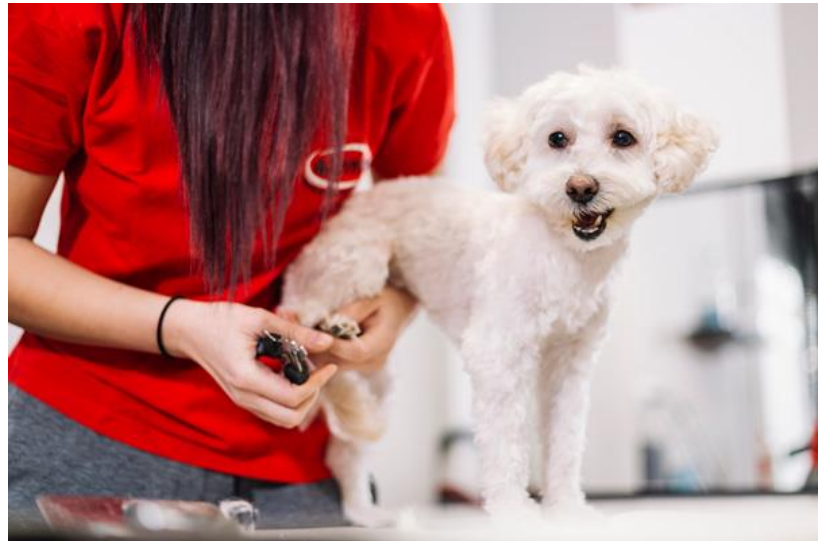


Trimming your Dogs Nails

Dogs need nail trims on a regular basis and this type of task can seem daunting to some owners, especially if it's a new experience for them. Trimming your dog's nails regularly is important because it prevents overgrown nails that can lead to ingrown nails, which can lead to more serious problems down the road. To make nail trims a positive experience for both you and your beloved dog you will want to ensure you have lots of yummy treats on hand and have a plan beforehand. By doing this you will make the experience low stress that results in a content owner and dog.



Nail Clippers

Dogs do quite well with nail trims when they have been accustomed to it at an early age in life. Before we get started with the standard nail trim let's look at the different style nail trimmers available.

- Pliers: Has the same working mechanism as scissors and is great for larger breeds that have thicker nails.
- Scissor: Works similar to scissors and are meant for puppies or smaller breeds
- Guillotine: Just like it sounds it works like a guillotine system. You place the end of the dogs nail inside the hole. You will then squeeze the clippers and a blade comes down to clip the nail.
- Grinder: This is a battery-operated machine and instead of cutting the nail this slowly grinds the nail down. This can be useful for dogs that have thicker nails or dogs that do not like the feel of the other clippers. Keep in mind that the grinder does make noise when turned on and when filing, so it may be scary for some dogs.

Standard Nail Trim

Now that we some of the different types of nail clippers we will go over the standard nail trim for dogs that are comfortable and used to getting their nails trimmed regularly, every 2-3 weeks.

1. Start with finding a comfortable place within your home where there will be no distractions or interruptions.
2. Once you found the perfect area you will want to grab the dogs paw and gently press down on the pad, which will separate the nails. Making sure that their fur is not in the way.
3. Now that you have a good view of the nails you are going to hold the clippers where you are able to cut from top to bottom.



If your dog has lighter coloured nails

You should be able to see the quick like the photo to the right. If you feel comfortable you can cut close to the quick or trim the nail little by little and stopping just before the quick.



If your dog has dark coloured nails

Begin to trim the tip of the nail at a time and continue to do so until you start seeing the beginning of a circle, which is still nail coloured (this will appear right where the cut was made.) When you notice that circle it means you are close to the quick and you will want to stop trimming.

What is the Quick?

The quick is a blood vessel and a nerve inside the dog's nails. Sometimes its hard to locate, espically on dogs with darker nails, so its very important to trim little by little to prevent hitting that sensitive nerve. If you accidentally hit the quick your dog may respond with a yelp and show some discomfort. You will then begin to notice bleeding, since it is a blood vessel. You will want make sure you have "kwik" stop available, which is a powder that you can get at your local pet store that stops the bleeding. Your pet may show some discomfort when walking afterwards and its important to avoid wet areas while the nail is healing. Seek medical attention from your Vetnerianian if nesscessary.

Desentization and Counterconditioning

Dogs that may have not had their nails trimmed in the past or have had a negative experience from the quick being cut to short may make it difficult to cut their nails. Below is some tips on how to get your dog confident and comfortable with nail trims:

1. Start feeding your dog with food or treats that they really enjoy.
2. Handle your dog while they are focused on eating. Do this for a few moments and stop feeding. When you begin to handle their paws again begin to feed again. Your dog will learn that good things happen when you are near their paws. (This can be easier if you have someone assisting you.)
3. Next you will present the clippers and begin tapping the clippers to the nails while they are eating. After you've done a few taps to the nail stop the feeding and the taps to the nails. What we want is the dog to understand that they will get food while they are being handled and no food when they're not being handled.
4. Now you will want to clip the nail while you are feeding them. If they stop eating don't proceed until they continue eating. Once they begin to eat again you can go ahead and start trimming the nails again. If your dog is showing signs that they are uncomfortable, or fearful, you will want stop and start this method another day.
5. If you notice that your dog is showing aggression or is stressed during nail trimming, then it would be best to talk to a professional to help.

Extra Tips:

- Punishment will stress out your dog or even have them act out aggressively.
- Do not forget to cut the dew claw, which is located at the side of the paw. The dew claw does not get worn down like the rest of the nails since it does not rub up or scrape against rough services.
- If you have a puppy start by associating the clippers with positive things like food.

References:

"Dog Grooming Tips." Aspcas, www.aspcas.org/pet-care/dog-care/dog-grooming-tips

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