

# TECHNIQUES FOR BEARDS AND MOUSTACHES

by Graham Holt

## Techniques for Beards and Moustaches

A period beard or moustache can be reproduced in several ways. Originally actors used crepe wool, pressing it flat or "laying" it on to the face in thin, glued layers. A similar technique using real hair is used in the motion picture industry. But unless you are experienced, this is not recommended.

The best type of beard or moustache is knotted/rooted on fine hair lace. They are more expensive, but worth it. Human Hair is preferable to synthetic for authenticity.

Simple, narrow moustaches, however, can be drawn on using cake eyeliner or a sharp, good quality eyebrow pencil. This works well for small shapes, but don't attempt anything larger as it will look unrealistic. If you are using liquid products, use a Fine Point Brush.

To make a Charles II moustache and lip beard, use long triangular shapes to each side of the vertical nasal ridges and a small triangular shape just below the bottom lip, ending before the chin begins to project outward. Draw in the hairs as closely as possible to the natural growth pattern.

For a 1930's style, have a long, narrow triangle follow the top lip closely, ending before the outer corner of the lips. Be sure that the "triangles" do not touch under the nose, but leave an even space on each side of the vertical nasal ridges. Be sure to apply as closely as possible to the natural growth pattern. Powder pencils afterward to be sure that the strokes don't smudge.

If natural sideburns are not long enough or thick enough they can be supplemented by lengthening or filling in the gaps with pencil or cake eyeliner. A Stipple Sponge can be used to create a 5-o'clock shadow, or to create a realistic looking beard for the stage.

Sometimes an actor grows a beard or moustache for a role, but it grows in either gingery or grey. If you want to darken the facial hair to match your own, or a wig, the easiest method is to brush Mascara through the beard in the correct shade. Use an Eyebrow Brush to apply the Mascara, or to use Hair White or Silver in the case of aging a character. Be sure to use a good Brush Cleaner and a proper Makeup Remover.

## How to Apply a False Moustache and Beard Securely

### For Moustaches:

Prepare the area by patting or spraying Barrier Spray on the skin. Paint a layer of Spirit Gum on to the skin and let it dry completely. Both will act as a shield against perspiration which can loosen the moustache. Paint another layer of Spirit Gum on the skin and press the moustache firmly against the skin, positioning it carefully. Press the edges down with a Velour Powder Puff. This will make the edge of the hair lace disappear. Smile to check that you haven't glued over your smile lines by mistake!

### For Beards:

Unless you have a sweaty chin you will not need the first layer of spirit gum so follow the above routine, leaving out Step #2, being careful to center the beard on your chin.

Note: If you are using a fake beard or moustache be sure to use the Barrier Spray, even though this step can be omitted if they are only to be worn for a short time. Always remove the Spirit Gum with Spirit Gum Remover.