



A Guide To Grooming

What is grooming?

Webster's Dictionary defines grooming as "to give neat attractive appearance to." We've expanded upon this definition to describe the full grooming cycle which includes brushing, combing, shampooing, conditioning, drying, hair cutting, nail trimming, ear cleaning, and (in some cases) anal gland expression. Grooming is the full process of attaining and maintaining a healthy and attractive coat on your pet.

Why is grooming important?

Regular grooming helps keep your pet looking and feeling good. Every time you brush and comb, loose hair and debris are removed from the coat, leaving it clean and healthy. Brushing and combing helps stimulate the blood supply to the skin. It strengthens the epidermal cells and enriches the oils and color, giving your pet a healthier and shinier coat.

A good regime of grooming helps to reduce the risk of matting. Aside from being unattractive a matted coat hurts your pet and limits the skin's exposure to air, making your pet more prone to infections. If a matt occurs even after you diligently keep to a regime or grooming make sure you dematt your pet prior to bathing. Once a matt gets wet, it will become tighter and harder to remove. Call your professional groomer for an appointment if matting becomes persistent.

When should I start?

Introduce your pet to the idea of grooming as early as possible. Even as early as eight weeks old. Puppies quickly become acclimated to a grooming routine. However, it's never too late to start a grooming program, even if your pet is in its golden years.

Like children, your pet may be hesitant to accept grooming at first, don't get discouraged: keep your grooming sessions short and sweet. Offer encouragement and praise when they're being cooperative. Always reward your pet after each session is finished. Pretty soon you and your pet will look forward to these grooming sessions.

Who can I turn to for grooming help?

If you are experiencing difficulty setting up a proper grooming regime, speak to your professional pet groomer for helpful hints on creating and maintaining a positive and inviting grooming experience specifically designed for your pet's needs. All of our PPGAM members are committed to continuing education both for themselves as well as for their clients. We care about building a strong grooming community in Manitoba and encourage everyone to learn more about it.

What can happen if I postpone or neglect my grooming responsibilities?

Grooming is an important part of your pet's health. It should not be postponed or neglected. Regular maintenance at home reduces matts,

Grooming Etiquette

1. Brush and comb your pet's hair regularly (two to three times a week).
2. Book your professional grooming appointments well in advance.
3. Begin grooming your pet as little as eight weeks of age. Keep in mind that puppies require multiple short and sweet training sessions per day.
4. To reduce the risk of severe matting, brush and comb your pet's hair completely before and after bathing them at home.
5. To reduce stress and the chance of your pet defecating in or around the pet salon, walk your pet prior to any professional pet grooming appointment.
6. Respect your professional groomer's opinion regarding the grooming care of your pet.
7. Respect your professional groomer's opinion regarding matts. Do not try to convince them to dematt your pet if they determine that your pet is severely matted. Complete dematting is inhumane and cruel.
8. Always have your pet on a leash and under control when going to a professional groomer.
9. Teach your pet to accept grooming, just like you would train him to sit and stay.
10. Teach your pet that biting is unacceptable during grooming.
11. Be on time and give your professional groomer enough time to groom your pet well, without rushing.

negative odors, foreign debris and foreign bodies (i.e. fleas, bacteria, etc.) from infecting your pet, it strengthens the epidermal cells, and encourages the release of natural oils on the hair. Postponing a grooming appointment or neglecting the at-home grooming regime affects the health of your pet and possibly your pocket book!

If you take your pet to a groomer and are not doing a regular grooming schedule at home, then your pet is most likely not trained to behave properly during grooming and the coat (in most cases) would be in poor condition. The professional groomer has no choice but to charge more for the extra time it takes to clean, condition, brush out, dematt, clip or manage your pet.

Most groomers list a basic price of each breed and size of dog based on the assumption that the dog is in perfect or near perfect condition and is well to semi-well behaved. Grooming is a profession and as such time is money. The more time and man power required to groom a dog the more money required to pay for their services.

By taking the time at home to train your pet you reduce the amount of stress and health risk your pet endures and you save money. What better reason is there to start a regular schedule of grooming at home than that?

12. Mention and remind your professional groomer of any health conditions that your pet has had recently or in the past.
13. Do not exceed more than three months between professional grooming appointments. Getting your pet shaved once a year without any grooming in between is inhuman and cruel and in most cases will cost more money.
14. Always provide feedback on the grooming and tip when satisfied just like you would your hairdresser.

The Professional Pet Groomers Association of Manitoba is an independent non-profit organization who's members care passionately about pet grooming and are committed to building a strong professional grooming society in the province of Manitoba.