

HOW SHORT

Queues that work for everyone.

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Every barbershop, booking or walk-in, has the same gap: **nothing effective sits between a customer's intention and a seat**. Bookings try, but a fixed slot is a guess that breaks under real timings and no-shows. Walk-ins don't try at all. Either way, both models lose money and both customers lose patience.

HOW IT WORKS

One click at every step, for the customer and the shop alike

1

ONE-CLICK HOLD

Customer taps once to join the queue and pay a small place hold, from anywhere.

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2

ONE-CLICK ARRIVAL

Customer taps once to check in the moment they reach the shop.

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3

ONE-CLICK INTO THE SEAT

Barber taps once to bring them into the chair, and the live queue updates for everyone else.

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4

ONE-CLICK OUT

Barber taps once to check out: the hold becomes the tip. No-show: the hold is forfeited.

WHO PAYS, AND WHY

The **customer** pays the place hold, because it buys them a reliable, predictable cut time, the one thing walk-ins never had. How Short takes a commission from the hold; the rest goes straight to the barber as a tip. **It's optional**: anyone who'd rather not pay to hold a spot can just show up and wait as normal.

MODEL 1 BOOKING SHOPS

THE SLOT PROBLEM

A fixed appointment slot is always either too long or too short. Guess short and the cut overruns into the next customer, pushing the whole day late. Guess long and the chair sits empty, burning paid time nobody bought. Worse still, a barber racing the clock to avoid overrunning ends up rushing the cut, the worst outcome for everyone: a bad haircut for the customer, a hit to the barber's reputation, and a shop that loses the repeat visit.

FOR CUSTOMERS

× PROBLEM

- 1 The appointment isn't actually reliable, they still end up waiting past their booked time when the barber overruns
- 2 No room to walk in on a whim, since the day is fully appointment-gated

✓ FIX

- 1 Check-in/check-out builds live, learned timing per barber and service, so bookings run to real durations instead of a padded guess
- 2 Named-barber holds give the same reliability as a booking, without locking the whole day into fixed slots

FOR THE BUSINESS

× PROBLEM

- 1 Double-loss: a walk-in gets turned away to protect a slot, then the booked customer doesn't show
- 2 One overrun cascades delays through the rest of the day
- 3 No-shows leave an empty chair with no time to refill it

✓ FIX

- 1 Named-barber holds keep the reliability of booking, without a rigid slot a no-show can waste
- 2 Runs an honest, transparent queue instead of being held to unrealistic fixed appointment times, replacing the one-size slot guess
- 3 A paid place hold puts money on the no-show, and live, realistic timing means customers are less likely to flake in the first place

MODEL 2 WALK-IN SHOPS

THE WALK-IN PROBLEM

Walk-in shops run on guesswork. Demand arrives in waves nobody can see coming, so barbers swing between slammed and idle, customers get no real sense of the wait, and the business has no data to plan around, only the till at the end of the day.

FOR CUSTOMERS

× PROBLEM

- 1 Pure guesswork on wait time, with no way to reserve remotely, and fear someone who walked in later gets seen first
- 2 Wasted trips: showing up to find the shop slammed
- 3 Having to call or text the shop just to check if it's worth coming in

✓ FIX

- 1 Customers join the queue and hold a spot from anywhere; live, learned wait times replace guesses and a visibly ordered queue restores fairness
- 2 Live wait status before they even leave home, so no more wasted trips
- 3 No more calling or texting to check schedule or availability, the live queue shows it instantly

FOR THE BUSINESS

× PROBLEM

- 1 Demand is lumpy: all the buses come at once, then none for an hour
- 2 No visibility into demand until customers physically arrive
- 3 Idle chair time from a no-show feels personal to the barber, not just lost revenue
- 4 No lever for a barber to fill a dead patch themselves
- 5 No way to signal an upcoming break or schedule change, so the queue doesn't reflect real staff availability
- 6 Payment admin and cashflow is a headache some owners want gone
- 7 Everyday shops (£20-30 cuts) can't absorb no-shows the way high-end shops can
- 8 No insight into traffic patterns or customer behaviour, so decisions are made on gut feel

✓ FIX

- 1 Turns invisible demand into visible, plannable demand the moment customers join the queue
- 2 Barbers see demand coming before it walks through the door, so the next hour can be planned
- 3 Customers are less likely to flake at all, since there's money on the line and they can see realistic timings; when one does, it tips the barber instead of costing nothing
- 4 One-tap offers let a barber conjure customers out of a slow hour
- 5 The system knows staff schedules, and a barber can mark "check out for lunch after this customer" so the queue updates to reflect it live
- 6 Opt-in ladder: owners keep handling payment themselves, or let How Short take it on
- 7 The same small hold protects an everyday shop as much as a premium one, with the walk-in style left completely intact
- 8 Real check-in/check-out data reveals traffic patterns and customer behaviour, unlocking more revenue per seat and a direct channel to customers to fill quiet gaps

NOT JUST ANOTHER QUEUE APP

EVERY OTHER QUEUE APP

Shows a live wait and texts you when a chair opens. Useful, but a no-show still costs the customer nothing, so they keep happening, and the app never puts a penny in your pocket.

HOW SHORT

Is the one that puts money on the line. **The flake forfeits a place hold, most of it landing with the barber as a tip**, and check-in/out teaches the system real timings so the waits it shows are actually accurate.

WHO NEEDS THIS MOST

HIGH-END BARBERS ALREADY COPED

Premium rates and booking deposits mean the occasional no-show is absorbed by the margin. They can afford to charge upfront because clients pay for the name, and one empty chair doesn't hurt.

EVERYDAY BARBERS CAN'T

On a £20-30 walk-in cut you can't demand a booking deposit, and the price leaves little cushion. Every no-show and every idle chair is pure loss on a margin that was already thin. The people who least afford no-shows have had no protection from them.

– **HOW SHORT CLOSES THAT GAP**: a small place hold gives the everyday barber the no-show protection and predictable flow that only premium chairs have had, without raising prices or turning walk-ins into bookings.

THE GROOM TRIAL · PROVING THE VALUE

The point of the trial is to prove the value with **Groom's own numbers**, not claims. The first two weeks set the baseline; the month after is the test. The system records the "before" itself, so nothing is invented.

WEEKS 1–2 · BASELINE

JUST WATCH AND MEASURE

Check-in and check-out only, no holds and no friction. Just logging who sits down and when they leave, to capture the true starting point: chair use and weekly takings.

WEEKS 3–6 · LIVE TRIAL

SWITCH THE SYSTEM ON

One month running How Short with the lightest-touch features only: place holds and live waits. The same measurements continue, now compared against the baseline, with held customers compared against un-held walk-ins side by side in the same shop.

THE VALUE, MEASURED

CHAIR UTILISATION ↑

working mins spent cutting · before vs after

REVENUE PER CHAIR ↑

weekly takings net of How Short's cut · before vs after

INSIGHTS, FROM ZERO

no-shows, waits, demand and repeat visits the shop could never see before

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ↑

a known wait and a remote hold lower the barrier to getting a cut, tracked via repeat visits and follower growth

– measured live at Groom · no figures printed until they're real –