

# GROOMING



We all know that regular grooming makes your pet look good, but did you know it makes your pet happier and healthier as well? Grooming also is a great way for you to bond with your four-legged companion.

## **Basic Grooming Tips:**

**Brush** your dog or cat every day to keep his/her coat in the best condition. Regular brushing loosens dirt, prevents matting, and distributes the natural oils in your pet's coat giving it a healthy sheen.

**Cut** your dog or cat's nails at least once a month. If you don't feel confident enough to do it yourself, many groomers and vets will do it for you for a nominal fee. You will need a guillotine-style clipper for best results. Do not use human nail clippers or scissors as you may end up crushing or splintering your pet's nail. Take your pet's paw and with gentle pressure, push on the paw pad to force the nail to extend slightly. Clip the nail slightly avoiding the quick. The quick is the part of the nail that contains the nerves and blood vessels. If you can't see the quick, stop cutting at the point where the nail begins to curve. If you do cut the quick, don't panic. Dab a cotton swab in some clotting powder and press it firmly on the nail for several seconds. Don't forget to trim the dew claw which is located just inside of each front paw.

**Clean** your pet's ears at least two times per month. The skin inside the ear flaps should be pale pink. If there is a bad odor and/or any red, brown, or black skin, you should have a veterinarian examine your pet's ears. Use a cotton ball moistened with baby oil or warm water to gently wipe the opening to the ear canal and ear flaps. Do not stick anything into the ear canal.

**Brush** your pet's teeth. Pets can get cavities too! Pet supply stores sell toothpaste with a small rubber "toothbrush" for cats and dogs that you put on your finger and use to massage your pet's teeth. You can also use a small soft child's toothbrush.

**Wash** your pet. Wash your dog every two to three months or as often as needed. Be sure to brush him before the bath to remove mats from his coat. Place cotton balls in your dog's ear to prevent water from running into his ear canals. Wash your dog with warm water and avoid getting soap in his eyes. Never spray him in the face with water. Massage pet shampoo into your dog's coat following the manufacturer's directions, moving from the head to the tail. Rinse with warm water and dry him with a soft towel or a hair dryer on low power.

Most cats do not need to be bathed, but if they will let you do it, you can try. As with dogs, avoid getting water in their ears and soap in their eyes. Make sure you use a shampoo specifically formulated for cats as their skin has a different pH than a dog's skin.

Experts recommend against bathing rabbits as they are easily susceptible to chills and take a long time to dry. Rabbits, like dogs and cats, will benefit from regular brushing, which is strongly encouraged.



**Provided courtesy of A.C.T. of Dubois County**