CLAIMS:

1. A ~~M~~method of manufacturing a guard element (21) which is configured to be used in a hair-cutting unit (20) as a guard for a movable hair-cutting element of the hair-cutting unit (20), and which is of a design including a shaving track (30) with a plurality of hair-entry apertures (34), the shaving track (30) having a thickness profile with at least one thickness value, the method comprising an initial step of providing a sheet (40) from which the guard element (21) is to be formed, and the method comprising steps aimed at creating the shaving track (30) according to the design of the guard element (21) in the sheet (40), including a thickness-adapting step of realizing the thickness profile of the shaving track (30) according to the design of the guard element (21) in the sheet (40) at a position where the shaving track (30) is to be formed, and a material-removing step of removing material from the sheet (40) at the position where the shaving track (30) is to be formed so as to form the hair-entry apertures (34), wherein the thickness-adapting step is performed earlier than the material-removing step.

2. The ~~M~~method according to claim 1, wherein, in the design of the guard element (21), the thickness profile of the shaving track (30) has different thickness values at different areas of the shaving track (30).

3. The ~~M~~method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the thickness-adapting step comprises reducing the thickness of the sheet (40) at a position where at least an area of the shaving track (30) is to be formed.

4. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-3, wherein the thickness-adapting step comprises an action of subjecting the sheet (40) to a cold forming process at a position where at least an area of the shaving track (30) is to be formed.

5. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-4, wherein the thickness-adapting step comprises an action of applying pressure to the sheet (40) and/or flattening the sheet (40) at a position where at least an area of the shaving track (30) is to be formed.

6. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-5, wherein, in the design of the guard element (21), the shaving track (30) is annular about a central axis (22) of the guard element (21), the

method comprising at least one of an outside bending step of bending the sheet (40) at a position of an annular section of the sheet (40) where an outer peripheral edge (31) of the shaving track (30) is to be formed and an inside bending step of bending the sheet (40) at a position of an annular section of the sheet (40) where an inner peripheral edge (32) of the shaving track (30) is to be formed, wherein both the thickness-adapting step and the material-removing step are performed earlier than at least one of the outside bending step and the inside bending step.

7. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-6, wherein, during the thickness-adapting step, a thickness distribution is realized in the sheet (40) in which the thickness value at ~~the~~a position of one section of the sheet (40) where a relatively thick area of the shaving track (30) is to be formed is at least twice as large as the thickness value at ~~the~~a position of another section of the sheet (40) where a relatively thin area of the shaving track (30) is to be formed.

8. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-5, wherein, in the design of the guard element (21), the shaving track (30) is annular about a central axis (22) of the guard element (21), and wherein further elongated lamellae (33) are present between the hair-entry apertures (34), the lamellae (33) having a thickness distribution in which the thickness value at outer end sections (33a) of the respective lamellae (33) is larger than the thickness value at main sections (33c) of the respective lamellae (33), wherein the thickness-adapting step involves realizing the thickness values of the thickness distribution of the lamellae (33) according to the design of the guard element (21) in the sheet (40) at the position where the shaving track (30) is to be formed, the thickness value of the outer end sections (33a) of the respective lamellae (33) being realized at an annular section of the sheet (40) where the outer end sections (33a) of the respective lamellae (33) are to be formed, and the thickness value of the main sections (33c) of the respective lamellae (33) being realized at an annular section of the sheet (40) where the main sections (33c) of the respective lamellae (33) are to be formed.

9. The ~~M~~method according to claim 8, wherein, after both the thickness-adapting step and the material-removing step have been performed, the sheet (40) is bent at a position where the outer end sections (33a) of the respective lamellae (33) are to be formed.

10. The ~~M~~method according to claim 8 or 9, wherein, in the design of the guard element (21), the thickness value at inner end sections (33b) of the respective lamellae (33) is also larger than the thickness value at the main sections (33c) of the respective lamellae (33), wherein, during the thickness-adapting step, the thickness value of the inner end sections (33b) of the respective lamellae (33) is realized at an annular section of the sheet (40) where the inner end sections (33b) of the respective lamellae (33) are to be formed.

11. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-10, comprising a shaving track-bulging step which involves providing at least an area of the shaving track (30) with an outwardly bulged shape.

12. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-11, wherein the sheet (40) which is provided in the initial step is a sheet having a substantially uniform thickness.

13. The ~~M~~method according to any of claims 1-12, wherein, during the material-removing step, the sheet (40) is subjected to a cutting action.

14. A ~~M~~method of manufacturing a hair-cutting unit (20) comprising a guard element (21) and a movable hair-cutting element at least partially arranged in an interior space of the guard element, ~~characterized in that~~ the method comprising the method of manufacturing of the guard element (21) ~~is manufactured by means of a method~~ according to any of claims 1-13.

15. A ~~M~~method of manufacturing a hair-cutting appliance (1) comprising a body (11) for a user of the hair-cutting appliance to take hold of and a head (12) including at least one hair-cutting unit (20), ~~characterized in that~~ the method comprising the method of manufacturing of the hair-cutting unit (20) ~~is manufactured by means of a method~~ according to claim 14.