

Facts About Scissors and Shears

Quality scissors and shears are the only kind to consider. Yet many consumers continue to buy scissors and shears that they find frustrating to use and hence are disappointed with their purchase. Quality scissors can be expensive, but the purchase should be considered an investment that can last a lifetime.

What is the difference between scissors and shears?

Scissors are usually under six inches (150mm) in length. Scissors usually have two small matching handles and eyes, and are designed for the lighter tasks of hand cutting. Shears generally measure six inches (150mm+) or more in length. One handle is small and for the thumb, the other handle is larger, and for the insertion of two or more fingers. Shears are designed to do a great variety of heavy cutting jobs in the home and in industry. Hair cutting shears are the exceptions to these rules of thumb, as they are both greater than six inches in length and have equal sized eyes and handles.

TIPS

The tips of good quality scissors always meet perfectly when in the closed position. Quality scissors will cut along the entire length of the cutting edge right to the tips. Delicate cutting tasks require fine pointed tip scissors like cuticle scissors, embroidery scissors, etc.

FEEL

Scissors will only get used if they “feel right.” People describe the feel as the smoothness with which the scissors open and close. A smooth finish is absolutely essential to prevent pressure points and fatigue.

BLADES

Blades are heat treated to the correct hardness and temper. Uniformity must be absolute to insure long-lasting cutting edges. Blades are ground slightly concavely on the insides, thus blades should only meet at one point at any given position. This is where the cutting action takes place. A pair of blades must be individually matched to ensure that they will function optimally together.

The screw allows the scissors to be taken apart for professional sharpening, reassembly and resetting.

HANDLE

The handle of a pair of scissors has two “eyes” which are the work place for the fingers. Size and shape of the eyes depend on the scissors’ designated job. Eye shapes have changed in recent years to reflect trends in style and shape. Dress making and tailor shears generally have one oval and one round eye.

QUALITY

To test for quality, look at a pair of scissors from the side. In the closed position only the tips should meet and you should be able to see between the blades. Secondly, open the scissors fully and then let the blades fall towards each other. They should not stay in the open position nor close completely, they should meet about half way.

Quality scissors are not limited to cutting only certain fabrics, they will perform well on a variety of materials. Additionally, the finish of the scissors should be smooth so that they do not catch on delicate materials.

MAINTENANCE

Scissors must, periodically, be professionally sharpened. Occasionally, a drop of oil should be put between the blades at the point of the screw. 