

From Pretty Pooch to Barking Beauty

Have a wash, clean your teeth, brush your hair - this is all obvious for us humans. But what's the story for our four-legged friends? Vets from the specialist retail chain, Maxi Zoo, have pinpointed the most important care tips so that dog owners know exactly what type of care and how much of it their dog needs.

Brushing is essential. It promotes a healthy coat and reduces unpleasant body odour and parasite infestation. Plus dogs enjoy it. It strengthens the bond between dog and owner. Once or twice a week is sufficient for short-haired dogs; long-haired dogs should be brushed daily. Dogs with thick or wiry hair, like fox terriers for example, should have their coats trimmed three or four times a year to remove dead hair. All dogs need to be brushed more frequently in the spring and autumn when the new coat grows. Rubber toothed and horsehair brushes, as well as those with wire bristles, are most suitable since they comb out loose hair from the undercoat.

Your pet should not be bathed too often. A well-groomed dog only needs a bath around every three months. Obviously, this does not apply to animals that are partial to rolling in dirt. Wash your pet in warm water and use a mild dog shampoo that is gentle on the skin and the natural, protective oil covering the coat. The head should be left out of the washing process to avoid soapy lather getting into the ears and eyes. Dry the dog thoroughly afterwards or use a hairdryer.

PET POINTERS



with Tony Cross

Dog's ears are very sensitive, examine the ears regularly for earwax or unpleasant odour. You can remove any dirt with the aid of a damp cloth. Never venture into the ear canal, least of all with cotton buds. If it is evident that your dog has ear problems, you should consult a vet. The same applies if its eyes are permanently weeping or inflamed. Otherwise clean away the corners of the eyes with a damp cloth.

You should clean your dog's teeth with dog toothpaste and a cloth or brush at least once a week. Give your dog a chew bone or strip every other day so that it can play its own part in tooth care. If your dog has free rein to run around on hard surfaces, the length of its claws will be taken care of naturally. If not, you must step in to ensure that problems with mobility do not develop. Your vet will show you how to trim the claws correctly.

Excessive hygiene, such as frequent bathing, completely unbalances the composition of the coat and is therefore no solution. Many dog owners achieve great success by switching to another type of food. A different formula can have a positive effect on the animal's metabolism and minimise degradation products from digestion as well as perspiration. The staff at Maxi Zoo will gladly advise you on suitable foods.

These are just a few simple pointers to ensure your dog is a barking beauty all year round.

