

Grooming Your Pet

Grooming is an important part of companion animal guardianship. Pets need regular brushing, bathing, and dental care, and some animals with longer hair (e.g., Maltese, Poodles, Cocker Spaniels) often require frequent trips to the groomer.

Another important aspect of maintaining your pet's appearance is giving regular nail trims. Long nails can become painful and interfere with their ability to walk. This grooming ritual also helps you protect your floors and furniture from being unintentionally scratched and your clothes from being snagged. Here's what you need to know to groom your pet's nails.

Before you clip

- Get your pet used to having its paws handled.
- Begin by speaking softly as you massage each paw, gently separating the toes.
- Your pet may instinctively pull away. If this happens, repeat whatever it was your dog didn't like, but do it more slowly and gently until it begins to accept it.
- When you think your pet is ready, cut one or two nails.
- Have a treat ready for positive reinforcement.

How to clip nails

- Hold the paw in your hand and locate the pinkish part of the nail. This is a blood vessel and should be avoided.
- If you cannot see the pinkish part, just clip the very tip of the nail.
- Snip the tip of the nail with pet nail clippers (available from any pet supply store).

More detailed instruction and demonstration are provided during **Canine Manners ‘n More** training sessions.

If you are uncomfortable with this procedure, visit your veterinarian for help.