

GROOMING

Regular grooming is important for your puppy or dog – not only from an aesthetic standpoint, but as a contribution to his health, comfort and general welfare. Most dogs require only a few minutes a couple of times a week on a regular basis. Otherwise, what should be an easy, pleasant task can soon become a mountainous chore.

When you bring your new puppy or dog home, start teaching him how pleasant it is to be touched and stroked. As he learns to accept regular handling, he will learn to respect and trust you as his leader. If he struggles and cries, be patient and gentle, but do not stop. Reward with praise and high value treats when he settles down. **Check** the eyes and nose for any unusual discharge. **Look** closely in his ears, if they contain dark or pus-like secretions, or have a foul smell, be sure to have your veterinarian take a look. **Check** his skin for rashes, mange and fungal infections. “Hot spots,” or sores, can be the result of matting or hot and humid weather. If you notice any of these conditions, take him to a veterinarian to be properly diagnosed and treated. **Check** carefully for fleas, ticks and lice. Infestations of such parasites can cause serious problems and should be treated promptly. **Check** his feet and between his toes for thorns, stickers, grass burrs, etc.

Before starting your grooming program, place your brushes, combs and nail clippers on the floor. Put a few treats among them so he will become familiar with them as he retrieves the goodies. This exercise will need to be repeated for a few days. Some dogs may be afraid of strange grooming tools.

BRUSHING: All dogs need brushing to keep doggy odor and shedding under control. Brushing releases natural oils and helps keep the skin and coat healthy. Short-coated dogs should be brushed weekly with a soft bristle brush or a grooming glove. Double-coated dogs will require more frequent brushing with a pin brush in order to remove the loose undercoat. Part the hair and brush away from the skin using short, gentle strokes. If the hair is matted, separate the larger mat into smaller sections with your fingers and brush the sections until the mat breaks apart. It may be necessary to use scissors to remove a mat. Start at the base of the mat and cut through it away from the skin. Be careful when brushing sensitive areas under the armpits, between the back legs and behind the ears. When brushing near the vulva or testicles, place your free hand over the area for protection. Use slicker brush on the legs and feet.

SHEDDING: Most dogs, especially double-coated dogs, shed a little all year round. Regular brushing will help minimize loose hair on clothes, upholstery and carpet. As a general rule, dogs shed or “blow coat” in the late spring and early fall. If your pet sheds excessively over a long period of time, consult your veterinarian. Such undue hair loss could be a symptom of illness.

FECAL MATS: With long-haired dogs, fecal material will often adhere to the hairs around the anus. This may cause messy bottoms and could cake over the area causing an obstruction. Examine this area during the weekly brushing routine and keep hairs under the tail clipped short.

BATHING: Be sure the dog is thoroughly brushed out before bathing. NEVER bathe a matted dog. Be sure any loose undercoat has been brushed out. When mats get wet, they draw up even tighter, retain soap and become almost impossible to remove when dry. Wet the dog thoroughly with warm water. Use a shampoo especially made for dogs. Massage the soap in briskly with your fingers. Use a tearless baby shampoo on the head. If you want to get your dog really clean, remember to lather, rinse, and repeat. Make sure all traces of the shampoo are rinsed out and the coat is squeaky clean.

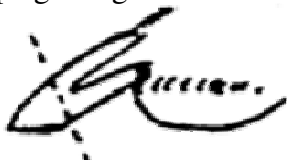


Soap left in the coat can cause matting, dandruff and can irritate the skin. A crème rinse made for dogs can be used to make brushing easier. Be sure to rinse it out thoroughly. When you are finished, encourage the dog to shake. Towel-dry him, rubbing only in one direction, rubbing back and forth will cause mats and tangling. Allowing long-coated dogs to dry naturally could cause the hair to mat down and possibly cause “hot spots.” Use an electric hair dryer set on medium, not hot. Fluff with your brush as you dry. Remember to praise and reward. **CAUTION!! Do not use or allow anyone to apply a “one spot” flea or tick control product for a few days before or after a bath.**

EAR CARE: Some breeds of dogs such as poodles and terriers may need to have hair removed from their ears. Your breeder or groomer can show you how. Dogs with ears that hang down need weekly attention. Frequent shaking of the head, scratching behind the ear or tilting the head to one side can signal problems. Consult your veterinarian.

DENTAL HYGINE: During the handling and gentling exercises, your dog learned to trust you and allow his mouth to be examined. Some veterinarians recommend a weekly or daily brushing at home. Use a toothbrush and toothpaste especially made for dogs. If you observe inflamed gums, tartar or bad breath, consult your veterinarian.

NAIL CLIPPING: Choose a time when you and your puppy, or dog, are relaxed. Be sure he has been introduced to nail clippers by linking them to treats and objects with which he is familiar. Be very careful, there is a soft pink vein called the “quick” running through the center of the nail. It is very sensitive and will bleed if cut. Start by gently pressing down on each pad to extend the nail. Touch each nail with the clipper, but do not clip. As you touch each nail, enthusiastically tell him what a good dog he is and give him a treat. After a day or two, snip just a very tiny bit off the end of the “hook.” As the weeks go by, you will become more confident and can snip off a little more. Clear nails are easier to avoid getting too close to the pink vein. If the nails are black, just snip off enough below the hook to keep the nails from scraping along the floor.



Cut Here.
You can see the quick
with a transparent nail.



Cut Here.
Just take off the Hook
On a dark nail.

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