



## Grafton Dog Obedience Club Inc.

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### ROUTINE GROOMING AND CARE

Short coated dogs only need a quick brush over to look their best. Even so, there are a bewildering assortment of brushes, combs and other grooming aids on the market.

For dogs with a very short coat (such as Boxers, Whippets), brushing with a soft bristle brush, followed by a wipe over with either a damp cloth or a polish with a chamois gets the job done. There is also a hound glove available especially for grooming fine coated dogs.

Cattle dogs, Golden Retrievers, German Shepherds etc have an undercoat and may need a coarse comb or slicker brush to help remove the undercoat as it's shed (be careful to avoid scratching the skin with the slicker brush). A coarse comb with revolving teeth can be helpful if the undercoat is thick. Follow up with an all over brush with a soft bristle brush.

Dogs with a longer coat (Border Collies, Maltese, Silky Terriers etc) will need more thorough grooming to avoid knots and tangles. You will need a slicker brush or coarse comb to remove knots and tangles, making sure that you comb the full length of the coat. Brushing over the surface of a long coated dog may make the dog look better but unless the whole length of the coat is brushed your dog can end up with an apparently nicely groomed coat that has knots and tangles next to the skin. Knots in your dog's coat will pull the skin and become very painful for your dog, so thorough grooming is essential for long coated dogs.

Many owners choose to get their pet dogs clipped for the hot weather to make the coat easier to manage and cooler for the dog. As an alternative, there is a grooming tool available that thins the coat by removing some of the undercoat. If your dog is very dirty or smelly, a bath may be needed to keep him both looking and smelling pleasant.

Check your dog's nails and trim any excess length (especially important for dogs that live mostly indoors, do limited exercise, or exercise mostly on soft surfaces). Remember to trim any dewclaws as well as these don't wear down and can easily become overgrown (even growing so long that they dig into the dog's skin).

Check the ears. If there is any wax build up, gently remove with a tissue or cotton ball. Don't use cotton buds as these can push the wax further into the ear and block the ear canal. If the ears are very dirty, you may need to use an ear cleaner (available from your vet or pet shop).

Make sure your dog's eyes are clear and healthy with no sign of discharge. Gently wipe any accumulated debris from the corner of your dog's eyes.

Regularly grooming and checking your dog for any sign of injuries, skin irritation, fleas or ticks will keep your dog looking his or her best and help to prevent health problems.

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