



# DOG CARE



## *Dog Grooming*

Grooming is an essential part of responsible dog ownership. Not only does grooming improve your dog's appearance and health, it also builds and strengthens your relationship with them. If you do not see grooming as a chore, you and your dog can derive great pleasure from the benefits of grooming on a regular basis for life.

In addition to improving your dog's appearance, regular grooming removes dead hair, foreign matter such as grass seeds and prevents matting and felting in long coated breeds. Correct grooming also removes dirt and parasites, and by stimulating the blood supply to the skin produces a healthier and suppler coat.

Regular grooming allows you to detect any skin ailments or other conditions thus making it possible for early veterinary diagnosis.



### **The first groom**

When you acquire a new dog, whether it is a puppy or older dog, you should get it used to being groomed from day one. A little at a time, stroking with your hand first until they settle. Then begin by brushing (with the correct brush) gently along the back with the lay of the coat. Gradually move from the back to the chest, the legs and belly, always be gentle especially underneath where the skin is very delicate. Finally, brush the head, ears and then the tail.

Talk to and praise your dog while it is being groomed and of course reward it handsomely when the groom is over. Grooming should be a relaxing and enjoyable experience for both of you. Don't try to groom your dog if it is excitable or rushing around. You need to choose a quiet time and a quiet place where there are little or no distractions; this applies for not only the first groom but those thereafter.

Long haired dogs need to be brushed thoroughly to keep them tangle free. As with short haired dogs, start with the back, lift the hair and brush underneath right to the skin NOT just across the top. Break up the dog's coat and untangle any matted areas using a wide tooth comb. Always brush following the 'hair streams' – the lines of hair growth that run from the head down the back and sides to the legs and feet. Do NOT tug and pull at tangles, it hurts! Always be gentle but as firm as you can without hurting or stressing your dog.

## Bathing

Do NOT use human shampoos/conditioners or clothes washing liquids as they are not suitable for dog hair and skin and may cause irritations. You can use a conditioner suitable for dog hair if you want to and this will make long coats easy to brush out.

Some short haired dogs can go for very long periods of time without being bathed especially if they have been brushed regularly. Dry mud will brush off quite easily in some dogs, so try brushing first before rushing into bathing especially if you don't have good bathing and drying facilities or if the weather is very cold. There are times of course that a dog gets into such a smelly and muddy mess that it has to be bathed.

Dogs that visit a groomer will usually have a bath at the time of their groom and if this is done on a regular basis then you don't need to bath in between times as long as YOU keep up your dog's grooming between visits. Bathing a very long haired dog should only be done after ALL the tangles and matts have been removed as they will only get worse during the bath.

Animal Aid in Coldstream offers a professional grooming service located at our Vet Clinic. Please contact our Grooming Salon staff on 8756 1316 to make an appointment.

