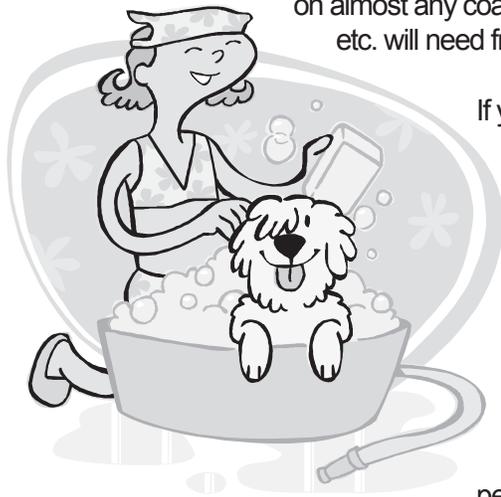


Grooming Your Pet

Grooming is an important part of responsible pet ownership. Grooming entails not only brushing, combing or trimming your pet's coat, but cutting toenails, cleaning eyes and ears, and brushing teeth, all of which are important for their health.

Pet owners can use a variety of different grooming supplies. A pin brush has long, round-ended pins that are usually stain-less steel or chrome plated. These types of brushes are used on breeds with long hair, such as Papillons, Shih Tzus, and Collies. Dog owners can use a rubber currycomb, which is round with short teeth, to massage the skin of shorthaired breeds, such as Beagles, Labrador Retrievers, and Dachshunds. A slicker brush usually has a wide base and metal bristles. The bristles are bent at an angle so the brush can slide easily through or over the dog's coat. This brush is used to remove mats from double-coated breeds, such as German Shepherds, Huskys, and Samoyeds. There is also a special slicker brush just for puppies, but it can also be used on shorthaired breeds, such as Pugs, Boxers, and Jack Russell Terriers to remove loose hair. Dog owners may also use metal or plastic combs to groom their dogs. You can use a comb on almost any coat type. Keep in mind that dogs such as Lhasa Apsos, Cocker Spaniels, Poodles, etc. will need frequent professional grooming to keep them looking and feeling their best.



If you are a cat owner you will also need to take care of your pet's coat. Cat owners can use either the pin brush for long coats, such as Persians, or the soft puppy slicker for matted long coats or smooth-coated cats. Combs can also be used on any cat coat type.

Pets that have extra teary eyes or skin irritations need to be seen by a veterinarian. Extra teary eyes need to be cleaned right away so that infection does not occur. Skin irritations can be minimized by always using appropriate shampoos when bathing your pet. Never use human shampoo or dish soap on your pet's skin because this can lead to serious skin problems and expensive vet bills. You will also need to make sure that your pet is fed appropriate food in order to keep its skin, coat, and teeth in good health.

Yes you do need to brush your pet's teeth! There are special toothpastes and toothbrushes that you should use on their teeth. These products can be purchased from local pet supply stores. It is also a good idea to give dogs a hard biscuit to chew on because as they chew it up the pieces scrape and help clean their teeth. If you neglect your pet's dental health you may be faced with ex-pensive veterinarian bills as they grow older.

Dogs, cat, rabbits, and other pets all need to have their toenails trimmed every four to six weeks. If you trim your own pet's nails make sure you keep Quick Stop on hand just in case you trim too far. This can be purchased at any local pet supply store. If you are not comfortable doing this yourself you will need to take your pet to a vet or a professional groomer to have this procedure done.

All pets need to have their ears cleaned frequently. They can be rinsed with special ear cleansers. They must be kept dry and infection free. If your pet has an unusual odor stemming from its head or if it is shaking its head more often than normal it should be checked by a veterinarian immediately.

No matter what kind of pet you have you will need to make grooming a regular part of your routine. Not only is this important for your pet's health, but it also allows you a special opportunity to bond with your pet and show them how much you love them by taking care of all of their needs.



San Bernardino County
Animal Care & Control Program
(800) 472-5609