on the tips of each hair.

Eventually they get long enough to bend around and poke at your skin. Your neck is very susceptible to this because of the angle where the neck meets the head and this explains the itchiness. For this stage you have several options:

1. Man up and wait. It's only temporary and will pass shortly.
2. Apply ample amounts of moisturizer like [a beard oil](#) or other applicable product. Avoid moisturizers containing alcohol as they'll dry out your skin and worsen the itchiness.
3. In the early stubble phase (day 1 or 2) use Soft Goat scruff softener. This product is designed to help make stubble softer and more kissable.

During this time you shouldn't be using a shampoo on your beard as the length is still fairly short.

I'd recommend using a natural bar of soap that doesn't have irritant chemicals in them (like sodium laureth sulfate).

There are a lot of soap options out there, and one I've personally used and enjoyed is Rocky Top Soap.

Once you get through the itchy phase you'll get to the point where your beard will look untidy.

To neaten up your look I recommend trimming the neckline, upper cheeks, and mustache lip. However, if you're going for the year, or natural beard, you should leave your beard untouched.

## 2. Your First Trim

This is the point when we lose the most beardsmen. Men will typically get a little ambitious with their razors, cut too much off and then simply shave their entire beard off in frustration.

Because of the risk of mistakes I recommend waiting at least a month to trim if possible.

Most new beardsmen also tend to trim the neckline too high.

The ideal location for the line is where the neck meets the head. So wherever your beard area is parallel with the ground you don't trim and whatever is parallel with the world in front of you, you trim.

You should be trimming very little of your beard for this part. An easy way to accomplish this is to simply shave what you can see in the mirror (on your neck). If you're looking up to trim, you're cutting too high.



Once your beard comes out a little bit you also have to start paying attention to keeping it clean - Your beard is not a food storage area. For now simply rinsing it on a daily basis should be enough to keep it clean.

When trimming your mustache I recommend you use a pair of scissors instead of clippers. This will give you a little more control and it only cuts a few hairs at a time so a small mistake is not a big deal.

With the cheek line, try to go with the natural curvature of your face and only trim off the one or two stragglers that are outside that line. If the beard on your cheek is very dense cheek you should trim no lower than the bottom of your nose.

### **3. Picking Your First Style**

For the “euro-style, corporate look” I’d go with a 1 day to 2 week look.

Wait till you have a nice stubble and then trim your beard, using the clippers on the lowest setting, as needed. Do not trim up the neckline or cheek line, as the natural stubble look is what you should be aiming for.

If you’re looking for a “corporate beard” I would aim for about 1 to 2 months of length. In the meantime make sure to keep everything trimmed and tidy as mentioned above.

## 4. Care and Maintenance

To keep the length I'd recommend you use scissors instead of clippers as this will help prevent wrong guard mistakes and give you more control.

Use a comb to pull out hairs to the desired length and trim away.

Remember that less is more and you can always trim more another day. For maintenance at this stage

I'd recommend rinsing the beard thoroughly every day in the shower and to apply beard oil daily.

You can also wash your beard with a beard wash anywhere between 1 and 3 times a week.

## Phase 2: Growing Out Your Beard

For those growing out your beards, this is where all the fun starts to come in.

After about 2 months you'll notice your beard does some really funky things.







What was once a straight and neat look becomes wavy, curly and what you may think is wild.

This is natural and it should be embraced as your natural beard.

## **1. Grooming Your Beard**

At 3 months and longer you'll only want to wash your beard about once a week or as needed, but a thorough, daily rinsing is also recommended.

Apply beard oil daily for moisturizing and trim only with scissors.

*Never trim or shave off your beard if you are depressed or under the influence of alcohol.*

A good rule of thumb is that for every month of growth, give it a day to think about it before shaving it off.

So if you've been growing for 6 months, think about it for a week. This will prevent any errant beard losses.

## 2. Drying Your Beard

With a longer beard, you may find that using a blow dryer will help your beard look more full and tidy.

When using a blow dryer on your beard, blow from the neck up as this will essentially “poof” out the beard.

If you want to use styling products I’d recommend applying a beard balm while your beard is still damp and then blow-drying.

After the beard is dry, use the blow dryer to blow the beard down into its final resting place. For grooming your beard use a nice acetate, wooden, or metal comb and finish off with a boar’s hair brush.

You can watch this video: [How I Style My Beard](#).



## Phase 3: A Full-Grown Beard

By now you should have a full-grown beard of several months' age. You can see what type of beard is likely to work for you and what you can expect from your beard. Now you get to the big day:

### 1. Picking Your Beard Style

The beauty with beards is that you can style it in many different ways, but I recommend that you “grow what you got”.

What I mean by this is that, based on your beard genes, try to grow a style that fits how your beard grows. If you grow a full thick mustache – don't trim that bad boy off.

Of course, if your cheeks are very sparse and patchy then go for the goatee.

The full beard is timeless, but other styles will come and go into fashion.



## **2. Consider Your Beard Genes**

Your genetics determine pretty much everything you can do with your beard growing potential.

That being said, things like stress, bad diet, and physical damage can hurt your full potential.

If you want to grow the most epic beard possible, follow these tips to make growing a one the best it can be.

### **Beard Growing Tips:**

If you have a perfect diet, top-notch workout regimen and optimum stress levels these tips won't help you, but if you aren't living the ideal life you'll want to read on:

1. Shaving your beard will NEVER make your beard grow faster – that's just an urban legend and anyone who says it makes your beard grow faster is just trolling you.
2. You can take supplements to make up for any deficiencies in your diet.

My regimen usually consists of a multi-vitamin, biotin, and fish oil. Biotin will help your hair and nails grow faster.

In other countries it's called vitamin H for hair. In addition to these basics, you can add zinc, vitamin B (specifically B6), and magnesium.

3. Testosterone will help your beard grow better. To boost testosterone you need to eat more red meats, avoid soy based products and lift weights.

Other good foods are spinach, nuts, avocados, olives, broccoli and olive oil.

Brett wrote an excellent article over at Art of Manliness about naturally boosting your testosterone.

4. When growing your beard you need to focus on stroking the beard rather than picking at the beard.

Picking split ends or simply focusing on single beard hairs can lead to patches, more split ends or other damaging effects.

5. The final thing you need is patience.



Beards take time and they will get longer, but you just need to wait. Hell, the best things in life take time, right?

## **The Mind of a Beardsman**

If you're new to the beard-growing process you'll find the most challenging part of growing a beard is handling other people's reaction to your beard.

## 1. Handling Other People's Reactions

If you were left on a desert island by yourself you wouldn't have this issue, but going for a different look will without a doubt get comments from other people.

The first and most difficult challenge will be communicating with those who are closest to you, but I've found that if you reach out and ask for support you'll usually find success.

## 2. The Key Is To Communicate

This is especially true if they're understanding and considerate of you as an individual.

(If they aren't perhaps it's time to find someone who is more supportive – but that's another e-book)

## 3. Getting Your Loved One On-board:

For a loved one, I like to say something along these lines,

*"[Loved one], I've decided to grow a beard and I know it's going to be a little bit different. It's something that I've wanted to do for a long time, but never had the confidence to do. I'm hoping to grow it for [length of time] months and can really use your support. Please help me through the hard times and help me reach my goal."*

If they're a little resistant or aren't 100% supportive, I like to drop something like this:

*"[Loved one], I'm [Age] years old and am looking to spend another 50 years with you. Please give me [length of time] months of these next 50 years where I can try something that is very important to me."*

If that doesn't work you can use the whole "I'm growing a beard – it's my body" reasoning, but an argument may ensue.

## **4. Strong-arm Your Buddies**

Once you get beyond your close loved ones, you'll have to get past the peanut gallery at work or with your buddies.

You can go with the sappy: "I need your support" strategy, but I think with them I'd start busting out the confidence card.



Whenever they make a comment about your beard you should follow up with a *“Hell yeah! I’m growing a beard and it’s going to be bad-ass.”*

People feed off your confidence and will quickly accept that’s your choice.

## **5. Dealing With Criticism**

One thing I always like keeping in the back of my mind is the phrase – “Haters gonna hate.” You can’t please everyone and you can’t control their actions and emotions.

What you can control is your own actions and emotions. Remember that in the end you also need to do things that make you happy.

After all, you won’t be able to please everyone – but you can please yourself.

## **6. Gaining Acceptance**

After a while of growing your beard, you’ll find that as you meet more and more people they will only know you as the guy with a beard.

The hurdles of dealing with comments from the peanut gallery will decrease and you’ll just be who you are – the awesome man that you are (with a beard).

## **7. Bearded Camaraderie**

There are a lot of groups on the internet that will provide support if you are having a bad beard day.



My favorite places to hang out are:

- [/r/beards](#)
- [Beardboard.com](#),
- [BeardedGents.com](#) You can upload photos of your beard growth progress and bask in the positive and constructive comments from other beardsmen. In addition to that, I like to go to [Beardbrand's Tumblr page](#) on how to be stylish and wear a beard. With great style comes confidence and that confidence is required to keep an awesome beard.

[How do others perceive facial hair? Click here to watch the video.](#)



## 8. The Fulfillment of a Beard

Growing a beard is a wonderful experience that I recommend all men try at least once in their lives. If it's not for you don't feel any worries about shaving it off, but you should at least try it.

Through the journey you will have a more open mind towards others, more patience, and more confidence.

Ultimately, it's one of the items that helps you become a better man.



## Picking a Beard: The Beard Style Guide



Beards.

Take a look at the latest street style photos, leading guys in TV shows and movies and even off the street and you're bound to find a man (or several) with one.

The beard is officially back.

For definitions sake, the term "beard" is used to refer to any style of facial hair.

However, not all beards are one and the same.

There are specific beard styles.

Do you happen to know the differences between each?

To help you understand the science behind facial hair, the different styles of beards are listed next.



**Click on the above image to view a larger infographic.**

# **The 18 Styles of Beard**

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- 1. Medium Stubble**
- 2. Long Stubble**
- 3. Full Beard**
- 4. French Fork Beard**
- 5. Ducktail Beard**
- 6. Circle Beard**
- 7. Goatee Beard**
- 8. Extended Goatee**
- 9. Imperial Beard**
- 10. Van Dyke Beard**
- 11. Anchor Beard**
- 12. Balbo Beard**
- 13. Mutton Chops**
- 14. Friendly Mutton Chops**
- 15. Verdi Beard**
- 16. Garibaldi Beard**
- 17. Dutch Beard**
- 18. Bandholz Beard**

## The Medium Stubble:

### The Perfect 5 O' Clock Shadow

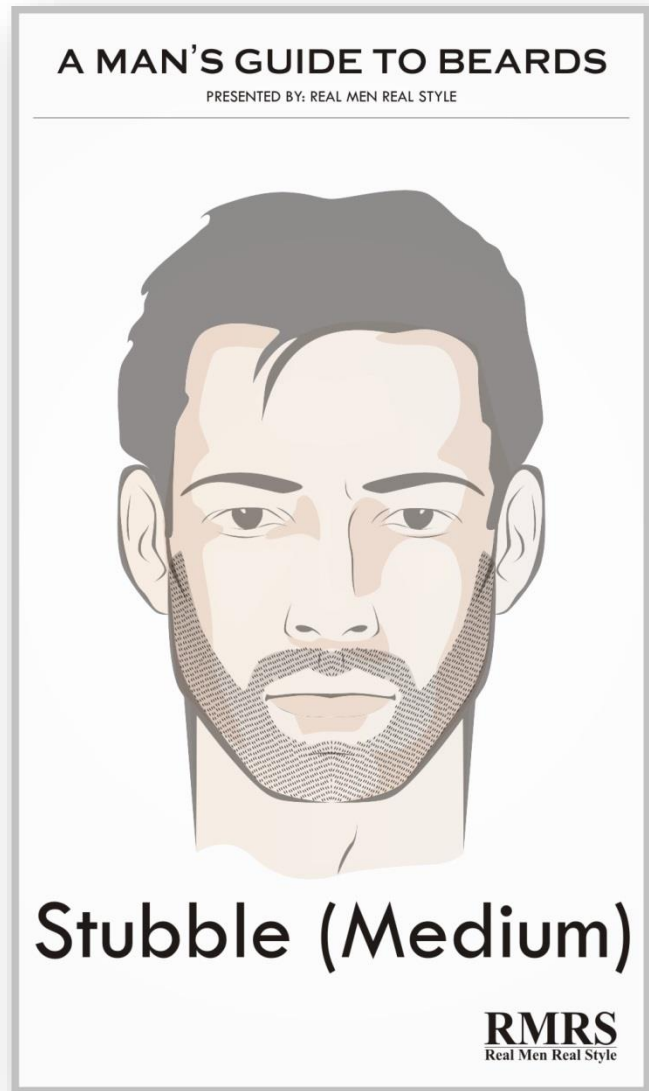
As the name suggests a medium stubble is a beard style slightly longer than the short stubble.

While the short stubble can be achieved by growing the beard for 1 to 2 days, a medium stubble may require a couple of days more.

A medium stubble can be anywhere from 3 to 5 mm long. Any longer and it begins to look unkempt and sloppy.

As with the short stubble a medium stubble looks best when kept at the bottom third of a man's face and right above the Adam's apple.

The upper cheeks must be left clean-shaven so that the overall look appears neat and deliberate.



## The Long Stubble:

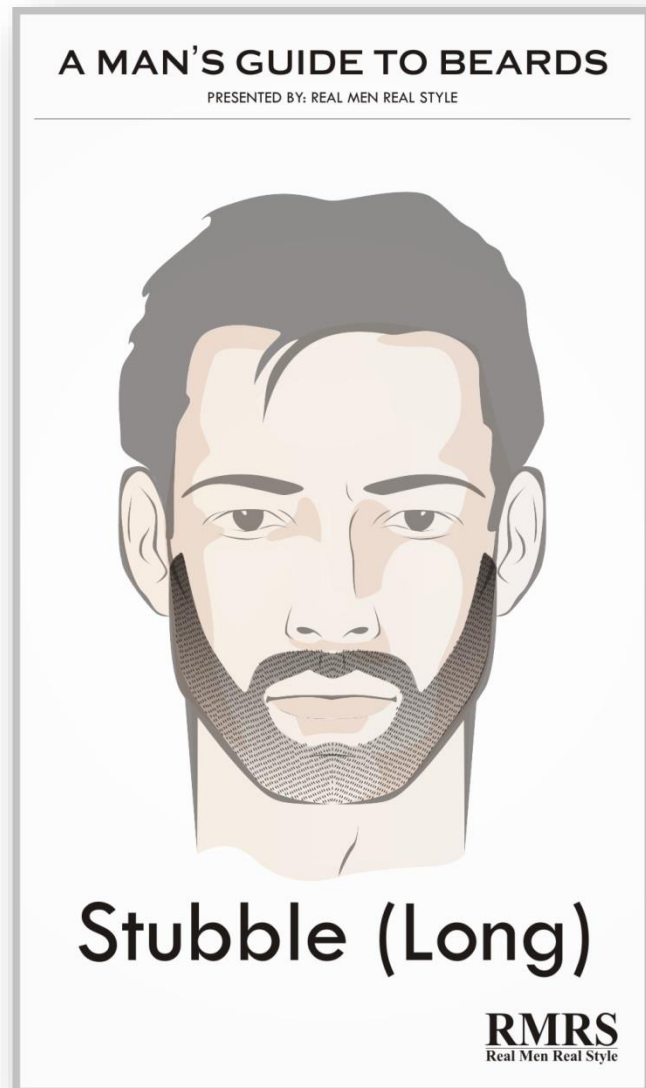
### The Transitional Beard Style

The long stubble style of beard may be trickier to maintain than its shorter counterparts.

It is *also* referred to as the perfect five o'clock shadow as it presents as an even darkening in the lower third of a man's face.

The long stubble is slightly longer than the medium stubble, measuring about 6 mm and to achieve this look an adjustable beard trimmer, set with the built-in guard at the back will work best.

A beardsman who chooses to sport the long stubble style is also encouraged to trim the stubble just so that the overall look remains consistent. Stray hairs must be removed using scissors or a precision trimmer. Again, any hair that grows above the lower third of the face and below the top of the Adam's apple must be gotten rid of.





## The Full Beard:

### The Classic Beard

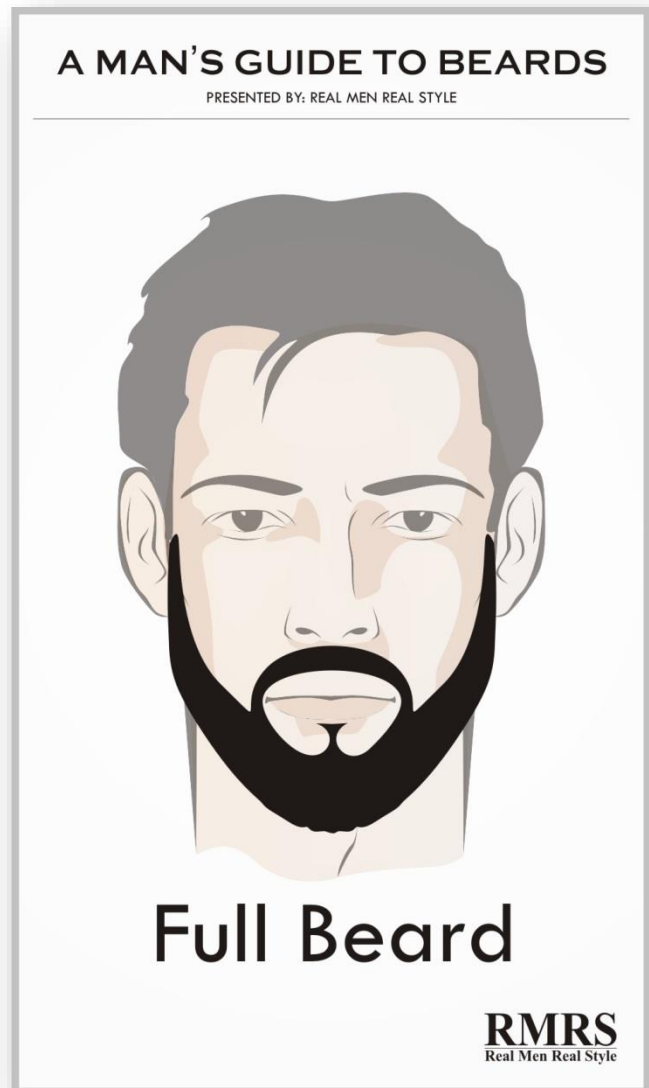
The Full Beard is considered a classic style and THE classic way to actually grow facial hair. The full beard can be difficult to achieve as not every man has the ability to grow one.

A full beard has a very distinct shape: It starts at the cheek line and everything below that is left to grow naturally.

Beardsmen who have cheek lines that are naturally too high, or have trouble defining the cheek line, are advised to draw an imaginary line from the angle of the side burn in front of the ear up to the outer edge of a mustache.

A full beard takes time and it's recommended beardsmen who want this style start growing their beards while on leave to get past the first phase. There may be strange reactions from other people during the growing phase.

After 4 weeks beardsmen who are successful in growing a full beard can start shaping it and start defining a neck line. For this process a professional stylist or barber comes highly recommended and can usually spell the difference between success and failure.



## The French Fork Beard:

### A Distinctive Beard Style

A French Fork beard is a very distinctive style.

It's still considered a full beard look, but is characterized by hair extending past the chin and splitting down the middle in two segments and is named for the fact that original French forks only had 2 prongs.

In recent times, fictional character Jack Sparrow has been credited for making the French Fork look cool again.



## The Ducktail Beard: Well-groomed and Rugged

The Ducktail style of beard is another twist off the original full beard and gets its name from its appearance.

By looking at it you can easily see how much the bottom part of this style of beard resembles the tail of a duck.

Many beardsmen consider the Ducktail a perfect compromise between the wild characteristic of having a beard and well-groomed sophistication. It's possibly for this reason the Ducktail continues to be one of the most popular styles of beard today.

To create it the upper part of the beard is trimmed shorter while the hair on the chin area is allowed to grow as long as the man wants it to grow, providing that perfect blend of styled and rugged.



## The Circle Beard:

### The “Standard” Beard

The Circle beard is the style for beardsmen who want a neater appearance.

While having full beards may appear untidy, wild and unkempt to some, the circle beard is a good compromise that allows a man to still keep some facial hair.

The circle beard derives its name from its shape. It combines a mustache and a rounded goatee to create the distinct round shape.

Part of the circle beard’s popularity stems from the fact that it is relatively easy to maintain: As long as the beard retains its round shape and short hair it’s perfectly acceptable. Sporting circle beards have a number of benefits. It’s a great way to conceal a softer jaw line or even skin breakouts and also works well on beardsmen who have squarish faces and jaws.



## The Goatee:

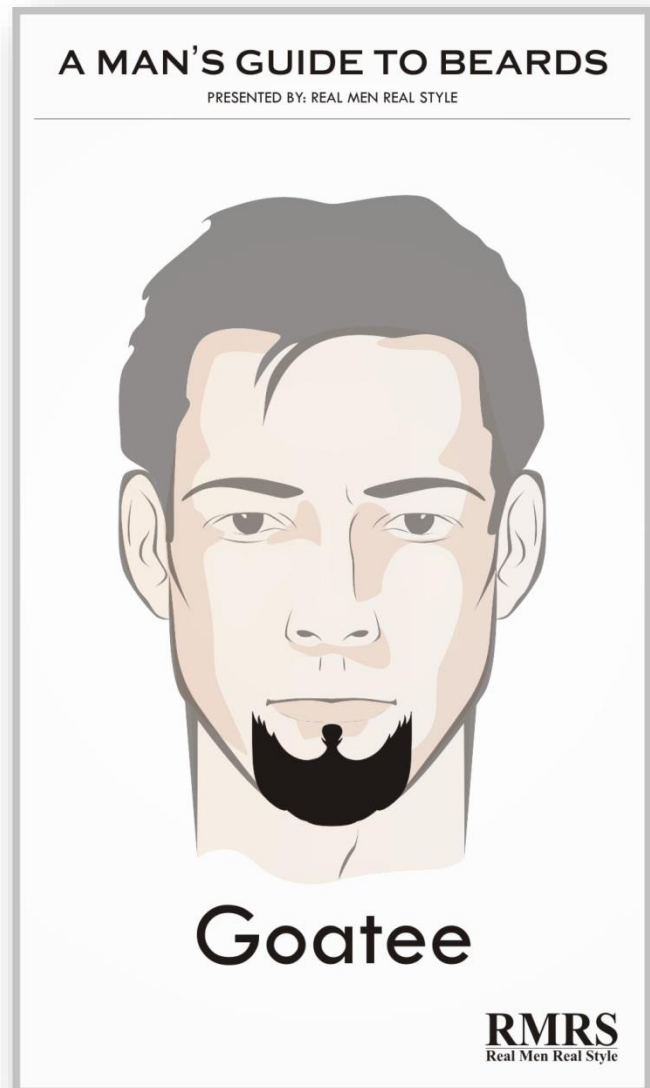
### The “Chin-Only” Beard

A goatee is a type of beard worn on the chin, much like a Billy Goat’s beard and is never supposed to be connected to a mustache.

A proper goatee should have hair right below the lower lip and the standard size for a goatee has to be the same as the width of the beardsman’s mouth.

To grow a goatee a beardsman must allow the hair below the lower lip to grow down into the part of the beard growing on the chin.

The sides are then defined as vertical lines or slightly curved, based on the beardsman’s preference and the hair is then rounded off at the bottom of the chin.



## The Extended Goatee:

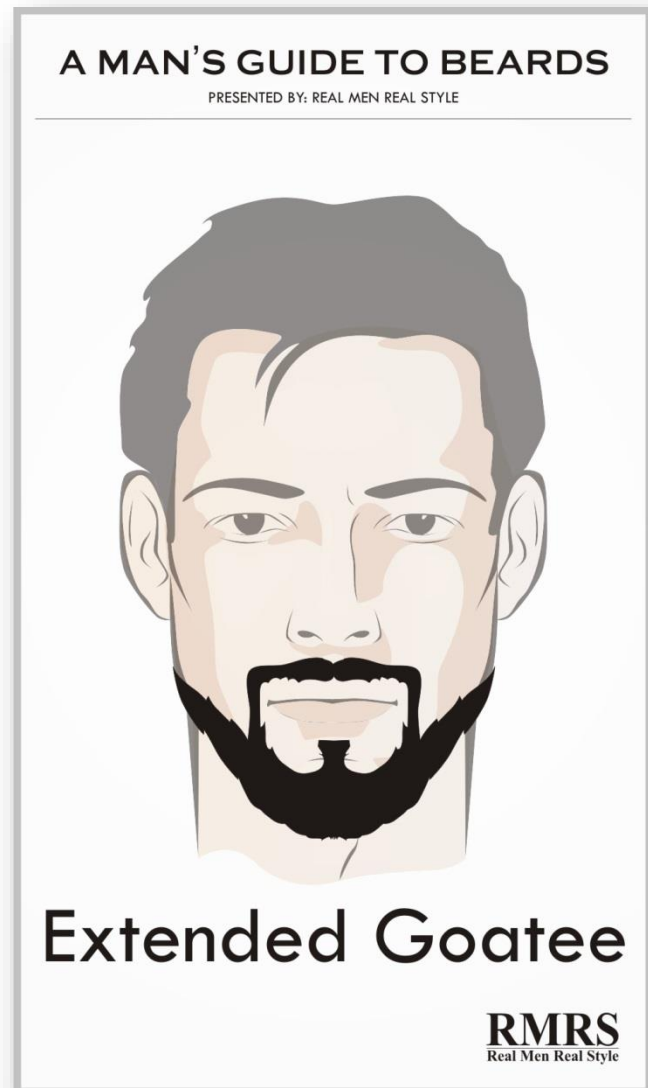
### The Hollywoodian Beard Style

The extended goatee is also called the tailback or the Hollywoodian and it's a combination of the goatee and the mustache.

Even more variations on this style can be attained by simply adjusting the shapes and angles of the hair extensions.

In appearance it looks like a mustache connected to a beard, but with the sideburns removed.

To grow an extended goatee it's suggested the beardsman allows a larger area of hair to grow than the preferred size. Once there is enough growth it becomes a simple matter to trim the extended goatee into the desired shape and size.



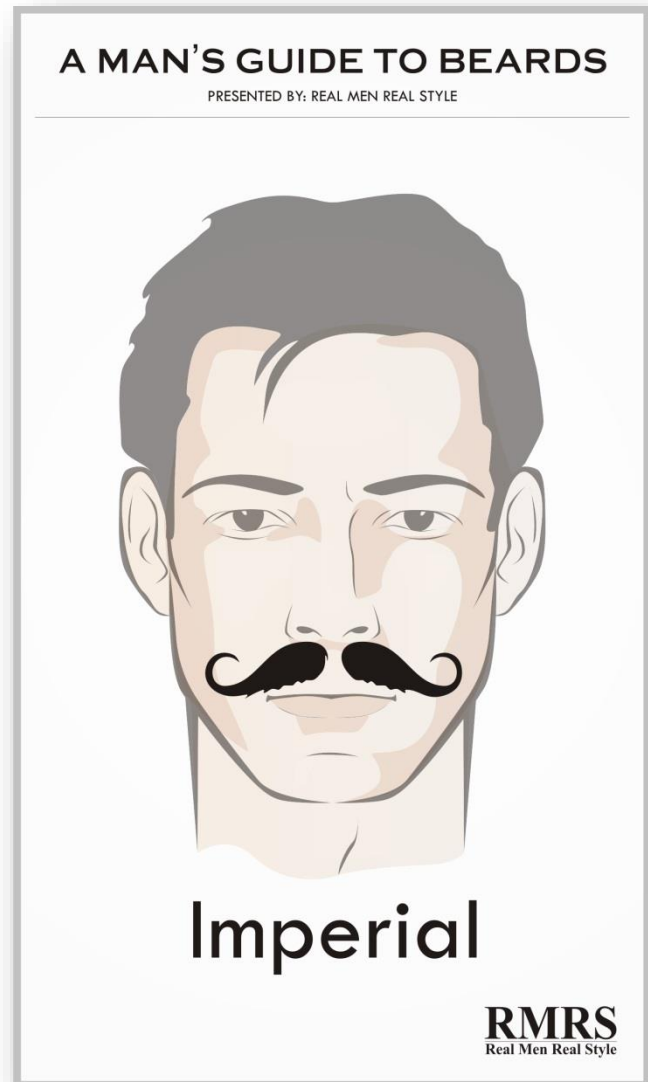
## The Imperial Beard:

### Beard Royale

For the man who really wants to make an impression with his facial hair, the Imperial style is certainly one that will do that!

The Imperial beard style is not really a beard but rather a moustache and was popular in France during the period of the Second Empire, where it got the name Imperial, instead of the former Royale.

It is not to be confused with the Napoleon III Imperial but has similarities wherein the actual moustache is connected to the hairs that grow on the cheeks and the fact that the tips curl over while with the Imperial the tips simply point upward. The chin and sideburns are left bare when donning the Imperial, allowing it to be the center of attention.



## The Van Dyke Beard:

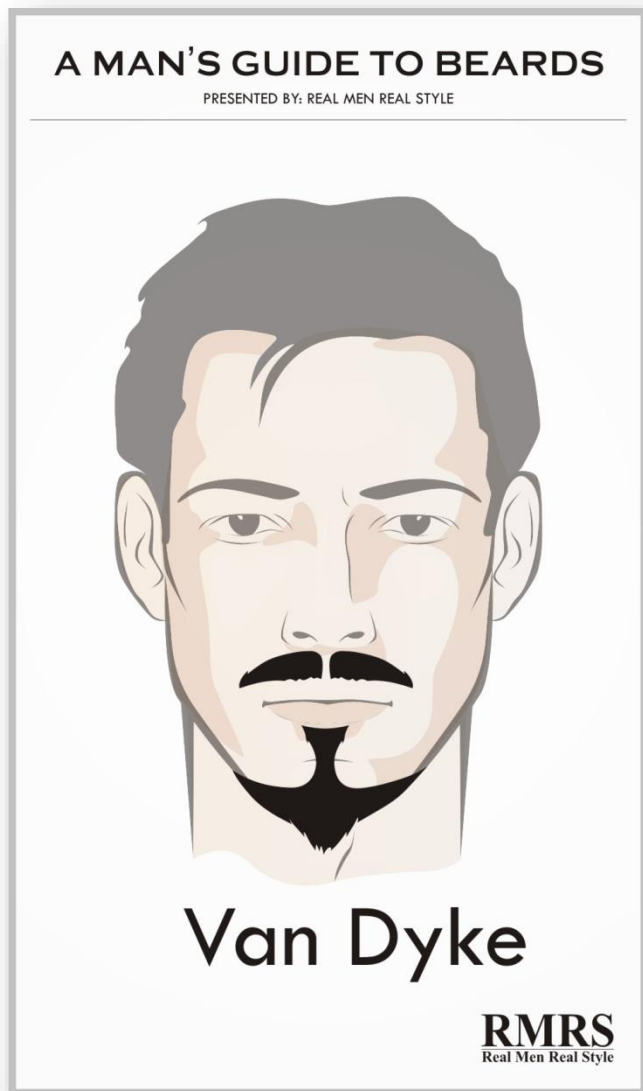
### Sleek & Stylish

The theory behind the Van Dyke beard style is simple: a goatee combined with a mustache.

The Van Dyke beard style gets its name from the 17th Century Flemish painter Anthony Van Dyke and this beard style was his signature look, but has recently experienced a resurgence in popularity.

When sporting the Van Dyke, the rest of the beardman's cheeks have to be completely smooth and free of facial hair.

A Van Dyke also looks better if it is more defined, so those who choose to wear this style are advised to pay close attention to the shape of the chin beard, making sure that the lines remain clear as time passes.





## The Anchor Beard:

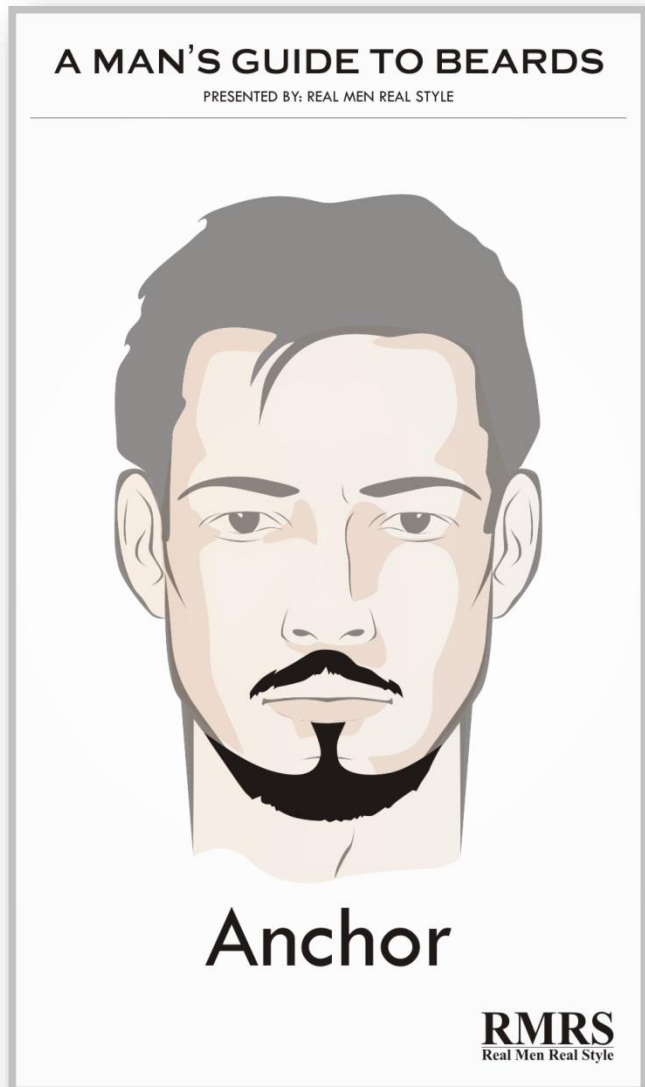
### Uniquely Stylish

As you may have already guessed, the Anchor style of beard gets its name from the nautical anchor and the overall shape should resemble one.

To get the Anchor right, a beardman's face must be free of sideburns, but have a beard that extends along the jawline and is then styled to a point.

This point should be connected to a pencil mustache so that the overall shape is anchor-like. A word of caution regarding this style: it can be tricky to get right as it's a combination of many styles, namely the Chinstrap, the Goatee and the Handlebar.

The Anchor style suits beardsmen with square or oblong shaped faces the best, so it's not a beard style that anyone can just pull off



## The Balbo Beard:

### Well-shaped and Minimalist

The Balbo beard style has an interesting history in that it used to be closely linked to fascists.

The specific beardsman who made it popular was Italian Air Marshall Italo Balbo, who was one of Mussolini's henchmen during the Second World War.

In recent times the Balbo seems to be synonymous with actor Robert Downey Jr.

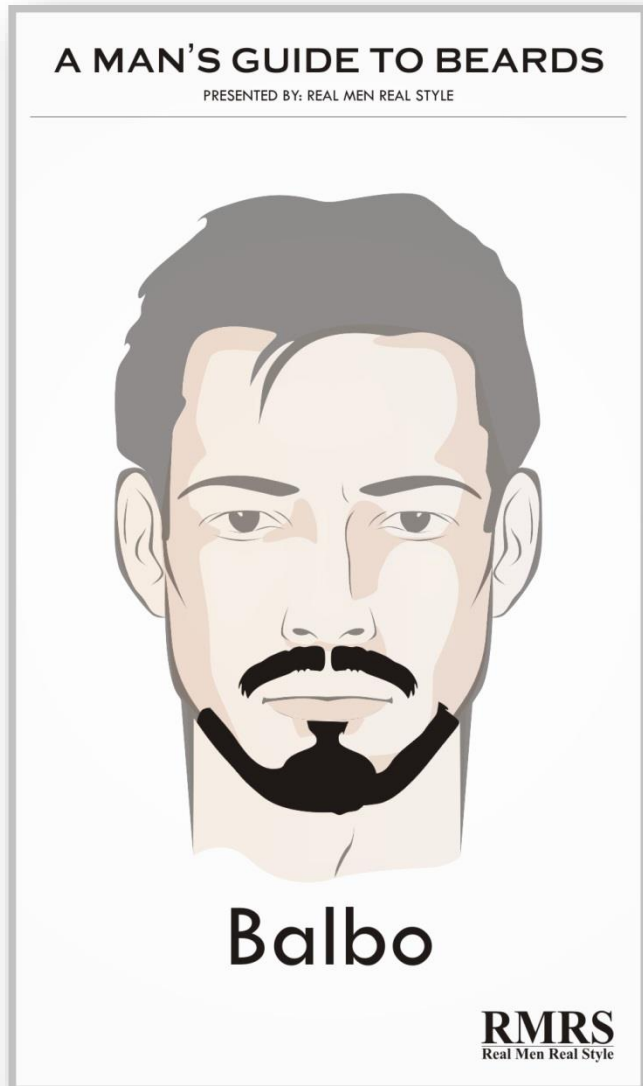
The Balbo style can be broken down into three main sections.

Firstly, it requires one to grow a moustache.

Secondly, there is the hair growing from the chin, taking note of the patch under the lip. Thirdly, the hair that is allowed to grow beneath the patch under the lip, resembling the low part of a typical beard.

For reference the Balbo should resemble an inverted "T".

The Balbo will suit beardsmen who have narrow chins and it is a go-to style for men who may have been aiming for the Van Dyke, but have had a couple of trimming mishaps.



## **The Mutton Chops: Sideburns on Steroids**

The Mutton Chops beard style is actually a fancier term for longer sideburns that are allowed to extend down to the corners of the mouth.

To grow Mutton Chops a beardsman should let his sideburns grow to the corner of his mouth freely.

The beardsmen should then terminate a part of the sideburns, creating an imaginary line defined at each corner of the mouth.

The bottom edge of the sideburns should be clearly defined along the edge of the jawline.



## The Friendly Mutton Chops:

### Sideburns, less the Steroids

There is only a slight variation between the Friendly Mutton Chops style of beard and the regular Mutton Chops.

Friendly Mutton Chops still involve sideburns but these have to extend to the edge of the mouth and have to be connected to a mustache. Keep in mind that the mustache is the main difference.

To grow Friendly Mutton Chops, allow your sideburns to grow to the corners of your mouth, at the same time allowing the mustache to grow too.

Let them connect to each other and then terminate part of the sideburns by drawing an imaginary vertical line defined at each corner of the mouth. As with regular mutton chops, the bottom line of the sideburns should be defined along the jawline.



## The Verdi Beard:

### A Classy and Full Beard

The Verdi is an example of a full beard that has been slightly styled.

It should be short and rounded at the bottom and should be no longer than 10 cm in length when measured from the bottom lip.

The Verdi also features a mustache that is distinct from the beard, but the mustache must not grow more than 1.5 cm past the corner of the mouth and must always appear impeccably groomed.



The Verdi style of beard is inspired by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), who was an Italian operatic composer who is best known for masterpieces such as La Traviata, Il Trovatore, and Rigoletto.

## The Garibaldi Beard:

### A Longer, Natural Beard

The Garibaldi is the type of beard that will suit a man who is looking for a slightly unkempt style.

It is basically a wide and full beard with a rounded bottom and an integrated mustache and should be no more than 20 cm in length.

While the mustache should be kept neat, the beard can be allowed to grow naturally.

In fact, the more natural the beard appears the better.

The Garibaldi is a good compromise as it appears as a bold and full beard, but is actually shorter than most beards in the natural category.



## The Dutch Beard:

### Like an Amish

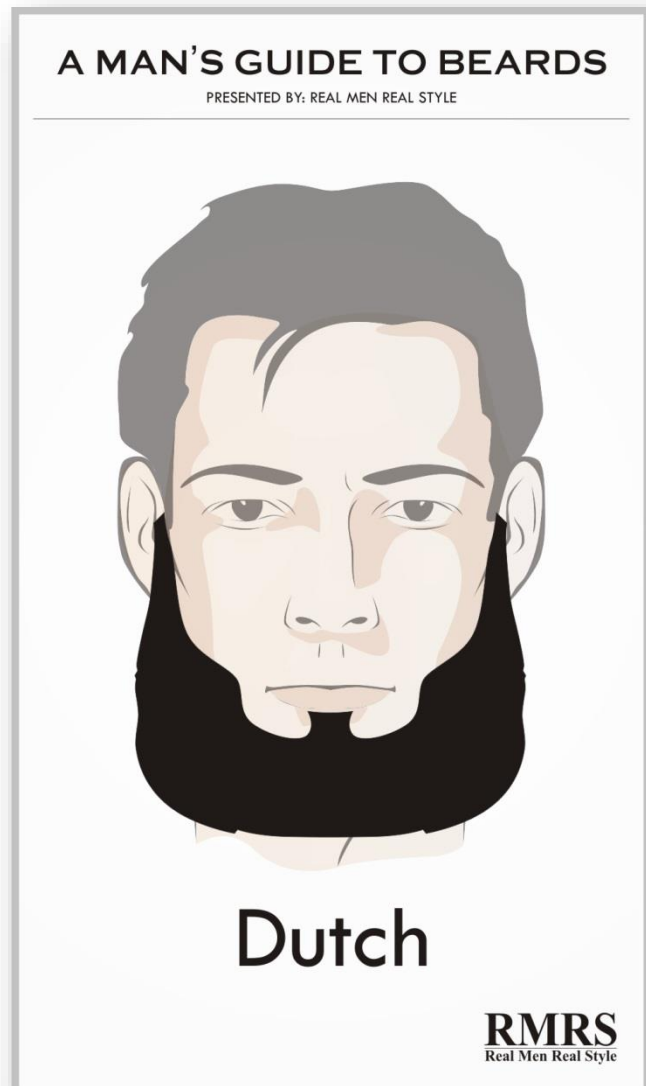
The Dutch or Old Dutch Beard is known to be an old-school beard style.

It is commonly associated with the lumberjack type of facial hair and is a large and long beard.

It is connected by sideburns and is allowed to flare outwards at the bottom, but the most distinctive part of this style is that it should not have a mustache.

This is the style you're most likely to see worn by the Amish because they believe mustache's have strong ties to the military man and are linked to personal vanity, both of which are concepts they reject.

The Old Dutch has also made a comeback in modern society and is particularly popular among hipsters.



## The Bandholz Beard:

### The Hardcore Beard

The Bandholz style of beard has a very interesting story behind it.

Eric Bandholz started out as a run of the mill guy working in the corporate world and in 2011 he felt a strong desire to grow a beard, but always got negative comments from his corporate work environment.

He then ditched his job and began to pursue what he calls his “urban beardsman lifestyle”.

Today Eric Bandholz is the founder of [Beardbrand](#), a company that specializes in beardsmen’s grooming products.

Thanks to his personal commitment to all things beard-related, he became well known for sporting a distinct style of beard which is now known as the Bandholz.

The Bandholz features a mustache that is connected to a full beard and unlike the Garibaldi, the beard does not stop at the 20 cm mark, but is allowed to grow freely.





## Conclusion

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Growing a beard is a unique combination of art and skill.

Most men who managed to successfully grow a beard appreciate the hard work and dedication that goes into it and now you can too.

We hope this guide will be your reference point going forward. If you learned a thing or two (or three) please do the beard justice and let others know about this e-book.

The more beard advocates we can claim, the more the beard will be universally accepted.

Respectfully,

Antonio Centeno, [Real Men Real Style](#)

Eric Bandholz, [Beardbrand](#)

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