

A close-up photograph of a bald man with light blue eyes looking directly at the camera. He is holding a light-colored ceramic coffee cup with a handle. He is wearing a dark shirt and a red string bracelet on his left wrist. The background is a textured, grey wall.

BALD CAFE

**GUIDE TO GOING BALD
AND BEING CONFIDENT**

FIRST EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Bald Cafe Guide To Going Bald And Being Confident About It. This guide is a collection of all of my thoughts and principles put together in one easy-to-read pamphlet. It's aimed at helping you, the anxious balding gentleman, finally get over all of that worry and fear of losing your hair and get you to recognise that you too can be a confident, brave and attractive bald man. How do I know? Well, I was once in your shoes. It took me a long time to get over the worry and depression of going bald and get to a place where I can say with 100 percent honesty that I am happy being bald. I am unfazed by it, proud of it and if anything I now see it as a positive. I know that my experience and the experience of the many guys I have spoken to can help you get over that balding fear once and for all. So let's get started.

My aim for the Bald Cafe movement is simply to help out as many guys as I can. I want to show everyone that going bald is actually a pretty insignificant thing—it won't change your life to the extent that you think. You may even be disappointed to know that the majority of people don't actually care about you going bald. One of the most impactful things that helped me get over my own balding was listening to the stories of other bald guys who had been through the same thing and came out the other side happy and in a better place. We all get told that it's not “manly” to talk about our fears, our worries or our insecurities. So many men simply hide from them or try to cover them up. When dealing with insecurity, avoiding the problem is an awful strategy. If you want to really overcome baldness, then be prepared to get in touch with those negative emotions. Be reassured, taking action on those insecurities IS manly.

A lot of the content I create for Bald Cafe revolves around sharing my own experiences and the experiences of others. Hearing others talk openly about their anxiety and fear of balding can really help other guys in dealing with their own insecurity about going bald. It is often whilst listening to someone else talking about how terrible they felt when going bald that many guys feel comfortable enough to take a look at themselves and really identify how they feel about losing their hair. This is the first step required for dealing positively and confidently with your own balding. I invite you to listen to my story to get you to that first stage.

MY BALDING STORY



ME IN LONDON A FEW MONTHS AFTER I NOTICED I WAS GOING BALD (AT THE CROWN). LOOK AT THAT GLORIOUS HAIR.

It truly was glorious. I remember my grandmother telling me how thick my hair was, just like hers. Even my hairdresser was impressed. It felt good. My father had gone bald at 22, but his brother wasn't (yet) and the men on my mother's side had thinning hair but they weren't all bald.

I remember the first time I worried about going bald. I was 14. I had grown my hair long for the first time during an early teenage skater phase. I noticed that there was more hair than usual clogging the drain in the shower. I watched my hairline closely for the next few weeks and even asked my hairdresser. "We all lose up to 100 hairs from our head every day, nothing to worry about," she said. And she was right. My hair wasn't falling out...yet. It looked that way because, well, there was more of it. It was longer so it appeared that more hair was falling out than usual.

Those were the last of my balding concerns for the next 13 years. I had all the hair styles during that time: buzzed, short back and sides, slicked to one side and I even went for the man bun look. Every now and again I would check my hair line but it was solid, as solid as it had been my entire life. My father had told me that an aunt of his had first noticed his hair falling out. He then told me that he would see it in the shower drain and on the pillow after a good night's sleep. I was 26 and had noticed nothing like that. I thought I had gotten away with it. Baldness must skip a generation. I had grand visions of being a silver fox, a thick head of salt and peppered hair, a real handsome gent... But it wasn't to be.

Fast forward a few months. I had been trying to make Youtube videos for a while. I was learning the ukulele so I decided I was going to document my journey on film: I would talk to the camera about my progress and then demonstrate my new ukulele skills. Reviewing one video, there was a scene where I had dropped my music sheet and I reached down to get it, by chance filming the top of my head. The horror.

"What on earth is that?" A big bald pink spot at the crown. It's not what I think it is, is it? I can't be going bald. I rushed to the bathroom, pulled out my phone, switched to the front camera and immediately filmed the top of my head. I felt the hair at the crown. It felt wispy and thin. My fears were confirmed. It had begun. I was actually going bald! I stared at myself in the mirror and said it. "I'm actually going bald."

That night I proceeded to film the top of my head another three or four times, just to be sure. Maybe it was the lighting? Maybe it's always been like that?

Who was I kidding. I was going bald. Denial wouldn't change that.

A cycle of filming the top of my head every day continued for the next week or so. I asked my girlfriend if she thought my hair was falling out and she tried to be nice. She said "you can hardly notice it", but it made me feel worse because it just confirmed what I had feared.

I felt awful. I felt like my whole world was about to change. Life as I knew it would never be the same again. I had been embarrassed about being a fat kid, and then embarrassed about being a skinny kid.

But as a tall, white European living in China for the last few years I had become accustomed to many comments about how “handsome” I was and how young I looked. It stroked my ego. I don’t deny it. I would get smiles in the street from attractive girls and people would ask for photos with me. And now I would be ugly again. All of the comments would fade and no one would find me attractive. They would just think I was a creepy old foreigner, and call me uncle instead of brother.

The anxiety mounted. I avoided pictures and would have to censor any that my girlfriend took to make sure no baldness was showing in them. I constantly touched the hair at the crown. I patted it down and tried to spread out the remaining hair evenly to cover up the bald spot. It was affecting me mentally. I was studying Chinese at the time and sat in a class full of handsome guys and attractive girls from all over the world. Before I had considered myself as one of those guys, but now I was shy for the first time. I sat with the back of my head to the wall or I purposely sat right at the very back so no one was behind me. I listened to people talking and I would think “oh they must be talking about my hair”.

At this point, no one who I hadn’t already told had pointed out to me that I was going bald. But I was so afraid someone would discover it and point it out in public, humiliating me. After a while, I couldn’t deal with it anymore. I would walk with my head down; anxious, afraid and a shell of the man I was before my hair started falling out. I had always regarded myself as a confident guy and I couldn’t believe what was happening to me. Enough was enough.

First I looked to my dad for advice. He had gone bald very early. He must have some great words of wisdom, or at least some support. I messaged him. “I discovered I’m going bald. How did you feel when you first found out? How did you deal with it” I waited patiently for his condolences. “I didn’t feel anything. I got on with it. There are plenty of worse things that could be happening to you.” ...Great. Not the response I had hoped for. He was right, though, I just didn’t know it yet. My next stop for support was the Internet. A simple search of “how to deal with going bald?” brought me to YouTube and to a handful of videos where guys were sharing their own stories about going bald. It provided relief. Just to hear and see guys who had gone through or were going through the same thing that I was struggling with, helped. It eased my anxiety to know that I wasn’t the only one.

With the brief ease of fear and armed with my father’s straight-talking, I made the decision to go to the barber’s and shave it all off. But I wasn’t ready to go full ‘Bic mode’ (wet shave with a razor) just yet. I decided to go for a Marine Corps style “high and tight”: this would make it look like I had more hair in the middle of my head and would even it out with the very short sides, or so I thought. It made it even clearer that I was going bald, but it made me feel better because I had taken action.

My girlfriend and others were shocked. They said “You don’t need to shave it off. Just keep it how it is.” They had a point, but *I* knew. While I had a short back and sides the balding was not very obvious, but I was chronically aware that I was going bald. It was obvious to me. I was worried about it being obvious to others, I was constantly anxious about it and I couldn’t live like that. I couldn’t concentrate on anything else. It was mentally crippling and it had to stop.

Shaving my head was my first step towards me controlling my baldness and not the baldness controlling me.

It felt good. I told people, “This is me now. I’m shaving it off now so that when I am totally bald in a few years it won’t come as a big surprise.”

I felt more comfortable. I bought a pair of clippers after I got sick of paying 5 quid every few days for a two minute buzz cut. I began to buzz it off myself at home and found the shorter I cut it the less often I had to shave it. It was razor time. I got out the shaving cream and proceeded to go full Bic mode, wet shaving the remaining hair until there was none. Damn, that first time felt weird, but I liked it. I felt strong. I had shaved it off. I had made the decision. I felt manly and in control. It looked clean, it looked intimidating and it had given me my confidence back. After that day, I have never looked back.



10 WAYS MEN TRY TO HIDE THEIR BALDING.

As you read this next section, I want you to really think about the different methods you have used to hide your balding head. Which ones can you relate to? How does it make you feel? Many guys think of these 10 cover-ups as “solutions”. In reality, they only create a bigger problem by increasing the anxiety and fear of going bald. By hiding from the baldness and trying to cover it up you are prolonging the inevitable and dragging out an already painful process.

1. **Special haircuts** - Trying to cut your hair in a certain style to give the illusion that you have more hair than you really do. This often means very short on the sides and longer on top to leave you with a maximum amount of hair to successfully apply number 2.
2. **Styling techniques** - Combined with a special haircut, many guys will use excessive hair product and hair spray to perfectly style their hair with each precious strand perfectly in place to result in maximum bald spot coverage. This method is often coupled with increased anxiety as it takes a lot to maintain this perfect bald-masking style. It's raining, it's windy...it's raining and windy, oh no! Can I hold on to the top of my head to keep it all in place? Are people looking at me? Where is the nearest mirror? Do I need a restyle? Nightmare.
3. **The long fringe** - Used specifically by guys who are going bald at the front but still partying in the back. Aimed at the receding hairline, and the widow's peak cover up. This method involves growing an extra-long fringe and then styling it down using hair wax or clay. Unfortunately, it's an easy one to spot because it looks so unusual. A sort of gentleman's “emo fringe”.
4. **Always wearing a hat** - This one is pretty straight forward. You just never reveal what is under the hat. It's a hat 24/7, whatever the occasion. The problem with this method is that there will always be a time when you're forced to take the hat off. In a restaurant, in church, on a night out... or you could just avoid all of these social occasions altogether out of fear that someone might force you to take your hat off. But then what's the point?
5. **Using hair fibres** - This one surprised me with just how popular it is. You take some magic hair dust, apply some to your head every day, and avoid any excessive movement. Again the elements must be avoided since even a minor disturbance could be catastrophic to your new look. Better yet, just stay indoors. The results can be pretty impressive, if you want to live like a mannequin.
6. **Hair systems** - Their popularity exploded in the 2017-2018 era aided by a lot of viral videos of epic hair transformations. This method involves growing out your existing hair at the sides and shaving off the thin areas on top for it to be replaced by thick, natural looking stick on hair. When you dig a little deeper you will find that a lot of the transformations were done by professionals who used systems that cost thousands of pounds.

There are still many guys taking the DIY approach by buying a DIY Chinese stick-on-hair system, which start at about £100. Results may vary, but it seems as if the hair system is the new wig.

7. **Hair transplant** - Viewed by many as a cure for baldness. In reality it is simply one of the most elaborate ways to cover up your balding. A cure would imply it can grow your hair back, but a hair transplant is just removing hair from one area of your head and transplanting it into an area where there is none. Hair transplants are expensive and time consuming, and they're not always successful. Results can vary dramatically, in fact. Not to mention that if it goes wrong the effects and scars are permanent. Risky, for an uncertain reward.
8. **The comb over** - The granddaddy of all balding cover-up attempts. Often sported by the older gent and now a little out of fashion. The classic comb over involved growing out one side of your existing hair and literally combing it over the top to make it look like you have hair there. But as we all know...this stereotype and running joke isn't fooling anyone.
9. **Never taking photos** – If the previous eight points were aimed at hiding your balding from the world, this one is more about hiding it from yourself. We can all joke about comb overs and hair transplants, but many people underestimate just how real, and how painful, the issue of balding is for so many men. For the insecure balding man, photos are to be avoided at all costs (a difficult thing in the world of social media). They don't want people to notice that they are going bald through looking at the photographs, but they also don't want to have photos that they can endlessly look at and use to obsessively inspect their own level of balding. They—We also don't want to leave a paper trail, a timeline of the painful process of balding to look back on. I now regret deleting the photos of my own balding stage, because I could have used them to help a lot of guys out there. But I felt so embarrassed that I never wanted to look at them to be constantly reminded of the pain I felt during that time.
10. **Never leaving the house** - This may seem extreme, but I assure you, it's real. It involves feeling so anxious, depressed and lacking in self-confidence that you avoid unnecessary trips out in public or avoid important personal social events because the baldness has really taken its toll on your confidence. This is a horrific reality for many, many guys. If you are that guy, I will do everything I can in this guide and in all of my content to get you out of this situation and into a place where you are bald and feel 100% confident about it. It might seem crazy now, but trust me. It **CAN** be done.

WHAT EXACTLY IS MALE PATTERN BALDNESS?

At this point I think it is worth mentioning a few facts about male pattern baldness. There are various debates online that speculate on the reason and causes of male pattern baldness. I am a firm believer in science, being a biology graduate, and therefore I think it's pretty undeniable that baldness is determined by genetics. However, I also believe that lifestyle choices (such as a poor diet and increased stress) may bring on your balding sooner than it might have started otherwise.

Male pattern baldness is the condition's common name. It is known in the medical field as androgenic alopecia. 50% of all males will be affected in some way by male pattern baldness by the time they reach age 50. Various genes that are responsible for baldness have been identified. These genes determine how sensitive your hair follicles are to the hormone DHT. Testosterone in male bodies is responsible for the traits we commonly associate with being male, and this testosterone is converted into DHT by an enzyme in the body. That DHT then reacts with the hair follicles on the scalp, and causes them to weaken. The hair growing from these hair follicles becomes thinner and takes longer to grow, and eventually stop growth altogether. The genes that have been identified to cause your susceptibility to baldness largely come from your mother (and thus her family), but "baldness genes" can come from your father's genetic make-up as well. So no avoiding it, unfortunately.

All of this is very important, because it's good to know that male pattern baldness is not some horrific disease with terrible side effects. It's a natural process that the majority of men will go through, and earlier than you might think. However, the psychological impact is what really gets to most guys. A drop in self-esteem, anxiousness, and even depression can result from this unfortunate process. And that is why @baldcafe and this guide were created.

Now that we know what we are dealing with, let's get to dealing with it.

THE PHARMACEUTICAL TREATMENTS YOU HAVE PROBABLY LOOKED INTO

There are a few well known treatments (not cures) that have been proven to slow down the rate of hair loss and allowed guys to hang on to their hair for a while longer. I will make it clear that I do not recommend any of them and for one simple reason: There is no cure for baldness. Yes, the below methods might allow you to hang onto the hair you have left for a little while longer but they will do absolutely nothing for your self-esteem. The use of these drugs do not address the real issues at play. The worry that the drugs will stop working or that the hair loss will eventually catch up to you will always be there in the back of your mind. Ultimately, you are just delaying the inevitable. Why would you want to subscribe to a life of drug use and annoying daily routines just to hang on to something that you don't really need? And that's assuming the meds work. Let's evaluate the two main alternatives, and why I don't think they're worth it.

PROPECIA / FINASTERIDE

Propecia, which contains the active ingredient finasteride, is a drug administered in pill form once daily at a 1mg dose. Propecia is an inhibitor of 5 - alpha- reductase, which is the enzyme that is responsible for converting the testosterone in your body into DHT. Remember, it is the DHT in your body that reacts with the hair follicles on your scalp which then causes the hair to get weaker and fall out. Once Propecia is taken the DHT in the body is reduced significantly within 24 hours, down to a level that allows the hair follicles on your head to function normally—i.e. growing healthy hair. Sounds pretty good so far. But, although approved by the FDA, there is a big concern that the manufacturers of Propecia were not transparent about the side effects discovered during initial trials of the drug. Do a quick online search, and you'll find many men who use the drug complaining about adverse effects to their sexual function. The side effects (which I found listed as "less serious") include impotence, a lack of interest in sex, trouble reaching orgasm and abnormal / reduced ejaculation. Great, so you can have your hair back and feel attractive for your partner but you can't actually do anything about it! That right there should be enough to put anyone off. Here's the scary part--these side effects were also reported years after usage of the drug was stopped, and for some individuals, normal sexual function never returned.

So yes, most individuals taking Propecia reported significant regrowth of hair. But once the hair has grown back, patients must continue the administration of this 'wonder' drug, because if its use is stopped the hair will go with it. So it seems like your choice is between a full head of hair with impotence, and a bald head with your virility intact. Personally, I wouldn't touch this stuff with a barge pole.

MINOXIDIL

Minoxidil, most commonly branded as rogain, comes in a liquid or foam solution. Minoxidil is used to regrow only hair lost at the vertex, or crown of the head. It has shown significant results for the re-growth of hair, but mainly in younger guys and for individuals who have experienced hair loss for less than 5 years. Minoxidil is ineffective at re-growing hair on particularly bald heads. Minoxidil is a vasodilator and works by increasing blood flow to the hair follicles on your head in the crown area. It is believed that with the increased blood flow to these hair follicles, the follicles become healthier and fully functioning, allowing hair to grow normally.

Some drawbacks of Minoxidil include the cost and the fact that it has to be used indefinitely. Results only begin to show after 3-6 months of consistent use and, as with anything, there are side effects. The most common side effects include the temporary shedding of hair (you start by actually losing more hair), rashes and itching of the skin, chest pain, weight gain and heart palpitations. Not as bad as Propecia, perhaps, but let's be honest, it doesn't sound great.

Although the side effects of Minoxidil are less severe and reported more rarely, its focus is quite specific. What if your hair loss is focused at the front? What if the drug stops working once you cross the level into 'particularly bald'? Using Minoxidil might allow you to hold onto what hair you have left at the crown but it's just another delay tactic. All of the issues and worries surrounding your balding are going to come back around and will be even harder to overcome because you didn't address them successfully the first time.

The only way to truly get over the balding is to tackle it head on (pun intended). Be in control of your bald head, have it the way you want and don't let the hair loss control you. For me, this was achieved by shaving the balding hair off. I believe the same can work for you.

THE ONLY REAL TREATMENT FOR BALDING

In my book, there is only one real cure: shaving your head. It is cheap, effective, empowering, takes balls, builds confidence, it doesn't involve drugs, it can be enjoyable, and it's a reminder that you chose to take control of something that at one point had control of you.

Let's think about the emotions we felt when we first found out we were going bald. Shock, fear, anxiety, worry, insecurity, sadness, depression, confusion. When we enter the denial stage, we add a feeling of unattractiveness. Maybe you feel paranoid your partner, present or future, will find out and look at you differently. You constantly try to hide from it. You don't feel confident enough to talk to many people about your balding because the last thing you want is for people to know you are going bald and to purposely draw more attention to it. So you look for alternatives. You adopt one or a few of the methods we described earlier of hiding your balding and (god forbid) you even go down the route of drug use to stop the balding.

Your actions aren't unique. By doing so you are doing what the majority of men do. You hide from the issues at hand. Ignore the feelings, and hope they might go away. There is no cure for baldness, and you know that, but there might be one soon, right? Those trials have started on rats in Japan and show promising results. I'm sure by 2020 there will be a cure. Elon Musk will figure it out. I can hold on until then!

Meanwhile your anxiety worsens, and you feel that constant weight on your shoulders (and not from your luscious locks), because deep down you know there is no going back. So go forward. Take action. And taking action means getting out the clippers and shaving that remaining hair. Why let the balding and fading hair make you feel that way when it's not necessary? Start turning your attention away from snake oil salesmen who promise ways of holding onto the hair and look at the thousands of bald guys out there who are thriving in all areas of life with not a single worry about their hair.

It takes a brave man to go bald and a braver man to take control of his balding. Taking the action of shaving your head, embracing it and being bald is like jumping in at the deep end. It's like ripping the plaster (bandaid) off quickly. It shows that you can be decisive, you can make decisions for yourself and not simply wait around for the negativity of balding to consume you. Being brave and decisive are some of the most attractive things a man can do (ask a woman if you don't believe me).

Now the doubts inevitably enter. I'm scared of losing my hair and you're telling me I should just get rid of it in a split second!? Are you serious? YES I AM. You said it yourself--you can rid yourself in a split second of all the worries that have been suffocating you for so long. It is the action of taking control that will give you that confidence that you so desperately desire.

You might feel afraid now, but by having the balls and the guts and the bravery to finally shave it off, you'll realise that you had it in you all along. You take that confidence forward and you get on with your life. A man in control, not an anxious person who allows their hair, the thoughts of others and their negative emotions to control them.

Now you might say, "I'm not Bruce Willis or The Rock. I don't have the right head shape to shave it off" and so on and so on. That's rubbish. How do you know? Has anyone you've ever met told you you have a weirdly shaped head? Heads are pretty similarly shaped in general, you know. You're afraid of people's perceptions and that's natural. You're human. But how do you think the man who tells people "Yeah I just decided to shave off my hair, it was falling out and looked terrible so I just got rid of it" will be perceived? As a bloody fine, in-control, confident gent; that's how.

Conclusion: everyone can look good bald. As with all things, it's about the way you carry yourself. When you feel attractive and confident, others see that in you as well. A brave bald man oozes confidence.

So no more excuses.



WHEN IS IT TIME TO SHAVE YOUR HEAD?

The answer to this question is a simple one. For me the time to shave it off is when the baldness begins to really affect your mental state in a negative way. As soon as you experience those feelings of self-doubt, depression, anxiety, and it's always on your mind, then it's time to let it go.

Despite this, I realise that every action needs a catalyst. If the negative feelings are not strong enough to force you into action you will do a passable job of “coping” with the balding and trying to manage the negative emotions. I had to go through the same process. It slowly got worse and worse until I would find myself continuously thinking about my hair. How does it look? Are people noticing? Is it sitting right? This is an unhealthy mental place to be in. It affects other areas of your life negatively, so that is the time to do it.



In my opinion, most guys leave it too late and a lot of confident bald men say they wish they had just done it sooner. It would have saved a lot of heartache and fatigue. So the sooner the better, but you too will probably have to reach your breaking point first. I just hope that this guide can save you from the pain and embarrassment that a lot of guys have to go through in order to finally take action.

HOW TO SHAVE YOUR HEAD?

So you've decided I might have a point, and you're going to do it. You're ready to take control and show the world you are done with worrying about that damn hair falling out. You have realised it's more than likely that no one else actually cares about your hair because they are too busy worrying about their own insecurities. And now you are ready to rid yourself of one of your biggest. The balding hair is going and you are ready to wash the anxiety, fear and depression down the drain with the shaving foam. Yes!

Here are some quick tips for first timers to make it a memorable occasion. You will soon be looking back on this as the day you set yourself free! So let's make it one to remember.

TOP TIPS FOR FIRST TIME HEAD SHAVERS

- Splash out on a fancy set of clippers, razor and shaving gel. They do a better job and you deserve quality. Treat yourself!
- Don't rush it. Set aside ample time, perhaps at the weekend, when you have a few days off from work or school to do a proper job and to get used to the new face in the mirror.
- Put on your favourite music.
- Take ample selfies so you can post on the socials and caption "I got rid of that terrible hair, this is the new me and I love it". Manage that image.
- Cultivate a positive attitude. Be nice to people, send someone you love a nice message and compliment someone on their appearance. Outward positivity will help your inward positivity.

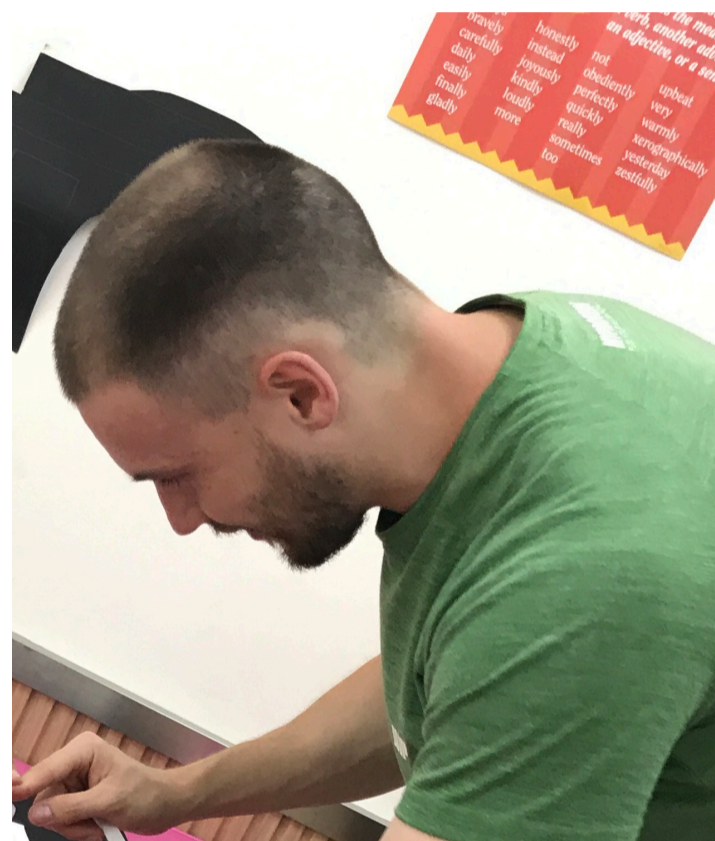
If you are still struggling, see if you have any pictures that show that balding hair. Maybe you took some pictures yourself, maybe they were taken by surprise and caught that bald spot off guard. Look for pictures you're particularly embarrassed about. Let them motivate you to end this. Maybe you can also think of some occasions where you had been ultra-aware of your baldness. Maybe you were embarrassed by someone mentioning your baldness or a friend realising you were going bald for the first time. Remember how those events made you feel and know that you are about to take action--all of those events and feelings will finally be in the past, and you are ridding yourself of them once and for all.

I want to just take a second to say if you are reading this and preparing those things to shave your head for the first time then I am so damn proud of you. And happy for you! It's such an amazing feeling to finally take control of something negative in your life. I remember how it made me feel and I only wish you can experience that joy ten times over.

DO I NEED TO GO STRAIGHT IN WITH THE RAZOR?

Of course not. I didn't. Rather than going in all guns blazing right off the bat, some guys like to go with the buzz cut first. I rocked a buzz cut for about a month before I decided to go all-in and use a razor. The buzz cut for me was high maintenance because if you're doing it yourself, it is a little time consuming to ensure your hair is one length all over. It also made my balding much more visible for me personally because the hair was very thin on top. But you have to cut it down before you shave it anyway, so you can easily pause at the buzz-stage for a while. Do things at your own pace.

YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE 3 LEVELS OF THICKNESS IN MY HAIR HERE MAKING MY BALDING VERY VISIBLE.



STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO A GLORIOUS HEAD SHAVE

Now that you have implemented some of the top tips, it's time to begin. For best results I suggest shaving your head in the bathroom and showering after. However if you are lucky enough to live in a beautiful country with epic scenery and fresh water I would totally do this in a lake or waterfall for a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience. But for us mortals, the bathroom will suffice.

1. **The zero guard** - If your hair is particularly long (not buzzed) you will need to get it as short as you can by using some hair clippers. The clippers don't need to be expensive but they should work well enough to allow you to buzz your own head to with a zero guard. You can even get a partner to help.
2. **Warm it up** - Once your hair is as short as you can get it using the clippers you should rinse your head thoroughly using warm water. This will make shaving easier and more comfortable.

3. **Lather up** - Now it's time to apply the shaving cream or gel. Use a good one. I would suggest one designed for sensitive skin (your scalp is sensitive, after all) and apply enough so that your whole head and hair is well-covered.
4. **Splash out** - Use a good razor, and avoid cheap disposable razors. A decent multi-blade razor is best in my opinion, and make sure it is brand new. An old one will tug on hairs and the entire experience will be painful and unpleasant.
5. **Slowly does it** - Start slowly and shave the hairs as you would on your face. The hair at the sides of your head, around the crown, will still be thick, so take your time. I used short, repeated strokes to slowly get a clean shave. You can go with or against the grain. I used a combination of both to avoid irritation, tugging of hairs and to finally get the closest shave possible.
6. **Finish the job** - As you work around over all areas of your head you can use your other hand to feel for any missed hairs. Continue this process until you have a 100% hair-free dome.
7. **Rinse and repeat** - Now it's time to wash off the shaved hairs and remaining shaving gel. Shower and then towel-dry your head. A note on the towel-drying: Like me, you may have previously been used to very gently towel drying the remaining hair being so very careful not to exacerbate the hair loss by being too firm and vigorous with the towel. No more! Be free and feel the wonders of your head drying with two swipes of a fresh clean towel.
8. **Protect it** - Now for one of the most important aspects of the head shaving process, the after-care. Your scalp will be dry from the shaving gel and the act of shaving the scalp, so it's important to moisturise your scalp after shaving to avoid irritation, flakes or dry skin and general discomfort. I have very sensitive skin and I struggled for ages to find a suitable moisturiser. I tried a few different ones but they would often sting and leave my head itchy for a long time after. This led me to develop my own "bald head butter" which will be available to all from Bald Cafe soon. It uses no chemicals or artificial ingredients, it gives my head a wonderful natural look and it feels and smells amazing.
9. **Bask in your glory** - Take the 'after' picture and bask in its awesomeness.

I still remember this part of the process clearly. I couldn't stop looking at myself in the mirror. However, this time I wasn't checking to see how obvious my hair loss was. I was curious. Look once, then twice. I remember saying "it looks alright actually" with a genuine smile on my face and I wish the same for you. This is a time for reflection. Well done, good sir. You have completed the next step in going bald and being confident!

HOW TO DEAL WITH COMMENTS AND PEOPLE ASKING QUESTIONS

People are going to comment and people are going to ask questions, but they won't be anything like you feared. I want to mention first that if, by chance, you do receive a jibe, a joke or someone trying to make fun of your balding, then know it is coming from a place of insecurity. People who are 100% content and happy with their appearance and who love and accept themselves for who they are have no need, desire or want to put others down. Negativity comes from a place of weakness and insecurity. People who feel low or bad about themselves will try to raise their own self-esteem by putting down and making fun of other people's insecurities.

But the jokes raise an interesting point. The stereotypical bald man that people like to make fun of is what exactly? What image do you have in your head? Is it a strong-willed, confident man with a shaved head? Is it Jason Statham? No, it's not. It's the quivering man in denial rocking a really obvious comb-over. This insecurity is easy to spot and people who are dealing with negativity in their own lives will point this out to make themselves feel better. There's no point in picking on guys who have clearly taken control of the situation, are unfazed by it and are getting on with their lives confidently.

I have never had anyone laugh at me in the street or call me names or anything. However, you will get people asking about it. Most likely colleagues or friends who are seeing you with a shaven head for the first time. It's a change and they will be intrigued. There is only one response: you tell the truth. You don't hide from it or make lies about how you did it for fancy dress or you lost a bet or you got drunk and shaved it off. Be honest. You tell people you were/are going bald. Your hair was falling out. You didn't want to be that guy running away from it. You tell them you took control and you just decided to get it over and done with and shave it off, and now you will be shaving it off for the significant future. People will have respect and admiration for the courage you have displayed to take control. After that, there isn't anything worth gossiping about behind your back, because you've told it straight. You have taken control and so there is nothing more to talk about other than things that are actually important.

A NOTE ON THE HORSE SHOE HAIRCUT

I want to give a special mention here to my own father who rocked the horse-shoe look for as long as I have been alive. I couldn't do this myself. I am not that confident. Now I'm not sure if it is due to not wanting to look like a skin head during the 60's/70's or what, but any man who can rock the horse-shoe without a care in the world is a better and more confident man than me and I applaud them 'til the cows come home.

HOW TO BE CONFIDENT ONCE GOING BALD?

The act of finally shaving your head, whether it is due to reaching your own personal breaking point or by being inspired by Bald Cafe and this ebook, speaks volumes. You already have that confidence. But there are also a few other ways that can help you turn it into lasting confidence.

1. **Tell the truth** - Tell the truth when people ask. If no one is mentioning the fact that you are bald, then great. It might be a little disappointing—you've made this huge leap of faith and other people barely notice, but that's life. There is no need to make a public service announcement and say to everyone: "Oh I just wanted to let you know I'm bald now". However, there may be times when it comes up in conversation. By being 100% truthful about your experience and why or how you came to shave your head, you keep building confidence and it is fully apparent to yourself and others that you have dealt with the difficult situation in a positive manner. Each time you can tell someone truthfully about your experience, the negative emotions you first felt when balding, and then how you came to shave your head, it is a little reminder to yourself about the great thing you have achieved. I have had this experience a few times. Other people's responses often express appreciation and they usually react with a heart-felt "good for you!"
2. **Support others** - Pass on your balding experience with other balding guys. It might be the case that by sharing your own experience with an insecurity, you inspire someone else to tackle their own. Give them the same advice that helped you beat your own balding. Since starting Bald Cafe and giving advice to hundreds of guys to try to help them conquer their balding I have only grown more secure, more inspired and more confident in myself. By helping someone else get to the point that you are at now, you will feel a real sense of goodwill, achievement and it will again be a reminder to yourself that you have totally beaten the insecurity that at one point had full control over you.
3. **Be proud** - Take pride in what you have achieved and don't forget it. Some people might like to brush it off once they are over and done with it. A few months or a year after they have shaved their head and beaten the balding they might now be so comfortable with being bald that they simply never give it a thought. That's fantastic, but I think that it's worth remembering once in a while that what you have achieved is by no means a small feat. It's one that many men will never overcome. So give yourself a pat on the back and be proud of how far you have come.
4. **Set goals** - Set yourself new goals and organise a plan for the future. While worrying about your balding you were wasting a lot of precious mental energy. Now that much of that worry has gone you will have more time and energy to spend on things that really matter to you. Goals can be based around health, family, hobbies, work, money, travel or business.

You can do anything you want. By working towards a different goal, you also won't have the time or the energy to spend worrying about your hair that you just shaved off.

5. **Get active** - The fifth point is exercise. Regular exercise has always played a big role in my life and I am under no illusion that it also played a big role in helping me get over and deal positively with my balding. I was relatively happy with the way I looked, apart from my fading hair, but I can only imagine how hard it must be for some guys to not only hate their body but then also to start losing their hair. It's a double whammy. So I decided to dedicate an entire section of this ebook to helping those guys make some positive changes to their life health and exercise wise in order to help further increase their confidence.



EXERCISE

A bald head with a great body is a winning combination--just take a look at Hollywood. But I'm not saying you need to be a 6ft, ripped bald guy to feel confident. Far from it. Making a few simple changes to your lifestyle to improve your overall health and well-being will go such a long way to helping you build your general confidence.

There is an enormous amount of research that shows that even just 5 minutes of exercise daily can have incredible mood enhancing effects. Regular exercise has even been shown to treat long term depression. With the mood enhancing qualities of exercise combined with the physical benefits, I can't recommend enough a regular exercise regime for us bald guys.

I want to share my own personal experience with exercises. I started going to the gym regularly at around 16. I had been a fat kid but at age 14, I shot up to nearly 6ft tall, and suddenly I was lanky and awkward with 'bean pole legs', as one family friend contributed. So, I hit the gym in an attempt to fill out my frame.

I would regard myself as having slightly below-average genetics for muscle growth. At this time I was also a keen golfer and all of my friends could hit the ball further than me. I also progressed much slower than they did in both muscle size and strength.

Despite all this, I had determination and consistency. Ten years later, this has allowed me to get to a place of contentment. I realised pretty soon that I wasn't going to be the next Arnold Schwarzenegger but I had learned that going to the gym for me was a form of therapy. It was one hour of my day that I didn't focus on anything else other than what I was doing in the gym. I would put my phone away, put my headphones on and just concentrate on myself and what I was doing. I didn't worry about work, I didn't worry about school or my relationships or my hair. I just got on with it. If I didn't go and have my "me" time I felt irritable and stressed out.

The gym is a great place to set small goals because they can be easily achieved in a relatively short amount of time. It teaches self-discipline, self-control and builds routine. It is fantastic for taking your mind off the negative and focus on the task at hand. There is always, ALWAYS a sense of achievement afterwards, and *that* is one hell of a mood enhancer.

Especially for newcomers to the gym or for those who are not used to regularly exercising: If you stick with it for a month, despite inconvenience or lack of progress, just a month, then you will notice your first positive change. It might come in the form of a compliment from someone else. You might notice it yourself in the mirror or see that you are performing better and better that week in the gym. If you reach this point you can damn well believe your bald head will be such an afterthought. You might have even forgotten why you first started going. It has impacted my life in such a positive way and I believe it is one of the best pieces of advice in this book. If you would like to learn more, download the Bald Cafe exercise ebook to help get you started.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

I want to start the conclusion of this book with a thank you. I want to thank you for taking the time to read this book. I am dedicated to help change the perception of male pattern baldness, and that means reaching out to both balding guys and the general public.

Some guys feel so sure that they are happier with hair that they will do anything to keep it or replace what has fallen out. However, guys feel that way due to social pressures and the way people currently think about hair and hair loss. My intentions with Bald Cafe is to open people up to a new way of thinking. I believe the methods I have discussed are the only real way to get over balding once and for all. It is with the Bald Cafe movement that I honestly hope to put companies out of business! I want there to be no need for hair transplant clinics, companies offering hair systems, hair fibres or hair loss drugs. These companies profit from the insecurities of men. They don't want men to realise that they don't need to pay for these expensive treatments and services. They don't want you to realise that you don't need a cure for baldness. All that is needed is for you to accept it, and move on to bigger and better things.

I know you can do it and I wish you all the luck in the world. I can't wait for your email or message to tell me how great you feel after finally getting rid of that thinning hair and getting on with your life.

What are you waiting for?

Get in touch via Youtube, Instagram and the email below. I'd love to hear from you.

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