

Young Man Life Skills Course

Week 1

Personal Grooming

As you grow and mature into a man, your sweat glands are also growing, which in turn leads to more body odor as a young adult. To avoid being called “the stinky kid,” you can do a few basic things to help prevent this.

Shower

Do this every day. This is your first defense against combating body odor. For best results, wash all of your parts. Start by standing under the water and wetting your hair and the rest of your body. Then grab a quarter sized amount of shampoo and start scrubbing your head. You have to scrub hard on your scalp, otherwise it will collect dandruff type material which can lead to other embarrassing moments with people. Scrub hard, don't be afraid.

Then grab a bath pouf or washcloth and lather up with some body wash or a bar of soap. Start at the top of your body and work your way down. Neck, behind your ears, shoulders, arms, armpits---very important!!!, chest, belly, bottom area and around your privates. Do your legs and feet too—to avoid any foot diseases.

Then stand under the shower head and rinse your entire body from head to toe.

You can shower at night or in the morning, just do it every day. If you tend to do activities at night like wrestle with your brother which cause you to be sweaty, you may want to shower in the morning to avoid smelling .

When you step out of the shower, dry your body thoroughly before putting on any clothing.

Getting dressed

Just as it is important to shower each day, you need to put on clean clothing each day as well to avoid body odor. If you don't know if something is clean do the "sniff-test" especially in the armpit area, you will be able to tell real quick whether it is dirty or not.

Take note if during the day you do a lot of sweating and are in need of changing your clothing. Maybe you have been working in work boots all day and your feet are sweaty, it is important to change your socks to keep your feet dry as much as you can. If you have been sweating, putting a fresh t-shirt on will help you combat any unwanted odors as well.

I know at your age, you probably are not thinking much about your appearance, many guys don't. But it is important to be considerate of the people around you and who have to travel in the car with you. No one wants to sit near the "stinky kid."

Shaving

Shaving can be a challenge when your first starting out, but with a few simple tips you can be on your way to doing the perfect shave.

1. Before you shave, wet your skin and beard to soften it. Taking a shower is a great way to soften your skins' hair.
2. Next , apply a shaving cream or gel. Squirt about a golf ball size foam onto your hands and spread on your beard or mustache area. Shave gel helps prevent razor burn, if you have a choice get this.
3. Take your razor and shave in the direction that the hair grows. You may have to go over the area a few times to remove stubborn hair. Don't press hard, a good razor will do all the work.
4. If you have to dip your razor in water to remove foam in between swipes, then do so. Shake it off before shaving your face again.
5. Rinse with cold water when finished to remove excess shave cream.

Change your blades or throw away disposable razors after 5-7 shaves to help minimize irritation. You will notice that the blades do not shave as well or they start tugging when your shaving... when they are going bad.

Use a multi-blade razor. You will get a smoother shave. The first blade cuts the hair, but it also lifts it out of the skin; the next blades cut progressively closer, enabling fewer strokes and leaving a closer shave with less irritation.

Note, that if you have acne, take special care while shaving. Shaving can irritate your skin and make acne worse. Never try to cut over top of pimples, it will make them worse.

If you have access to an electric razor, it is much milder on your face. You can pretty much move it around and not worry about cutting your face 😊

Razor burn

What is it?

Razor burn is a skin irritation that can be caused by many different factors while shaving. It usually happens after a few moments of shaving and can be in the form of a rash. Here are some factors that can cause razor burn:

Dry shaving

Always use a shave cream. They are made to hydrate your face and the hairs on your face. This will help your razor glide across and can hold in hydration while you shave.

Pressing too hard

Being overly aggressive with your razor is a quick way to get razor burn. Let the razor do the work for you.

Change your blades

If your blades are dull, swap them out. This will help in non-irritation while shaving.

What are some ways to help get rid of the razor burn while your face is healing up?

- apply some aloe vera gel either from an aloe vera leaf or a bottle
- apply an astringent liquid such as witch hazel, apple cider vinegar, 2-3 drops of tea tree oil and 1 Tablespoon of water

How about shaving nicks?

No matter how careful you may be, you are bound to get a small nick sooner or later when shaving. Most men just use small pieces of toilet paper applied to the little wounds and they wait for them to clot up. This is an effective way to stop it, but sometimes it takes a much longer time. What can you do? Here are some different options for when you experience this:

- aftershave—the alcohol in aftershave acts as an astringent and can help slow bleeding
- applying witch hazel—works as an antiseptic which can prevent skin infections
- applying cold water—it will cause your blood vessels to constrict, which will cause the blood vessels to slow and eventually clot.
- lip balm like chapstick—the waxy texture will help seal the wounds allowing a clot to form
- anti-perspirant—dab anti-perspirant on wound. The aluminum chloride will act as an astringent.
- Vaseline or petroleum jelly—apply a small amount as you do the chapstick---(remove before you leave the house 😊)
- Mouth wash---yes the stuff used to make your mouth all fresh and clean started out as a surgical antiseptic and was used to clean wounds on battlefields of WWI
- just apply pressure---if all else fails, apply pressure to the area and it should stop within a few minutes.

Lotion

Lotion is NOT just for girls. You can use lotion to keep from having dry, flaky, and itchy skin. You can get lotion made especially for guys. It doesn't have to have all the "girl" smells added to them. If you put it on while you are still damp after a shower, it will be a smoother process.

Deodorant

Another possible thing to use to help fight the body odor is to apply deodorant daily. If you want a natural choice, choose ones that say deodorant. The ones that say anti-perspirant/deodorant contain some chemicals that block your sweat glands. Some would argue that this was not good for you. I have had men in my life use both kinds, some were able to use just the deodorant kind and not smell and the others have used that kind and it did not work at all. You have to use your own judgment. Try different kinds to find a smell that works for you.

Cologne

Why wear cologne?

There are two main reasons: backup for deodorant and personal scent. When you get hot in certain places on your body, the odor protection deodorant provides starts to break down. That's why you have cologne in reserve to mask the natural body scents that people are going to find offensive.

How much to apply?

Regulate the number of spritzes. One to two is enough when applying to the body.

Where to apply?

You want to apply where your body generates the most heat. When you do this, the cologne will "activate" when you need it throughout the day. Some examples include:

- wrists
- underarms
- neck
- chest
- thighs
- back

Hand washing

This is important to discuss because it is about personal hygiene as well as preventing sickness and disease. When you touch things and they are contaminated with germs, everything else you touch becomes contaminated. It is important to do this, especially after using the bathroom, before eating, before working with food, or handling any type of animal.

How to wash your hands:

Seems silly to address this, there is a reason that there are signs in restaurant bathrooms on how long to wash your hands for 😊 It takes 15-20 seconds to wash your hands under warm water with soap. Take note of your nails to see if you need to use a brush to remove dirt under them, which can also contain germs.

Hair care

We have already discussed the importance of washing your hair daily. Young men usually have oil problems and to wash each day is a good idea.

Some boys use gels or mousse to help style their hair. These generally wash out easily. If you have very long hair and find it hard to untangle...use a conditioner to help the comb go through your hair much easier.

Get a haircut that is easy to style. Less fuss and work is always easier.

Ears

Most people will recommend not to insert a cotton swab to clean your ears. If you don't do that in your home, use a washcloth with your finger inserted in your ear to clean out any slightly wax. When you scrub your body, work behind your ears, where yuck will accumulate.

Teeth

The best way to take care of your teeth is to brush them. Here are some tips:

- Pick right brush. A brush with bristles labeled "medium or hard" will be too tough and can actually contribute to gum disease. A worn out toothbrush won't get your teeth squeaky clean, so replace every three months.
- Use toothpaste that contains fluoride, which helps prevent cavities.
- When you are finished brushing all surfaces of your teeth, brush your tongue. This can hold bacteria that can make your breath smelly.
- You need to brush for 2-3 minutes to get them done well.
- Always floss. Most cavities are found in between the teeth, which can't be reached with a brush.

Bad breath

If you keep your teeth properly brushed, brush your tongue, and floss your teeth regularly you should have fairly decent breath. You can always suck on a few mints to help freshen up your breath.

Drink plenty of water to flush bacteria out of your mouth. You can always breathe into your cupped hand and smell it to see if your breath stinks. Keep a pack of mints on hand for public outings 😊

Feet care

Feet can be one of the smelliest parts of your body along with those armpits 😊 This is because these two areas sweat a lot. When bacteria is allowed to grow, it emits an unpleasant odor. Foot care is just like caring for any other part of your body. Keep it clean and dry.

A common foot problem is athlete's foot. This can turn your feet into an itchy, smelly mess. It looks like you have extra dry skin on the bottom of one or more of your toes. It can usually be treated with an antifungal spray. It is important to get rid of this right away because this can spread to other parts of your body. Have you ever heard of jock itch ? It can affect that area.

Nail care

If you have ever shaken hands with someone with bad fingernails, it is definitely something you will remember about that person. Men sometimes tend to bite their fingernails which will cause an uneven jagged look. Take an extra minute or two and use a fingernail clipper to clean up your fingernails and toenails.

Cut across the top of the nail and then do the sides slightly. You will have to do some minor clips to get the sides as even and rounded as possible. You don't want pointed corners.

Acne

I know this part of your life is hard, most EVERY teenage boy gets acne, its just the natural part of growing up. All those hormones are changing and it causes bodily changes within, you experience stress and unhealthy eating habits and bam!!! you have a breakout. So what can you do to help prevent some of them??

Eat a healthy diet. I know I am talking to a wall right now, but what types of food you put into your body, you are going to get out of it. Try to limit the amount of greasy salty foods, fast foods, and sugar filled drinks. Increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables that you eat.

Drink lots of water. The only way to flush out those toxins is to wash them away. Just pure water. Don't buy those sugar filled drinks. Keep a water bottle with you and keep filling it with water. Drink 4-5 of these a day at least.

Exercise. Causing your body to sweat and allowing it to release those toxins within your body is a good thing. The next step is to SHOWER as quickly as possible after a workout to remove those oily germs off your body. Put on clean clothing afterwards.

Wash your face, neck, and back every day. After showering apply a product like an Astringent. It is a liquid in a blue bottle. Apply it with a cotton ball and wipe your acne prone areas. You will see the dirt and oil left on your body even after you shower. This costs only about \$2 at your local store.

Avoid touching your face with your hands throughout the day if possible to avoid spreading any germs.

If you are experiencing extreme acne you can talk to your doctor about other products that may help. Remember it starts from within. Instead of going and getting a heavy duty chemical to put on your face, start taking care of yourself properly and heal your acne on your own.

What about back acne

Some men because of the sebaceous glands on their backs coupled with hair and several other factors, men are susceptible to this difficult form of acne.

This can be embarrassing for a young man especially when going swimming. It is easily treated, it just needs some constant attention. Here are some tips:

- check to see if your soaps are causing the pores to be clogged. Sometimes scented ones clog pores. Try a natural body wash specifically for acne.
- shower daily and keep dry. If you work out, change your shirt.
- Change your sheets weekly along with your pillowcase to help prevent acne.
- Where a clean cotton shirt while working out and shower afterwards. Don't sit around for hours with your sweaty shirt to breed bacteria and cause breakouts.