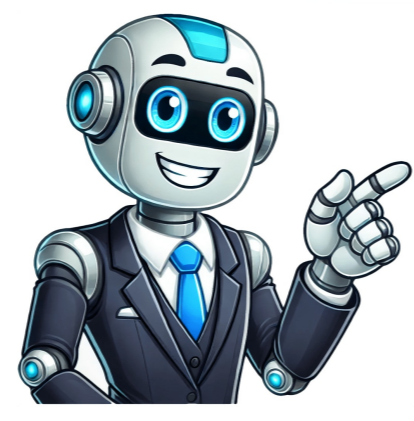


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The dependable Philips brand and its team of beauty and grooming product designers produce some of the world’s finest electric rotary shavers, including the Series 5000 and Series 7000 line of men’s shavers. At a glance, these Philips electric razors look very similar, making it tricky to distinguish the qualities they have to offer, which one of the two is better and right for you. But there are more differences than first meet the eye, so read on to learn what makes each of these top-quality electric shavers unique. The Philips Series 7000 Shavers, known for clarifying that both the Series 5000 and 7000 rotary shavers perform admirably and that neither is slow or unworkable – meaning that each operates a little differently. The Philips Series 5000 was built for speed. Its Multi-precision blade system works in tandem with three 5-direction Flex Heads, quickly and accurately lifting and cutting both short and stubborn, hard to reach and flat-lying hairs from other shavers’ miss. The increased skin contact provided by Philips’ Flex Head technology means a close shave in fewer passes – especially important on sensitive areas like the neck. The Philips Series 7000 was designed with extra comfort in mind. Like the Series 5000, it features 5-direction Flex Heads that gently follow your unique facial contours with minimal pressure. Philips’ patented GentlePrecision blade system, with its circularly arranged slots and V-shaped blades, shifts skin out of the way, and positions each hair at its optimal cutting point – removing short and long facial hair without causing irritation. Unique to Series 9000 electric shavers are SkinGlide rings, comprised of a remarkably smooth anti-friction coating that surrounds each rotating head. SkinGlide contains thousands of tiny, evenly distributed glass-like spheres that decrease surface resistance, allowing the shaver to glide easily over skin. Lower friction means reduced pressure and redness. Both the Series 5000 and 7000 electric shavers run on rechargeable lithium-ion batteries. Light, powerful, and immune to the so-called “memory effect”, lithium batteries are standard in most high-end grooming tools. Series 5000 shavers run for approximately 40 minutes, while those in the Series 7000 range have a slightly better and longer runtime of 50 minutes. Either is respectable, capable of providing at least 13, and up to 17, shaves – and recharge times are fast, in the area of 1 hour to replenish a fully-depleted battery. Add to that a quick-charge feature that provides enough power for one shave after just 5 minutes of charging, and there’s little worry about not being able to shave when you need to. The Series 5000 power adapter consumes a maximum of 9W, as compared to the 5.7W of the Series 7000 adapter. In the grand scheme of things, it’s a small difference, but one that some watt-watchers may find worth considering. Where the Philips Series 5000, with its black, sleek colour scheme, is dark and striking in appearance, the Series 7000, with its vibrant and matte metallic body, looks light and fresh. Both shavers are highly ergonomic, tapering near butt-end into a handle, flaring out, then tapering in again near the power button. On the rear portion of the handle, a stippled, soft-touch material provides extra grip – essential when using the shaver. The power button on the Series 5000 is placed on a panel that subtly protrudes from the shaver body, making it easier to press, whereas the Series 7000 power button is recessed and slightly narrower. That extra depth requires a touch more reach but reduces the possibility of accidentally powering the shaver on or off. Placed side-by-side, the difference in handle shape between the two shavers becomes more apparent. The Series 5000 sports a pronounced, angular taper, which curves inward at a lower point, whereas the Series 7000’s elongated handle may be more comfortable for those with long fingers. However, the broader shoulders of the Series 7000 necessitate a lower grip, whereas the Series 5000 can be “choked up” on, allowing the application of more pressure with greater precision. Both shavers include a Philips SmartClick Precision Trimmer – a click-on, click-off, round-tipped beard detailing tool for maintaining beards up to 5 mm in length. Also included with each shaver is a travel accessory – in the case of the Series 5000, a clip-on protective cap that protects the shaver head from dust, debris, and impacts. With the Series 7000 is a pouch that’s perfect for storing the razor while traveling, or when not in use. Now, the Philips series 7000 is available in different models – S7921/51, S7370/12, and S7530/50 – which come with various accessories such as Exfoliation electric cleansing Brush, Precision Trimmer, and travel pouch. The Philips series 5000 comes in models S5420/06 AquaTouch, S5130/06, and S5572/10 – which are all pretty much the same, apart from colours and Turbo+. Philips Series 7000 With Bluetooth Smart Shave Technology
Universal, wide input voltage (100-240V) power adapter for worldwide operationCorded and cordless useDisplay features: 1-level battery indicator; low battery indicator; cleaning indicator; travel lock indicator; shaving head replacement indicatorAquatec Wet and Dry technology, for use with cream, gel, or in the shower2-year guarantee Don’t worry – both are excellent wet & dry shavers in a similar price range – it’s a tough call. Based on their most significant differences, we’d recommend the Philips Series 5000 if you favour speed, and your skin isn’t especially sensitive, because it’s designed more for speed and efficiency, with “Turbo Plus Mode”. But if your face and neck are irritation-prone, try the Series 7000 with its dermatologically tested anti-friction rotary heads – designed with extra comfort-oriented features, it provides an exceptionally close shave without redness or pain. Also, the new series 7000 has “Smart Shaver” technology which allows you to connect your shaver and smartphone for a personalised shave – a feature currently not available on the series 5000. I myself am a fan of Philips trimmers, and shavers, and follow their newest devices frequently, yet I get confused between their trimmers from time to time because there are so many, especially in their Norelco collection alone. It’s very easy to get lost in their feature-heavy, hand-sized and I don’t blame you for that. This is why I feel it’s necessary to draw the lines between bad to good trimmers. With that in mind, I’ve covered the gradual improvement of the three prominent trimmers in the market as a form of battle: Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000. I pre-owned the first two devices and made a purchase of the third six months back and have been trying them out side by side ever since. If you follow closely, you’ll find that there are certain differences, improvements and shortcomings in these devices and hopefully it’ll help you identify whether you need an upgrade or to grab one of them depending on what you actually require. Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000 : Comparison Chart
FeaturesNorelco 5000Norelco 7000Norelco 9000 Cutting DirectionOneTwoTwo No. of Attachments171921 CleaningSeparately rinseableFully washableFully washable HousingPlastic handleStainless steel handleStainless steel handle Charging Time1 hour2 hour2 hour RuntimeOver 2 hours4 and a half hoursOver 5 hours Warranty1 year5 years10 years Price See on Amazon See on Amazon See on Amazon Brief Feature Overview In this section, I’ll briefly shed light on the Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000 trimmers’ basic qualities before moving on to my experimental analysis for each cordless trimmer. Philips Norelco Multigroom Series 5000 The Norelco Multigroom series has been lucky to have included the Norelco 5000 device because it’s a great value for money trimmer unit. It’s optimum for one who are looking for an entry-level long beard trimmer for their daily deeds. It’s equipped with all the basic & necessary features and is marked as the budget killer for uncountable reasons. Philips Norelco Multigroom Series 7000 The Norelco 7000 series in this line has brought in significant upgrades from the previous 5000 series. Norelco 7000 contains stronger guards built out of fiber-glass material that’s made to last long. It excels at battery power as well. With the additional attachments included in the packaging, this sits at the most optimum spot between price and performance. Philips Norelco Multigroom Series 9000 The Norelco 9000 series is a premium and top-of-the-line body groomer by Philips. There’s a significant upgrade in the blades with self-sharpening properties and a more comfortable trimming operation on any type of skin. Even though it’s priced higher than the rest, Philips has obvious reasons for doing so because of its comfort, all-round attachments and a carry-pouch to store everything in one place. Side by Side Feature Assessment I’ll put the features that are different from one another side by side in this section so that you can gain a basic understanding of their distinctions at a quick glance. Comparative Analysis: Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000 I’ve had the pleasure of using each of these trimmers in question side by side to fully understand their maximum potential. By doing so, I am able to provide you with the insight data on how each of them performs next to the other. Trimmer Housing Let me start off with the housings of these trimmers. Basically, all three of them share a similar no-slip rubber grip that is advertised by Philips. But when I used each of them for prolonged duration, the grip felt like an area of improvement as I had to hold on to them firmly in the fear of slipping out. Check Price On Amazon But between Norelco 5000 vs 7000, the quality of housing has been significantly improved and it has carried on to the Norelco 9000. While the Norelco 5000 generates a plastic feeling in my hand, the latter variants feature a stainless steel body. I’ve dropped them on a couple of occasions which seemed to have caused no damage whatsoever. The Norelco 5000’s housing has another shortcoming as opposed to the newer variants – it lacks an LED indicator. I find such indicators housed on the body to be very important to understand the charge level and whether it’s going to die on me during a trimming procedure. So in terms of design, grip and shaving comfort, I’ll put both the Norelco 7000 and 9000 ahead of the 5000 model. Trimmer Comparison After closely analyzing these three units, I took them to the field to test out their trimming capabilities. There have been recognizable differences in each of their performances. For instance, I could only trim toward one direction only using the Norelco 5000 as opposed to the succeeding devices. When it comes to trimming between the Norelco 7000 vs 9000, the results have been almost identical at first sight. But after running my thumb over the trimmed area, I realized that the 9000 device does provide a smoother trim. Also, I was able to scrub back and forth during trimming so that I don’t leave behind an unclear hair patch for my stubble, which wasn’t possible with the 5000 unit. Thus, if I have to rank, I’ll rank the 9000 over the 7000, and both of them over 5000. It’s worth mentioning that apart from the certain degree of smoothness, the 7000 and 9000 did generate the same degree of closeness and comfort in trimming so there’s not much between them. Attachments The Philips Norelco Multigroom series excels at offering trimming attachments. There are so many accessories that it often gets overwhelming to keep track of. But at the same time, these attachments have made my investment worth it as well, so it’s a tradeoff I must accept. Check Price On Amazon Between the Norelco 5000 vs 7000, the former device came with 4 attachments and 13 guards. The 7000 contains all that 5000 has and added an extra foil shaver and an eyebrow trimming guard, and thus it has allowed me to concentrate on less devices for more functionalities. And when it comes to Norelco 7000 vs 9000, the latest model has added a detail trimmer made of metal, which has come in handy for me on numerous occasions, especially when mustache trimming. Another addition to the 9000 arsenal is the 3.7-mm beard adjustable guards which has cut down on my grooming investments by a large margin! So in terms of attachments, if I don’t consider the large number of small portions that I have to maintain carefully, the Norelco 9000 transcends past the rest if you’re someone like me who’s into maintaining their long beard in a refined way. If you don’t have such beard-related demands, then the Norelco 7000 would be the overall victor here considering the price point. As a footnote, all of these units contain a nose trimmer accessory which I’ve found to be one of the best attachments for the Norelco series. Diverse Trimming Operations This is where things take an interesting turn. I’ve tried out each of these devices for duties other than beard trimming. I used them to trim my hair, body shaving purposes and even dared to go to the extent of putting them on my man-jewel cleaning routine. Hair Trimming First off, trimming my hair has been significantly straightforward with all three of these devices due to the extra-wide hair trimmer comb attachment. Other hair attachments that they share generated similar outcomes so there’s nothing much to differentiate between in this matter. Body Shaving I noticed real differences when I got down to my body hair. I selected different hair patches of my body to try out with the three waterproof trimmers individually so that I can reach a verdict. For the Norelco 5000, the result has been somewhat underwhelming and I swapped between both hair and beard combs to see which one turned out to be the most fruitful. In the end I’ve come to conclude that this isn’t made for body shaving as I nicked myself at places and the trim wasn’t neat. Check Price On Amazon The Norelco 7000 unit however surprised me in a different way. While the trimming experience has been much like the 5000, I was able to use the foil head to clean out the stubble made from the trimmer. The only downside is that I had to run over my body twice with two separate attachments, so it was quite time consuming. When I took on the Norelco 9000 with its native body shaver head, the result changed drastically. It is a well-made unit that didn’t cut or tug me in any way. And the outcome it left behind was finer than I had anticipated. Even if someday I stop using the 9000 for my trimming duties, I’ll definitely keep it around for my body shaving purposes. Ball Shaving As I already have a quality ball shaver, it was easier for me to compare how these three Philips devices pan out in contrast to that. Long story short, it was very tricky to get right for all of these trimmers when the hair was longer than an inch. I was left bleeding at one point so had to pause the venture for a while. Once I trimmed my pubic hair down a little with my original ball shaver, I let the battle between these Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000 unfold. The 5000 and 7000 performed similarly with the trimmer head and the shortest guard – it’s not optimum and something I’d want to settle for. However, Norelco 7000’s foil attachment actually gave me a run for my money as it managed to shave my balls surprisingly well without causing me any discomfort, given the situation. And when I shifted to the Norelco 9000 with the body shaver attachment, this probably gave me a similar feeling to my specialized ball shaver in many ways. So the bottom line is, none of these trimmers operate well on longer ball hair. Period. If the nut hair is around half an inch, the Norelco 7000 vs 9000 is a close call still, but the 9000 eventually comes out on top in terms of time consumption, performance and safety. Ease of Washing Cleaning my trimmer is always something that bothers me and so I keep looking forward to devices that are easy to clean. Call me lazy, but that’s how most people I know are in this matter. So when I tested out these 3 Norelco trimmers, I intentionally invested myself in the cleaning procedure to see how much effort I had to put into. Among the three units, the Norelco 5000 has proven to be the most difficult to clean out. As neither of these devices are waterproof, I had to be extra cautious each time. Added to that, Norelco 5000 doesn’t have any additional cleaning utility whatsoever. So it didn’t pass my personal cleaning test compared to the rest. For the Norelco 7000 vs 9000 however, they turned out to be somewhat effortless as Philips has endowed them with a rinse-cleaning ability. Unlike the 5000, I could rinse them under running water without removing the trimmer head. This has been enough to thoroughly clean them and they receive passing grades in this regard. Battery Backup A good battery life is very important when it comes to trimming for a prolonged duration or performing at difficult angles. While all three of these devices are capable of corded trimming with the power cable plugged in, it’s not my preferred method of going about this business. So when I stress tested each of these devices, I was quite shocked to see them holding so much juice for such a long time. For the Norelco 5000, I could get it up to speeded with a full charge within an hour and it relentlessly ran for a little over 2 hour. The Norelco 7000 in contrast has introduced a beast battery which lasted me around 4 and a half hours before slowing the motor down. And the final installment of Norelco 9000 survived a little over 5 hours with full speed, each of them took 2 hours to fully charge. So the battery department of these Norelco units is a significant landmark in the world of trimmers, having enough juice to be the perfect travel trimmer. As an addition, each of them contain a 5-minute quick charge option for one short trim which I found to be quite satisfying if I choose not to use them while plugged in. In terms of battery backup I’d definitely say the Norelco 9000 has surpassed them all, which the Norelco 7000 closely behind. Portability Regardless of which one you choose to side with, you won’t have to worry when going on a trip with one of the three models covered in this article. This is because, despite having different batteries which have a different battery life, the Multigroom 5000, 7000, and 9000 are extremely easy to carry due to how compact they are, and the travelling pouch that is provided with each item. Therefore, if you’re planning to take a break soon by travelling to a whole new country and plan to meet new people, keep your grooming problems in check with the help of one of the three promising Multigroom models; all of which can accompany you overseas! Warranty Lastly, I’ll analyze the Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000 debate from the warranty’s point of view. The 5000 device comes with a 4-year official warranty from Philips, the 7000 comes with a 5-year and the 9000 comes with an astounding 10-year warranty! What I must tell you is that, all of these devices are made to last and I’ve had both of the 5000 and 7000 units in my collection for a couple of years now. Neither of them had run into any trouble and I hope my new 9000 device should do the same. If not, I have 10 years ahead of me to send it back to the company so that’s how long I can use it without any tension! Verdict After this intense battle between Philips Multigroom 5000 vs 7000 vs 9000, you are probably expecting a winner out of it. Don’t worry, I’m not going to disappoint you! What I must tell you first is that price is a huge factor while placing a verdict, so keep that in the back of your mind when you receive my opinion. From my extensive uses and experiments, I declare the Norelco Series 9000 as the winner because of its all-round performance. It can not only trim but also shave with the foil and has the ability to shave the body better than the rest of the devices in concern here. If you consider the price point, you must remember the gigantic 10 year warranty that it comes with which makes it a guaranteed worthy investment. Thus I’ve placed it above both the Series 5000 and 7000. However, the Series 5000 is a great choice for first timers and a solid basic device for regular trimming duties. But if you don’t have body shaving priorities and don’t intend on spending much, I’d suggest you to go for the Series 7000 as it shares almost all the features that the 9000 does. In the end, it all comes down to your preferences and grooming needs to pick your own winner. Similar Post: Braun Series 9 Sport vs Pro: When Two Of The Best Collide! Register Join the Philips family Our site can best be viewed with the latest version of Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome or Firefox. Philips (Norelco) is one of the three major electric shaver brands alongside Braun and Panasonic. With a rich legacy and a loyal user base, Philips has managed to stay at the very top for decades. Moreover, they stuck to their guns, being the only large manufacturer that makes rotary razors. Their shavers portfolio is constantly changing, with many models being discontinued, updated or rebranded. And to make things worse, there’s a lot of confusion regarding the performance of various series as well as the old vs new generations. This Philips comparison and buyer’s guide aims to make it easier for everyone to understand the differences between the various shavers and series. Without all the clutter, you can simply choose the Philips shaver that’s best for your needs and budget. I’ve owned and used almost every Philips electric razor of the past 20 years, so I’m able to compare and evaluate them from a user’s perspective. As you’ll see, choosing a Philips shaver is pretty straightforward when we only consider a few key aspects that really matter. Let’s get started. Philips (or Philips Norelco in the USA) makes a wide range of grooming tools for both men and women. However, we’re only interested in their men’s shavers. In a world where foil electric shavers are ubiquitous, Philips carried on with their original rotary design. A Braun foil shaver next to a Philips rotary shaver. Philips electric razors are of the so-called rotary type. Without getting into too much detail, a rotary razor uses circular blades that rotate constantly in a single direction behind a perforated metal guard (or comb). A guard and a rotary blade. Their hair pokes through the perforations or slots and gets cut by the rotating blade. Image credit: Philips We’ll talk more about the specific pros (and cons) of rotators later on, but the benefits that are universally agreed upon are: quiet operation/better performance with longer facial hair/more durable blades (so lower cost of ownership)/the clipped hairs are contained inside the heads (less messy)/The rotary razors in Philips’ lineup are grouped into a so-called Series. For example, the 3000 Series, 7000 Series or 9000 Series. Philips 3000, 7000 and 9000 Series. The higher the series number, the more capable (at least in theory) the shaver is. As we move from the lower series to the high-end ones, we also get more features, more efficient blades, more powerful motors and various technologies. However, not all of these will have an impact on the actual shaving performance and some are downright gimmicks. The light ring on a Philips Norelco Series 9000. This means you don’t always have to pay more for a Philips shaver in a presumably superior series to get better performance. Some Philips models/series simply offer better value for money. And that’s my main goal with this guide — to showcase the truly important aspects to someone interested in buying a Philips shaver. I will go over every Philips series separately, but before that, there are a couple of things that I would like to address. Philips (Norelco) electric shavers are part of a Series, which is essentially a family of shavers with very similar characteristics. With a single exception, the performance of any shavers belonging to a series from the same generation will have identical shaving performance. The exception is within the Series 2000 and I will explicitly mention the models and the differences in the respective section. But getting back to the names, these series are organized hierarchically, from low-end, less capable shavers, to high-end, advanced models. For example, a Series 9000 or 9000 is better than a Series 5000. The series number, the better the shaver, at least in theory. So the Series 3000 number would be the first, all-encompassing layer. Next, we have the actual shaver model name. It usually starts with S or SP, followed by the series’ first digit. For example, the S3341/92 is a shaver in the Series 3000, while the S9985/84 is a shaver in the Series 9000. The model number, including the part after the /, also refers to things like color, accessories, the region where the shaver was released and so on. Side note: Some of the newest shavers start with an X or XP instead of S/SP. I think you’d agree that these model names are not very memorable and don’t sound particularly exciting. Therefore, Philips came up with a more user-friendly moniker for the most popular models in addition to that sterile model name. For example, the S3341/92 above is also known as the Shaver 3900, while the S9985/84 is the Shaver 9500. These are easier to remember and to market. The first digit in the Shaver xxxx moniker is of course a reference to the series the shaver is part of. Let’s look at the Shaver 3600 and Shaver 3900 in the Series 3000. They share exactly the same, use the same shaving heads and the most important features are the same. However, the differences are related to color and accessories — the 3900 also includes a charging stand. Shaver 3900. And these are usually the differences you’d expect between Philips shavers belonging to the same series (from the same generation). Models that come with more stuff or maybe a more advanced battery indicator (like 3 levels vs a single low-charge LED) are usually more expensive. For some users, these upgrades are not worth the extra money since the performance will be the same, so the decision is entirely yours. The Philips naming scheme is a bit redundant and confusing at the same time, so hopefully it makes more sense now. Fun fact: Philips sells its shavers and groomers under the Philips Norelco brand in the USA. Because of a trademark issue, it couldn’t use the Philips name back in the day, so they used Norelco (North American Philips Electrical Company) instead. Because it gained a lot of brand equity, they decided to append it to the Philips name once the legal issue had been solved. I. The cutting heads A rotary Philips electric razor has a shaving unit comprised of several cutters or heads. The vast majority of Philips shavers have three heads. There is a great compromise in terms of performance and ergonomics. They’re plenty to cover large areas with great efficiency while the shaving unit remains manageable and not overly bulky. Other rotary shavers that are intended primarily for face shavers feature 4, 5 or even 6 heads. For example, the Remington Balder Pro, a rotary head shaver, has 5 heads. The Remington Balder Pro with the 5 rotary cutters. Such a high number of heads is still fine ergonomically when shaving your head but it’s very cumbersome to use on the face. That’s why having three cutters seems to be a great, balanced solution favored by Philips. The only Philips razors with two heads are a couple of travel shavers like the 510 or some older (discontinued models) like the Click & Style S738. So in 2025, no matter which Series is part of, a Philips shaver will most likely have 3 cutting heads. Now, a Philips rotary head can have single or double tracks. The double tracks on a Series 9000 Prestige. A head with a single track will have a rotary cutter with one circular row of blades inside, while a dual-track head will have a cutter with two rows of blades. Rotary cutters with one and two rows of blades, respectively. In the past, we even had Philips heads with 3 tracks like the excellent RQ9 (highly praised by the community). Currently, Philips rotary heads only come with a single track or with two tracks in the case of the higher-end models (from the Series 8000 and up). Philips (Norelco) shavers with two and one track heads, respectively. Fun fact: some of the more advanced two-track heads are actually compatible with the lower-end series, so that’s a relatively inexpensive upgrade. More details later on. As you might have guessed, a head with more tracks is more effective at catching the hairs, especially the ones that stay flat on the skin. The closeness isn’t necessarily impacted by this, but because the shavers with double-track heads also have more powerful motors, getting a faster/closer/smoother shave is often a convenient side effect. The Philips i9000 Prestige. For example, the entry-level Series 3000 uses the SH30 single-track heads, while the Series 9000 and i9000 comes with the double-track SH91 heads. Objectively, a 9000 variation is better performance-wise; it has a more powerful motor and more effective, independently flexing cutters. 2. Rounded vs angular heads Still related to shaving head characteristics, we have rounded and angular (aka polygonal) shaving heads. Rounded (left) vs angular shaving heads (right). Until somewhat recently, Philips always used a conventional, rounded design of the three heads that comprise the shaving unit. For any long-time Philips (Norelco) user, it’s a very familiar design. Philips shavers with rounded heads. And it also worked very well since these heads tapered down toward the edge, making the shaver more manageable, especially when shaving below the nose or around the sideburns. Shaving head size: old Series 9000 Prestige (rounded) vs new Series 9000 (angular). But with the introduction of the new Series 7000, Philips moved gradually toward a new angular design which in the meantime became the norm. Except for the entry-level Series 1000/2000 and 3000, all current Philips families use this new angular design of the shaving head. In my opinion this is a case of form over function because from an ergonomic perspective, this change doesn’t make much sense. These new heads are thicker, wider and require a bit more work when shaving the tricky areas I mentioned earlier. Most users aren’t bothered by this and I admit that I have gotten used to it. I think there’s a reason behind this — the angular heads look striking and sleek — and also for making these shavers compatible with the new cleaning pods (more on that later). Personally, I prefer the old rounded heads design as it’s more user-friendly and makes the razor easier to use. I think this is the reason why Philips tried to somewhat tweak and improve the angular heads in the case of the 2025 Series i9000. These feature a squirrel-shaped head, most likely in an attempt to make it more manageable while still maintaining compatibility with the cleaning pod. I think they are still more similar to the slab-like angular heads than the old round ones, but they are slimmer and better ergonomically. For now, the squirrel heads are only available on the new i9000 variations. 3. Double vs single-edge blade design Rotary shavers have an inherent weakness compared to a typical foil machine. Because the guards are thicker than a foil screen, the closeness offered by a Philips rotary isn’t generally as good. To compensate for the closeness issue, Philips came up with a unique design of the blade. Specifically, they used two cutting edges instead of one, the so-called Super Lift&Cut system. Side note: single and double-edge rotary shavers have different types of blades. The Super Lift & Cut system from Philips. Image credit: Philips. And the solution worked but came with a major compromise to the comfort of the shave. These double-edge blades were unforgiving and aggressive, especially for men with somewhat sensitive skin. For example, I found them very grabby and irritating and would even nick the skin on my neck. Men who weren’t affected by this loved the Super Lift&Cut blades because they were able to get very close shaves. However, the compromise was probably not worth it and Philips gradually phased out the Super Lift&Cut blades throughout the different series. As of 2025, only the old Series 5000 comes with the original Super Lift&Cut blades (the SH50). All the other ones were switched to either more comfortable single-edge blades or a new, refined double-edge design called Lift&Cut (without the Super). To be more specific, the lower-end, budget shavers now use single-edge blades. Series 1000Series 2000Series 3000The mid to high-end families use the new double-edge Lift&Cut design. Series 5000 (current)Series 6000 (current)Series 7000Series 7000Series 8000Series 9000i9000, including the Prestige and Prestige Ultra variations This new double-edge Lift&Cut design is a lot more comfortable than the old one and still allows the blades to cut the hair close to the skin. One of the ways they achieved this was by reducing the gap between the two blade edges. Comparison of the old Super Lift&Cut and the current Lift&Cut design. Again, these Lift&Cut blades only come with the more advanced series (5000 and up). In my opinion, the switch to single-blade tips for the budget series was the right move as it made Philips razors more user-friendly and mass-appealing. Seasoned, life-long Philips users on the other hand may not be as happy with this change. Some feel that the new blades aren’t as bitzy as the old ones (despite being more comfortable). But the old Series 5000 still offers the old system and as mentioned, the new 5000, 6000, 7000, 8000 and 9000 even come with upgraded, more comfortable Lift&Cut blades, so you’re getting the best of both worlds. Some of the old and aggressive double-edge Super Lift&Cut heads (like the SH90) caps still will be found and will even fit newer havers; likewise, more comfortable single-edge heads are available for older shavers if you feel like your Norelco could be more forgiving. I will explicitly discuss the compatible parts when going over each series later on. 4. Motor speed/RPM and high-end Philips shavers are different in several ways. Apart from blades, features and accessories, motor speed is one of the more important aspects as it has a major impact on the performance. While rotary shavers usually have slow rotating motors (around 2000 RPM) compared to foil shavers (up to 14,000 CPM), a difference in speed and torque is noticeable among the different Philips series. Philips doesn’t share any explicit RPM numbers, but they do mention some useful bits of information, like the motor consumption (wattage) and especially the cutting actions per minute. The latter is particularly helpful in determining (approximately) the motor speed of a certain series/shaver. And that spec is useful because a theoretically lower-end series with the same motor and blades as a more expensive one will shave the same and be a better buy. Let’s take a practical example, the Series 9000. Philips says it’s able to deliver 150,000 cutting actions per minute. We also know that the SH91 rotary heads that come with the Series 9000 have 72 individual blades (24 per head). SH91 blade and guard. If we divide 150,000 by 72 we get approximately 2100 which is actually the RPM figure we’re looking for. So the Philips Series 9000 is fitted with a 2100 RPM motor and the SH91 Lift&Cut blades. With that info, we can easily conclude that the Series 8000 for example also comes with the exact motor and blades, so it will perform identically. But the Series 8000 usually costs less than the 9000, making it the better pick. 5. Cordless and corded operation Most of today’s electric razors will only work cordless. There’s an obvious trend toward cordless-only shavers and all the major manufacturers seem to have embraced it. Braun for example only has cordless shavers in its lineup (with a few exceptions in the entry-level Series 3 range). Panasonic only sells corded shavers in Japan, while the rest of the world gets just the cordless variations. Philips (Norelco) is no exception and most of their current shavers are cordless-only. I think cordless and corded operation makes even more sense for rotary in the context of long-term use and low costs of ownership. Luckily there are still a few cordless/corded and even corded-only Philips models available. This feature is a must-have for some users who don’t want to stress about charging a shaver. I will explicitly mention the ones that work with cord; unfortunately, there are very few and only in the low-end segment. There are no high-end cordless/corded Philips shavers anymore. Side note: even though corded/cordless Philips shavers are marketed as dry-only (for safety concerns), they are still waterproof for easy cleaning (with the cord unplugged of course). 6. Integrated vs click-on trimmers Another feature that may be important when choosing a Philips shaver is the hair trimmer. While Panasonic razors for example only use integrated, pop-up trimmers, Philips (Norelco) shavers have either integrated or separate (click-on) trimmers. The integrated ones are more practical since they’re always there and you simply deploy them when needed. Philips Norelco Series 3000 integrated trimmer. On the other hand, the separate click-on trimmers are more capable and even suitable for trimming an entire beard (although I wouldn’t use one regularly). Such a trimmer will fit in place of the rotary shaving head and some even have an integrated adjustable comb. But you’ll always have to remove the rotary shaving head and swap the trimmer in its place. They’re also a bit too bulky for things that require more precision (edging a sideburn or a moustache). I wouldn’t however recommend any of them for regularly trimming a full beard. You’ll still be much better off with a dedicated beard trimmer like the Multigroom 7000 or 9000. Since I shave often and don’t need to pre-trim my beard, I prefer integrated Philips trimmers. I only use them for my sideburns and they’re ideal for that type of grooming, even though the Philips pop-up trimmers are nowhere near as good as the ones from Panasonic. The click-on trimmers are more fiddly to use since they’re thicker and bulkier, but again, more capable for more extensive trimming. To some users, having a shaver with a particular type of trimmer matters a lot, so I will mention it for every Philips series later on. 7. Cleaning systems For many years, Philips shavers belonging to different series at different price points were available with or without an automatic cleaner. A discontinued Philips Norelco 8900. These were full-fledged cleaning stations that charged, cleaned and dried the shaver. And I’m using the past tense because nowadays, none of the current Philips series include such systems anymore. Instead, there’s only the option of a so-called Quick Clean Pod or no cleaning system at all. The Philips Quick Clean Pod I’ll get into more details later on, but the important thing is that the latest iteration of a Philips shaver can at most include a Pod, not a fully automatic station. The Quick Clean Pod is a very simple cleaning device that uses the shaver to power itself and flush the cleaning fluid through the head. The fully automatic station only comes with older/discontinued generations of the Series 5000, 7000, 8000 and 9000 if you can still find one. Those stations evolved throughout the years, the latest one before the decision to drop them being the so-called SmartClean system. Philips SmartClean station. The SmartClean station uses a detergent-based solution that comes in cartridge refills. A Philips cleaning station features induction heat to dry the shaving head. This system works best and is the most effective when paired with a fan. However, only Panasonic stations use both. Generally, a Philips SmartClean station purchased later on will work with a shaver that didn’t originally come with one. It will however need to be compatible with it, so a Series 9000 station will not work with a Series 5000 shaver. Whether a cleaning station is necessary or not — that’s entirely up to the user to decide. I think it can be practical and useful and the Philips detergent solution lasts a long time. Again, the current Philips razors can only come with a less advanced Quick Clean Pod (it’s the same device for all the series with minor design differences). 8. Charging: USB-A cable vs classic wired chargers A few years ago, Philips has taken some measures to reduce waste and environmental impact. One of the ways they’re trying to achieve that is to gradually phase out the Philips wired adapters (chargers) and only include a USB-A cable instead. The new Shaver 2600 comes with a USB-A cable. This cable has a proprietary Philips connector at the other end and you would simply use it with your own USB-A charger, like the one from your mobile phone. Or you can plug it directly into a USB-A wall socket. And on a related note, some of the more recent Philips shavers are simply older models that have been rebranded and now only ship with a USB-A cable instead of a charger. For example, the new Shaver 3600 is essentially the Shaver 3500 but with a USB-A cable. It’s the same story in the case of the new Shaver 3900 and the previous Shaver 3800. There’s nothing really remarkable about this change and you’d assume that a shaver that now comes with a USB-A cable can be charged with an older Philips wired charger. But you’d be wrong. Philips also slightly tweaked the charging port on these newer shavers (like the 2600, 3600 or 3900) so that the older wired Philips adapters won’t fit. Philips new (left) vs old (right) charging port. I think this can matter to some users that already had an older Philips charger and were hoping to use it with the new shavers that only come with a USB-A cable. The switch to USB-A cables in now in full swing and as of 2025, all of the newly released Philips (Norelco) models will come with that instead of a charger. 9. Price and value for money! Think the price is a key factor when deciding which Philips shaver to buy. Prices can vary a lot throughout the same series for no logical reason. For example, a shaver in the i9000 Prestige Ultra line with a different color can cost significantly more than another, even though it doesn’t come with any improvements. It just costs more. Also, the price difference between two Philips series can be significant. And as you’ll see, some of the presumably inferior series can sometimes shave pretty much the same and even use the same blades/motors as the next one in the hierarchy. This was one of my main goals with this comparison guide — to show the Philips razors that offer the best performance for the money and are worth buying. Since the full-fledged cleaning and charging stations are now history, the Quick Clean Pod is the only option for automatic cleaning. The Pod is available with various shavers from the Series 5000 and up and it’s essentially the same no matter the shaver model. So a range-topping S9000 Prestige will come with the same Pod as a budget Series 5000 for example. With the latest 2025 i9000 models, Philips also introduced a redesigned Pod, but it’s actually compatible with the other shavers as well. Old and redesigned pods, respectively. Let’s take a look at the device and how it works. The Quick Clean Pod is a very basic automatic cleaning system comprised of three elements: a container (essentially a plastic tub), a cleaning cartridge, a lid that features an intake tube below and a cleaning chamber on top. The Pod lid and the tub with the cartridge. With the cartridge placed inside, you would then screw the lid on top, with the intake tube submerged into the cleaning fluid. The Pod is not electrically powered and doesn’t have any type of logic to determine the fluid level or if the shaver is placed in it. Instead, it relies entirely on the shaver to provide the power. Inside the intake tube, there’s a small impeller that pushes the cleaning fluid from the cartridge into the cleaning chamber where the shaving head rests. Closeup with the Pod impeller. And the way the Pod works is quite ingenious. The shaver has a small metal piece at the very center and it rotates in sync with the blades when the shaver is switched on. That tiny metal piece splines to a plastic shaft at the very center of the pod and that shaft connects to the impeller in the intake tube. Top view of the pod. You can see the small shaft at the center. So when the shaver is placed inside the Pod, it would actually drive the impeller shaft, causing the cleaning fluid to go up into the cleaning chamber. This system has both pros and cons. In my opinion, the pros are the compact size of the Pod, its portability, the ease of use and the fact that there’s no way for the Pod to force you to replace the cartridge. You would simply replace it when you feel like the solution is way too contaminated with grime and hair. Philips recommends once a month, but I think you can go longer than that. The cleaning is pretty effective and the solution also provides lubrication for the blades. As for the cons, the Pod will not charge or dry the shaver. Also, even if the cartridge has a mesh filter, some cross-contamination can still occur and clipped hairs will end-up in the head unit. Hairs inside the filtered part of the cartridge. Once the cleaning is done, the shaving head is dripping wet and foamy, so you will need to let it air dry (with the head unit open). The Pod compatibility is a bit strange. A Philips shaver that comes with a Pod is fitted with an accelerometer that determines when it’s placed inside the pod. So instead of an electrical connection (like in the case of the corded stations) the shaver will sense and respond to the Pod and completely stop and be shut-off. As a result, the shaver will only be able to clean itself. Fun fact: You can actually fool the accelerometer. If you hold the shaver in your hand, it will still think the shaver is inside the pod and enter the cleaning mode. Fooling the i9000 Prestige Ultra. Once you start the cleaning by pressing the shaver’s power button, it will turn on and off, flushing the fluid through the shaving head. The shaver will turn off automatically after approximately one minute. The shavers that didn’t come with a Pod lack this accelerometer, so they can’t know when they’re upside down and will never enter the cleaning mode. But because they still have that tiny rotating metal piece, they will still power the Pod. However, the shaver will run continuously until you manually switch it off. Here’s a video of my S9000 Prestige that didn’t come with a Pod. I tried cleaning it using a Pod from another shaver and this is how it went. So if you plan on buying a Pod later on, just know that it will only be partially compatible, but as you can see in the video, it will work. The only exception to this rule is the new i9000 Prestige Ultra: all the models are fitted with an accelerometer and are fully compatible. I think the Quick Clean Pod is quite useful despite its shortcomings and it’s probably worth getting. In this section, I will go over each Philips series of shavers currently available. You can navigate directly to the one you’re interested in. As you’ll see, there will sometimes be an older (even discontinued) generation alongside the current one. Some of the older models are still available and because many users still use them, I thought it would be useful to mention them as well. I won’t be getting into as much detail with those just to keep things simple. With that out of the way, let’s check out the Philips shavers available in 2025 and see how they stack up against each other. Motor speed:

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