Haircut Plan

What happens at a haircut, how it might feel, and what your child can do about it.

Inside

What is happening, and what might happen
How your child might feel — including feeling okay
10 things they can actually do
A Now → Next board and cut-out cards
Two short rehearsals
A guide for the grown-up

Every child responds differently.
Use, skip or adapt any page to suit your child.

What is happening?

I am going to get my hair cut.

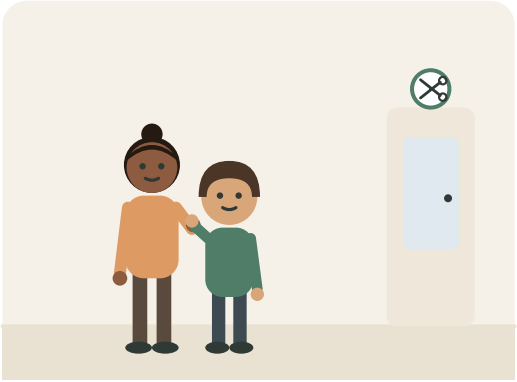
What might happen

Not every visit has every step. Read it through together before the day.

1 Going for a haircut

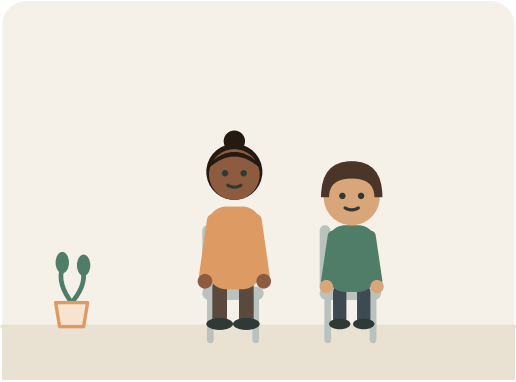
I am going to get my hair cut.

2 We arrive



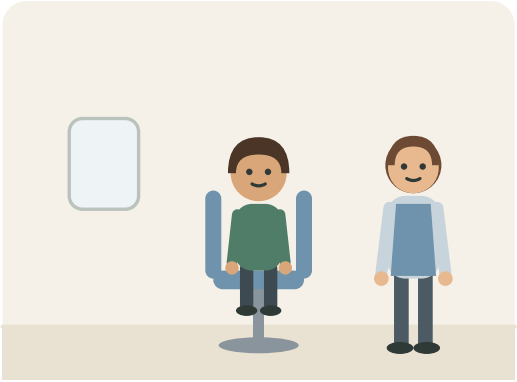
We arrive at the salon.

3 Wait



Sometimes we wait for a turn.

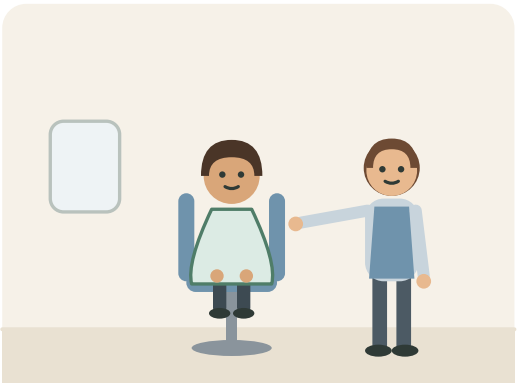
4 Sit in the chair



I sit in the big chair.

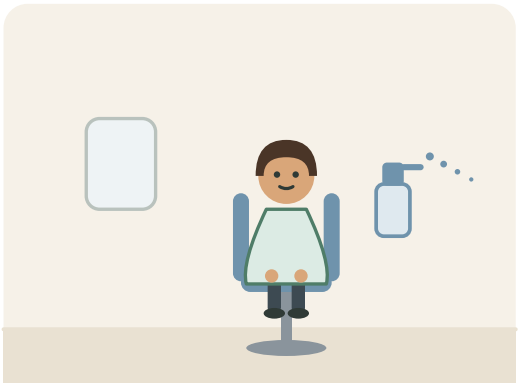
What might happen

5 **Cape on**



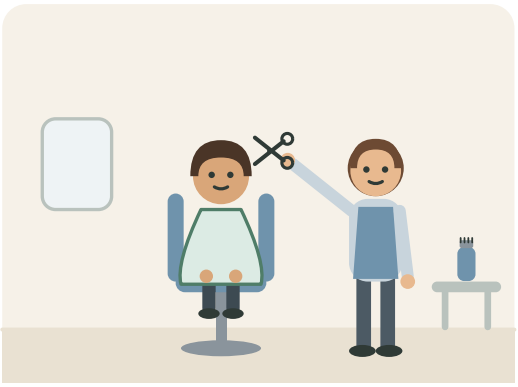
A cape goes around me.

6 **Spray**



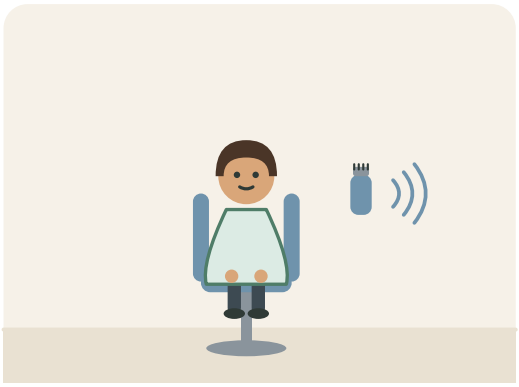
My hair may be sprayed with water.

7 **Cutting**



Little bits of hair fall down.

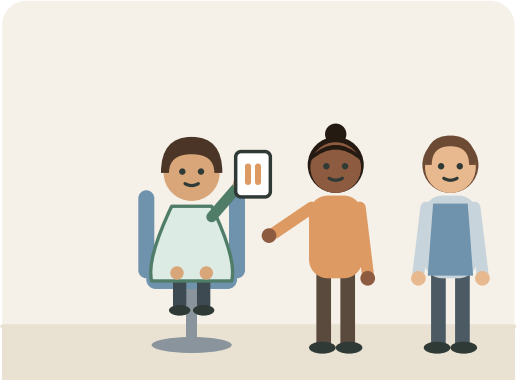
8 **It may be noisy**



The clippers can sound buzzy.

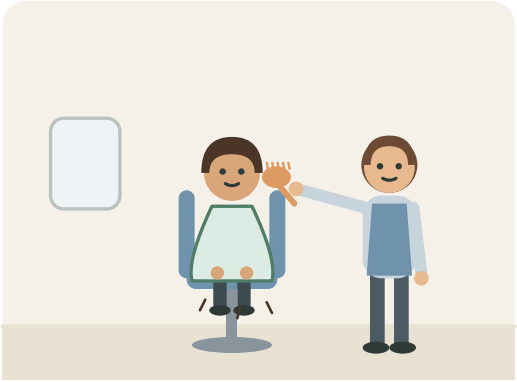
What might happen

9 **Ask for a break**



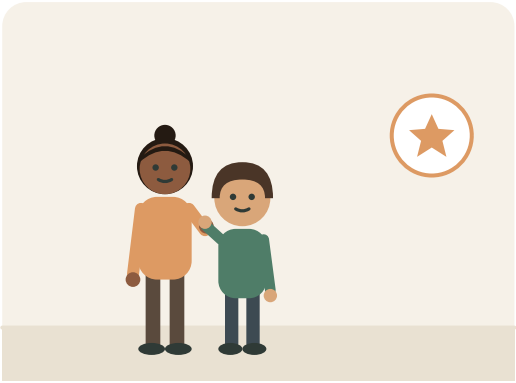
A break is always allowed.

10 **Finished**



The haircut finishes.

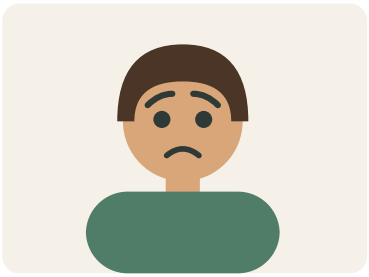
11 **We leave**



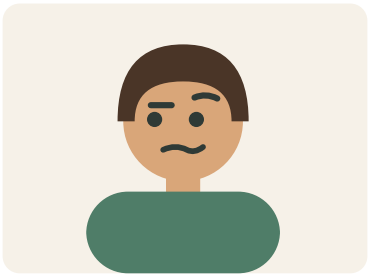
Then we can leave.

How might I feel?

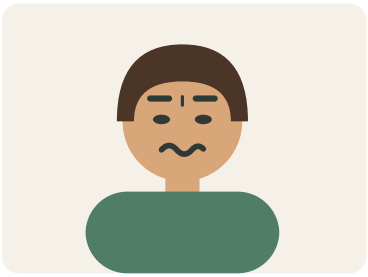
Point to any that fit. More than one is fine, and there is no wrong answer — including feeling okay about it.



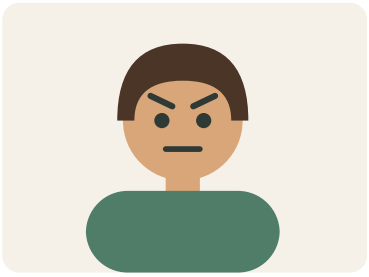
Worried



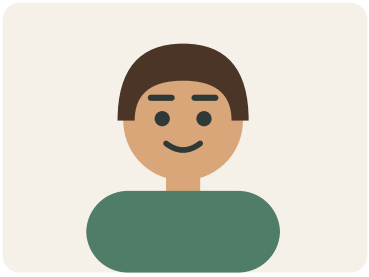
Unsure



Uncomfortable



Annoyed



Okay

Excited

It is okay if this feels uncomfortable. The next page is things that can help.

What can I do?

Cut these out along the dashed lines. Your child can point to one instead of having to find the words. Nothing is printed on the back of this page.

Hold a grown-up's hand

Wear headphones

Watch something

Hold my favourite thing

Ask for a break
“Break, please.”

Say it's too loud
“Too loud.”

Say stop
“Stop, please.”

Take slow breaths

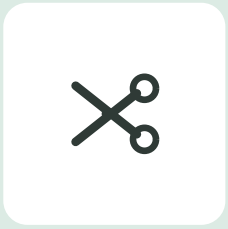
Count to ten

Look away from the clippers

Now → Next

Show what is happening and what comes straight afterwards. Write what your child is doing afterwards in the Next box, or draw it.

NOW



Haircut

→

NEXT

write or draw what happens afterwards

First → Then

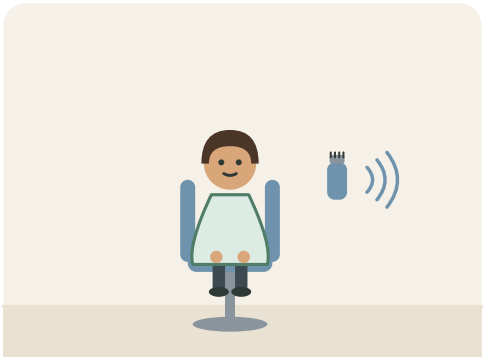
Sit in chair
→ Haircut

Haircut
→ Next activity

Break
→ Back to the haircut

Let's practise

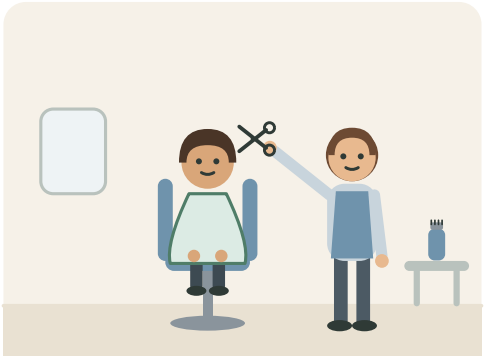
Ask the question, then look at the answers together. Every one of them works — this is a rehearsal, not a quiz.



The clippers sound loud. What could I do?

- Wear headphones
- Say it's too loud — “Too loud.”
- Ask for a break — “Break, please.”

Yes. Headphones, saying “Too loud”, or asking for a break all work.

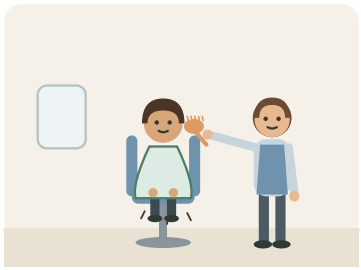


Little bits of hair are tickling my neck. What could I do?

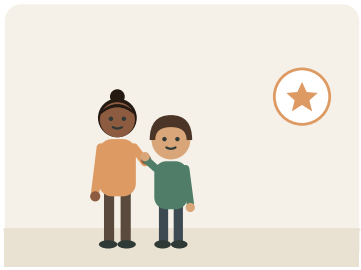
- Ask for a break — “Break, please.”
- Hold my favourite thing
- Hold a grown-up's hand

Yes. Asking for a break, holding something, or holding a hand all work.

What happens next



The haircut finishes.



The cape comes off.
Then we can leave.

Then I can…

write or draw it

Fill the last box in before you go, and show it again on the way. Knowing what comes afterwards is what makes the middle part bearable.

For grown-ups

Two or three minutes of reading. The child's part is on the page above — this part is for you.

Before the haircut

- Go through it together on a calm day, not in the car park five minutes before.
- Two or three short goes over a few days works better than one long one.
- Let your child stop whenever they want to. Making them sit through it again turns the resource itself into something to resist.
- Ring the salon first. Ask for a quiet time of day, and say what helps — most will happily book you in when it is empty.
- Pack whatever you chose above: headphones, the comfort item, something to watch.

During

- Say less than feels natural. A running commentary is more to process, not less.
- Show the card instead of explaining it. Point at the step you are on.
- Offer one or two choices, not an open question. “Headphones or hold my hand?” is easier than “What do you want?”
- Take the break the moment it is asked for. A break that arrives late teaches that asking does not work.
- Name what you can see — “that sounds loud” — rather than correcting it. Agreeing costs nothing and it is usually true.

If your child refuses

- Refusing is information, not misbehaviour. Something about it is not workable yet.
- Try a smaller step: sitting in the chair with no cut, or watching a sibling go first, or just going in and leaving again.
- A haircut done in two short sittings still counts as a haircut.
- Some children manage clippers but not scissors, or the back but not the fringe. Getting part of it done is a real result.
- Home haircuts, dry cuts, or a salon that will come to you are all reasonable alternatives, not a failure to do it properly.

If it does not work

Visual supports help many children and do not work for every child. This one may make a haircut more predictable; it cannot promise that a haircut will be calm, and a child who becomes distressed is not doing it wrong.

If haircuts are consistently distressing, or the difficulty extends to other everyday care like washing hair, teeth or clothing, an occupational therapist or your GP is a reasonable next conversation. This resource is educational material, not therapy or medical advice.

Roo Bloom provides educational materials, not therapy or medical advice.