



A Human Guide Home Grooming



This Guide

This handy guide for humans will give you advice of howto do basic grooming at home, as well as some tips to keep them happy and healthy.

Brushing

Brushing and combing your dog's hair coat is an important part of general pet care.

Brushing helps to keep your dog's coat in good condition by removing loose hair and preventing hair mats/knots. Brushing also helps to distribute healthy natural skin oils over the hair shaft, promoting a shiny coat and helping dirt to slide off the hair. This can also help to reduce the need to bath and therefore reduce the frequency of bathing.

Brushing and grooming will help to strengthen the positive relationship bond between you and your dog. Brushing should be a pleasant and comfortable experience for you both.



Brushing Different Breeds

Different types of dogs can require different brushes. It's important to use a brush that is comfortable and suitable for your dog. Make sure the brush does not cause any physical discomfort to your dog.

Brushing should be a pleasant, soothing and relaxing activity for your dog. Talk to your local vet clinic and professional groomer for advice. Always watch your dog's reactions. Change brush types and decrease the pressure applied if your dog seems at all uncomfortable.

Short-haired smooth coated dogs may suit a soft grooming glove or soft brush to remove loose hair. Dogs with

medium to long-hair coats may require combs and brushes with longer bristles/projections (please make sure the bristles don't cause any discomfort).

For more specific information on caring for your dog's paws, nails, ears, teeth, and eyes, continue reading.



How often do I brush my dog?

How often to brush and groom your dog will depend on each individual dog. Dogs tend to differ in their need for brushing because of their coat type and length and also depending on their recent activities.

Dogs with short coats generally require less brushing and grooming compared to dogs with medium to long haired coats as these longer coats can get tangles, mats and debris trapped in them more easily.

Some very short-haired dogs may not need traditional 'brushing' and for these dogs, owners may instead like to try a soft grooming glove to gently remove loose hair.

Your dog should be brushed 'as required'. You should monitor the condition of your dog's coat, looking for any tangles/mats or dullness which indicates they might need a brush. Grooming can take anything from a few minutes to several hours a week depending on your type of dog.

What If I don't brush my dog?

Not grooming your dog as often as required can have an influence on their health. Mats and knots can worsen and moisture that is trapped underneath a matted coat and lack of airflow can predispose towards skin irritation and infection. Grooming is therefore a necessary activity, not just a nicety.

If your dog has a lot of matting, you may need to take them to your professional groomer or vet who can safely remove the tight mats as they can be difficult to remove without specialised clippers. Your vet will also be able to examine the condition of the skin underneath and advise if any medications are needed.



Bathing

The benefits of bathing can include cleaning your dog's skin and coat which helps to remove loose hair, scale and debris and improve the hair coat's shine.

If your dog has a specific skin condition, bathing may be part of their medical treatment plan as recommended by your vet.

How do I prepare my dog?

Preparing for the bath is the next step to take. Whether you're bathing your dog indoors or outdoors, you should move all your bathing equipment to the desired location in a clean, safe, and reachable area. While you're organising everything, do so quietly and calmly so as to not alarm your dog.

If you're using the bathroom, put the shampoo and conditioner to the side where your free hand will be (your other hand will be holding onto your dog).

Place the towel on a towel rack, away from the water, and put the treats in your pocket so you can easily get them out when needed.

Other tools and equipment should be within reach of your free hand, but safe from the water. And don't forget to place the bath non-slip mat in the tub, as well as one next to the tub, to prevent you and your dog from slipping and causing injury.

Use tasty food treats and an encouraging voice to call them to the bathroom or out into the yard. Plenty of prior introduction to bath-related things in apposite way will make things easier.



How often do I bath my dog?

How often to bathe your dog will vary between each individual dog and their particular needs. Essentially, dogs should only be bathed when necessary.

Bathing is generally required when a dog has an unpleasant odour or they've accumulated dirt/mud on their coat. So if your dog smells normal (remembering that most dogs have a healthy dog smell which is not unpleasant) and they are not dirty, then bathing is probably not necessary at that stage.

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If dog is bathed too frequently this can dry out their skin and hair coat and may cause problems. Only bathing when it is necessary should help to prevent the skin drying out due to excessive bathing as the natural oils on the skin and coat won't be stripped away too frequently.

Dogs with skin problems may require different bathing schedules as part of their treatment plan and your local vet can provide advice.

Other dogs who go swimming may require less bathing as this activity can function like a bath. Remember, if you do allow your dog to swim occasionally, supervise them at all times and stick to safe and shallow waters where your dog can always touch the ground.

** If you notice an unpleasant odour from your dog, this could be caused by rolling in something that smells unpleasant, however, if you can't identify an external cause your dog should be checked by a vet to rule out any medical causes of an unpleasant smell such as skin or ear problems.

What shampoo do I use?

Choose a shampoo specifically designed for dogs. Dogs have sensitive skin and their skin pH is different to the pH of human skin so human shampoo products should not be used on dogs.

For dogs with healthy skin and coat, choose a mild and gentle hypoallergenic shampoo. For dogs with skin conditions your dog groomer can advise what type of shampoo or product to use to help manage or treat specific skin problems.

You can also try applying a mild and gentle hypoallergenic rinse-out conditioner after shampooing to help prevent dryness after shampooing.

Test patch a small amount of products first to make sure there is no reaction or irritation. If your dog seems irritated at all – talk to your vet and try a different product that doesn't cause any irritation.



Where do I bathe my dog?

Where to bathe your dog tends to vary depending on individual circumstances. For some dogs it can be easiest to bathe them outside using a garden hose on low pressure. For smaller dogs, a bathtub inside is usually suitable, but if you notice any distress remove them and proceed to bathing outside.

Drying

While dogs will tend to instinctively shake off excess water after getting wet, you will probably also need to help them dry off with some large absorbent towels. After this, most dogs can be allowed to air dry naturally.

Always take all safety precautions when using hairdryers. Directly supervise the dog at all times, avoid the head area and ensure the air is always at a comfortable temperature (not too warm or hot). The dryer should also be placed a good distance away from your dog.

Paws

Follow these simple steps to keep your dog's paws healthy:

- Monitoring your dog for any limping or changes in physical behaviour.
- Checking their feet and footpads regularly to ensure there are no wounds or infections.
- Some dogs can have extra hair between their footpads which can become matted or catch debris (e.g. grass seeds). Carefully trimming that extra hair can help.
- Removing any debris such as grass seeds and burrs around the paws.

Nails

Follow these steps to keep your dog's nails in good condition:

- Dog's nails should be trimmed as required and this tends to vary between individual dogs. Basically, if the nails are getting too long they can be trimmed. Trim a small amount off the tip.
- Talk to professional groomer about how to trim nails. They can show you how to do it safely, what length is suitable and what type of clipper to use.
- It's very important not to trim too short as this can cause bleeding and pain.

Adequate daily exercise should help to keep nails in good condition and at a good length as nails are naturally worn down.

However, nails which don't touch the ground surface such as the 'thumb' nails higher up on the feet, may need to be trimmed occasionally to prevent them from getting too long, curling over and digging into the skin.

For nails that are transparent you can usually see a pink area, which is where the blood vessel runs. When trimming nail tips, it is important to stay well away from the blood vessel, if the blood vessel is cut then your dog will bleed and feel pain.

Sometimes a nail file can be used to smooth rough edges.

Eyes

Follow these steps to keep your dog's eyes in good condition:

Healthy eyes generally appear clear and bright and they are usually symmetrical (including symmetrical pupils). Squinting or holding an eye closed also often signals an eye problem.

- Hair around the eye area that is obscuring vision to help prevent irritation should be trimmed. Blunt-nosed safety scissors should be used, always pointing them away from the eyes and taking extra care not to touch the eyes.



Ears

Here are some tips for ensuring your dog's ears are healthy:

Signs of ear problems can include head shaking, ear discharge, ear scratching, rubbing ears along the floor or furniture, redness/swelling around the ear opening; sensitivity around the head area; a head tilt and an unpleasant odour.

- Vets usually do a routine ear check using an otoscope when doing annual health check-ups. If they see an issue they may prescribe medicated ear drops or ear cleaner.
- If your dog is not showing any signs of an ear problem then for most dogs it is best to leave their ears alone. This is because putting ear products into healthy ears can potentially cause a problem.
- If your dog has long, droopy ears that hang over their ear openings, skin allergies or recurrent ear infections, monitor them regularly for any signs of an ear problem and follow your vets advice.



Teeth

Here are some tips for ensuring your dog's teeth are healthy:

- Chewing is a basic and natural behaviour for dogs and they need regular opportunities to chew on appropriate items.
- Chewing also helps to keep teeth and gums healthy. Providing safe chew items throughout the day will help this.
- Safe chew items include dog chew toys and dental chews.
- You may also offer a raw meaty bone once or twice a week. Remember, bones must be raw and human-grade.



Mad Dog

Modern Mobile Grooming

This Human Guide to Canine Home Grooming was made with love by Mad Dog Grooming.

We care about the welfare of each and every dog and continue to invest our time in educating Humans on the really important stuff related to their canines.

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