



A2

A2 · UNIT 1 · EPISODE 8

Getting a Haircut

Say exactly how much to cut.

KEY WORDS

just a trim	Cut only a little; keep the same style.	<i>Just a trim, please.</i>
a little shorter	Cut some more off.	<i>A little shorter, please.</i>
about this much	Say this and show the length with your fingers.	<i>About this much. Maybe two centimeters.</i>
short on the sides	Cut the hair on the sides short.	<i>Short on the sides, leave the top.</i>
leave the top	Don't cut much on the top of your head.	<i>Short on the sides, leave the top.</i>
a little more off the back	Ask for a small change at the end.	<i>Can you take a little more off the back?</i>

THE STORY

- Nina** Hi, I'm Nina.
- Ray** And I'm Ray.
- Nina** Ray, your hair looks different.
- Ray** It's shorter.
- Nina** A lot shorter.
- Ray** I said just a little. She heard something else.
- Nina** What did you say exactly?
- Ray** I said, not too much.
- Nina** Ah. That's the problem. Not too much means nothing.
- Ray** Why? It's clear to me.
- Nina** Not too much for you is two centimeters. For her it's five.
- Ray** So I need numbers.
- Nina** Numbers, or something you can show. Let's do the words first.
- Ray** Okay.
- Nina** If you want almost nothing, say just a trim.
- Ray** Just a trim. Is that really short?

Nina It means clean it up, keep the shape. Nothing changes.

Ray That's what I wanted.

Nina Then say those three words. If you want some off, say a little shorter, and show with your fingers.

Ray Fingers work?

Nina Fingers always work. Two fingers apart, and say about this much.

Ray About this much. That's good.

Nina And one more. Leave the top.

Ray Leave the top?

Nina Short on the sides, leave the top. It's the most common haircut here, and it's four words.

Ray Short on the sides, leave the top.

Nina And at the end, they'll ask how it looks. You can say a little more off the back.

Ray Can I still change it at the end?

Nina You can always take more off. You can never put it back.

Ray That's a life rule.

Nina That is a life rule. Let's practice. I'm cutting your hair.

Ray Okay.

Nina Hi, what are we doing today?

Ray Just a trim, please. Short on the sides, leave the top.

Nina How short on the sides?

Ray About this much. Maybe two centimeters.

Nina Perfect. See — you gave me three things. The style, the amount, and a number.

Ray And I didn't say not too much once.

Nina So — just a trim, a little shorter, leave the top. And always show with your fingers.

Ray Thanks, Nina. My hair thanks you too.

Nina That's it for today. See you next time.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Why was "not too much" a problem?

- ☐ A It's rude.
- ☐ B It means different things to different people.
- ☐ C It's too long to say.

2. "Just a trim" means...

- ☐ A Cut it very short.
- ☐ B Clean it up and keep the shape.
- ☐ C Cut only the top.

3. How short on the sides does Ray want?

- ☐ A About one centimeter
- ☐ B About two centimeters
- ☐ C About five centimeters

4. What is Nina's "life rule"?

- ☐ A You can always take more off.
- ☐ B Always say not too much.
- ☐ C Never go back.

Shadowing tip. Pick three lines you like from the story. Say each one five times, faster each time, until it sounds natural.

ANSWER KEY

1. **B** Not too much for Ray is two centimeters. For the hairdresser, it's five.
2. **B** A trim means clean it up, keep the shape. Nothing changes.
3. **B** About this much. Maybe two centimeters.
4. **A** You can always take more off. You can never put it back.

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