

2027

AHA
AUSTRALIAN
HAIR FASHION
AWARDS



CREATIVE CATEGORY

HAIR CUTTER OF THE YEAR

RULES AND CRITERIA

AHFA Hair Cutter of the Year

AT A GLANCE	Quick reference for entrants - full detail below.
Category type	Creative Category - Video Entry (NEW for 2027)
Key dates	www.australianhairfashionawards.com
Who it's for	Australian or New Zealand based fully qualified hairdressers with a demonstrable specialty in cutting.
What you submit	One smartphone-recorded video of a real haircut from start to finish (time-lapse OR near real-time documentation), maximum 5 minutes, portrait mode. Plus a short bio, headshot, credits and Stat Dec.
Judging weights	100% video-based judging (no written component). Scored on: technical precision, cutting methodology, hair integrity, the finished cut, and authenticity of the recording.
Entry fee	\$AUD 175 (ex GST) per entry.
Awards Period	Premium, Creative & Business Categories: 10 November 2025 - 18 January 2027
Submit via	www.australianhairfashionawards.com
Questions	Contact ahfa@mdivision.com.au

NEW Category for 2027.

AHFA Hair Cutter of the Year is a category for hairdressers whose craft is built on the precision and discipline of cutting - and who are confident enough in that craft to put it on screen, exactly as it happens.

This category is open to qualified hairdressers working in Australia and NZ across every business setting - salon-employed, salon owners, chair-renters, suite operators, freelance, and independent operators alike.

The entry is one video: a real haircut, recorded on a smartphone, from consultation through to the finished dry result. Judges score the cut itself - not the production, not the editorial styling.

Each entrant is only permitted to submit one entry in this category. Entrants may also enter other AHFA categories, provided all entries meet the relevant Category Rules & Criteria.

Entry Eligibility

Entrants must be fully qualified Australian or New Zealand based hairdressers who have lived and worked in the respective country for a minimum of 80% of the Awards Period.

Entry into 2027 AHFA Hair Cutter of the Year is open to:

- Hairdressers in any setting (employed, salon owner, chair-renter, suite operator, freelance) who have a specialty in the discipline of cutting.
- Hairdressers whose entered cut was performed during the Awards Period.

If you are unsure about whether you meet the criteria above, please enquire with the AHFA Awards team before entering.

Criteria

Each entry is scored against the following criteria:

- **1. Technical Precision.** Clean section work, accurate angles and elevation, considered weight distribution, and

the quality of the line work and blending visible in the recording.

- **2. Cutting Methodology.** The clarity and discipline of the entrant's approach - sectioning structure, sequencing, the visible thought behind the cut, and the decisions made as it progresses.
- **3. Hair Integrity.** Respect for the hair throughout the cut: no over-cutting, no unnecessary stress on the strand, evidence of skilled handling, and - wherever visible - model comfort.
- **4. The Finished Cut.** The cohesion, wearability, and fashion-relevance of the final dry result as shown at the end of the video. Judges ask: would this look be credible walking off the floor of a top salon?
- **5. Authenticity of the Recording.** The video must show a real, continuous haircut. Judges score down for editing manipulation, skipped sections, mannequin work, or any sign that the recording is not a faithful document of a real cut.

Submission Checklist

This is everything required to submit your entry on the online AHFA Awards Platform.

1. One Smartphone-Recorded Cutting Video

A single video of one real haircut, recorded on a smartphone, no longer than 5 minutes. The cut must be a real haircut on a real person - no mannequin or training heads permitted. *NB Must be shot on a smartphone for your entry to qualify.

Entrants may choose one of two formats:

- **Time-lapse documentation.** The full cut, from consultation through to dried finish, compressed into a time-lapse video. The compression must be even across the whole cut - no skipping of sections.

OR

- **Near real-time documentation.** A near real-time recording of the cut. Light editing is acceptable to bring each section together in one cohesive video (to keep within the 5-minute limit), but every key stage of the cut must remain visible - sectioning, the cutting itself, and the finishing.

Whichever format you choose, your video must include:

- A short opening shot (5-10 seconds) introducing yourself and the client/model.
- The consultation moment or brief discussion of what cut is being performed and why.
- The dry hair shown clearly before the cut begins.
- Clear footage of the sectioning and the cut as it progresses - this is the core of the video.
- The dried, finished result shown clearly from multiple angles at the end.

Technical specifications:

- Smartphone, portrait mode (9:16 aspect ratio).
- Maximum video length: 5 minutes.
- Maximum file size: 30MB. .mp4 or .mov format.
- Captions or on-screen text labels for each stage of the cut are permitted and encouraged.

Please upload your video, in the following format:

- CuttingVideo_brief 2-3 word cut description
- e.g. CuttingVideo_PrecisionBob, CuttingVideo_TexturedCrop, CuttingVideo_ConcaveLayers etc



2. Artist Bio

A short written bio (300 words maximum) covering your cutting background, training, the cutting techniques and disciplines you specialise in, and the salon/setting you work in. Submitted as text in the AHFA Awards Platform. This is not separately scored - it provides context for the judges.

3. PR / Headshot

1 x High Res PR / Headshot of Entrant.

4. Credits

Provided in the SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS TAB on the AHFA Awards Platform. Should include:

- Your Name
- Salon / Business Name
- Client / Model name (with their consent - see Step 5)
- Any other credits

5. Statutory Declaration

Online form on the Awards Platform to confirm:

- The cut shown in the video was performed entirely by you, during the Awards Period.
- The video is a faithful, unedited (or evenly compressed) recording of one real haircut. No editing manipulation has been used to skip sections or stitch together unrelated cuts.
- The client / model has consented in writing to having their hair cut and to being filmed for AHFA entry purposes.

Rules

1) Awards Period

The 2027 Australian Hair Fashion Awards (AHFA) Awards Periods are:

Premium, Creative, and Business Categories: 10 November 2025 - 18 January 2027

Product Categories: 18 September 2025 - 2 November 2026.

All images and/or video, and/or content submitted/referenced in your entry MUST have been created during the above applicable Awards Period.

2) Residency and Practice Requirement

Entrants must have lived and worked as a hairdresser in Australia or New Zealand for at least 80% of the Awards Period.

The Australian Hair Fashion Awards (AHFA) is honoured to welcome New Zealand Hairdressers to compete within the awards program. All categories, excluding Eastern Australian Hairdresser of the Year, Western/Central Australian Hairdresser of the Year, Australian Hairdresser of the Year, and Global Hairdresser of the Year, are open to New Zealand based hairdressers. There is a category created specifically for New Zealand based hairdressers to enter: New Zealand Hairdresser of the Year.

If you are unsure about whether you meet the criteria above - please enquire with the AHFA Awards team.

3) Originality

The video submitted must be a recording of a haircut performed entirely by you, during the Awards Period. The submission must not have been previously entered into another awards program. Posting the same video on your business's social media or any other public platforms prior to the AHFA Finalist announcement is not permitted.

4) Video Format and Integrity

The submitted video must be a faithful recording of a single, continuous haircut. The following are permitted:

- Time-lapse compression across the whole cut, applied evenly.
- Light editing for length (to stay within the 5-minute limit), provided every key stage of the cut remains visible.
- Captions or on-screen labels naming each stage of the cut.

The following are not permitted, and entries breaching this rule will be disqualified:

- Editing out the cut itself and showing only before / after footage.
- Time-lapse that selectively skips sections of the cut.
- Multiple cuts stitched together or sections of separate haircuts presented as one entry.
- AI-generated, AI-modified, or substantially digitally altered video content.

5) Model

The cut must be performed on a real person - not a mannequin, training head, or wig block. Models must consent in writing to having their hair cut as part of an awards entry and to being filmed for AHFA judging and any subsequent AHFA promotional use.

6) Hair Enhancement

Wigs, wefts, hairpieces, and hair extensions are NOT permitted as the subject of the cut. The category is judged on cutting performed on the model's own hair.

7) Tools and Setting

Entrants may use any cutting tools and may film in any setting (salon, studio, home). There is no requirement for a professional shoot location - the spirit of this category is that the entry can be filmed in the entrant's normal working environment.

8) Judging Panel

This category is judged by a select panel of respected industry judges drawn from Australia, New Zealand and globally - a deliberate mix that brings both deep local market understanding and a broader international perspective to the assessment. Judges score independently in their own time, with all scores entered directly through Award Force, a globally recognised, third-party awards software platform used by competitions across many industries internationally. A judge's score cannot be overridden by anyone once they have entered it into the platform.

9) Finalists Announcement

For details on the Finalist Announcement, please see information at: www.australianhairfashionawards.com

10) Releasing Your Video Publicly

Your video may be released in any form as soon as the Finalist Announcement has been made. A representation of all finalist entries will be published on www.thejournalmag.com once finalists are announced.



11) Requirements for Finalists and Winners

Across all internal and external communications, AHFA finalists and winners must include the year of their award alongside their title.

E.g. Winners name - 2027 AHFA Hair Cutter of the Year.

12) Copy of Your Work

All submitted videos, written bios, and headshot images become property of The Australian Hair Fashion Awards / MDivision Pty Ltd. Entrants are advised to keep personal copies of their entries.

13) Entry Fees

Entry into the AHFA Live Cutter of the Year Category is \$AUD 175 (ex GST) per entry, payable upon successfully submitting your entry on the AHFA Awards Platform.

14) Entry Deadline

Please refer to www.australianhairfashionawards.com for the entry deadlines.

In rare cases, a deadline extension may be considered - please apply by emailing with your reason for extension clearly stipulated. Please note that extensions can be difficult to grant due to judging timelines already being confirmed with our busy Judging Panel. If an extension is possible, it is unlikely to be more than a few days extra. Please send your email to: ahfa@mdivision.com.au

The AHFA reserves the right to make adjustments to the above Rules and Criteria if they deem it to be in the best interest of entrants and the integrity that these Awards stand for. We will make all reasonable attempts to inform you of these changes.

For any further information regarding entry into this category, please email ahfa@mdivision.com.au