

Why Amish Men Grow Beards ... But Not Mustaches

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Today I found out **why Amish men grow beards but not mustaches.**

This tradition stems back to the early days of the Amish when wearing elaborate mustaches was common among those in the military. In their early days, the Amish and other Mennonites in Europe were often persecuted by these groups. In addition to that, the Amish, being a pacifist group, didn't want to associate themselves with those who waged war, so strictly forbid their members from growing mustaches. Today, few men in the Western world choose to grow mustaches, but this tradition remains among the Old Order Amish people, which number about 200,000 in North America.

While mustaches are not allowed, beards are practically a requirement among the Amish due to beards being common among men in the Bible. However, not all Amish men are traditionally allowed to grow beards. It isn't until an Amish man gets married that he will stop shaving his beard and allow it to grow out, with beards being a mark of an Amish male having become a man.

Bonus [Factoids](#):

- The Amish live their life by an unofficial set of rules collectively known as **Ordnung**. These rules give strict guidelines to the Amish people on how to conduct themselves both publicly and privately. The rules vary somewhat between different pockets of Amish throughout the North America, which isn't surprising considering the Ordnung is not written down anywhere. Rather, these traditions are passed on from one generation to the next verbally and changes to these traditions are occasionally made by each group, trying to balance traditions with the changing world.
- Within their own communities, the Amish typically do not speak English, unless outsiders are present. Most Old Order Amish speak Pennsylvania Dutch, which is a dialect of German. The children are taught English at a very young age, but typically speak this German dialect among each other and sermons are always given in German.
- Among the Amish, weddings always take place on Tuesdays or Thursdays in November or December, after the harvest is complete. Courtship typically begins at church. When a boy decides to court a girl, he will ask her to let him give her a ride on his buggy after church. They will then continue courting one another in a secretive manor until only a few days to two weeks before they are to be wed. At that time, their commitment to be married is announced in the church. The wedding does not take place in the church, but rather at the home of the bride. In their weddings, which typically last about four hours, the bride and groom do not kiss or exchange rings, like in traditional Western style weddings, though there is a reception afterward where the community will get together and eat to celebrate the newlyweds.

- The Amish give every member of their community the chance to leave and even often encourage them to do so for a time. When Amish children turn 16 years old, they are encouraged to go live and experience modern life among the “English”. If you’ve ever lived near an Amish community, you’ll often find these teens getting drunk, doing drugs, having sex with random people, and generally trying to cram a lifetime of such acts into the span of a few months. Once they’ve had their fill of this, they can choose to remain among the “English” or return to the Amish community. If they chose to return to the community as official members, they are expected to marry and remain among the Amish for the rest of their lives and abide by the strict rules of the community and the precepts of the Bible. The vast majority of these young Amish choose to return to their communities. Once they do so, they are baptized for the second time in their life, being previously baptized at birth, and will pledge themselves to the Amish way of living. Those who leave are no longer considered Amish, as to them being Amish is not an ethnic designation, but rather is a matter of faith, though Amish children are still considered Amish, even though they are too young to be members of the church. The few who decide to cease being Amish typically will leave and join Mennonite church communities among the “English”, as they have similar religious beliefs owing to the Amish having broken off from the Swiss Mennonites in the early 18th century.
- If a particular Amish group isn’t to the liking of one of their members, in terms of some rule or other, they will often seek out another Amish community that has slightly different rules than their existing one, trying to find one where the rules coincide with their way of thinking. Most Amish communities have more or less the same core doctrines, but there are variations, such as how much modern technology to allow. For instance, some communities allow for a community telephone to be placed in a public area on or just off of the group’s land, while other communities find this practice and abomination due to being too worldly. Interestingly, groups of Amish have also been known to separate based on something as seemingly trivial to the outside world as the acceptable width of a hat-brim.
- One of the reasons Amish goods are often extremely high quality is that they feel that all work they do should give glory to God and so producing something like a quilt that isn’t perfect as it can be would violate this precept.
- Christmas among the Amish is a two day celebration. The first day is comprised of celebrating Christ’s birth in a solemn, worshipful manner. The next day, on December 26th, the people will visit family and friends and have traditional Christmas dinners and the like.
- Interestingly, Amish people do not play musical instruments. They are strictly forbidden in the Old Order Amish communities, being thought of as too worldly, owing to the fact that musical instruments being played illicit strong emotions from those listening and is a form of showing off, or standing out, by the person playing the instrument, which isn’t in concert with Amish humility.
- The Amish get their name from Jakob Ammann, who lived from 1656-1730 and was a Swiss Mennonite leader who ended up creating a division among the Mennonites of the day. The group that followed him became the Amish or Amish Mennonites and the other group became known as the Swiss Mennonite Conference.
- The Amish Mennonites came to North America in the 18th century to escape persecution and poverty.
- The most common names for Amish people are: for men: John, Amos, Samuel, Daniel, and David; for women: Mary, Rebecca, Sarah, Katie, and Annie.
- A typical day for an Amish man is as follows:
 - Get up around 5:00am.

- Tend to the animals and milk the cows.
 - Pray and eat breakfast with the family.
 - Tend the fields (planting / harvesting / etc, depending on the season), with a break for lunch.
 - Milk the cows and tend to the animals once again in the evening.
 - At sunset, cease working and either visit with community members and family or go to bed.
- A typical day in the life of an Amish woman is as follows:
 - Wake up around 5:00am.
 - Help out with milking and prepare breakfast.
 - Get the children, if any, ready for school.
 - If it's laundry day, do the laundry, generally using a gas motor to power the wringer style washing machine. Laundry day is typically Monday for many Amish communities.
 - Tend the garden and house; prepare the mid-day meal; can food / make jams / etc, depending on the season; make and repair clothing; prepare the evening meal; and other such household related tasks.
 - At sunset, like the men, they either visit with community members or their families, or go to bed.

Read more at <http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2011/01/why-amish-men-grow-beards-but-not-mustaches/#YgBcLsAvHrP8H3wm.99>