Dog Grooming Checklist

A dog grooming checklist for owners covering brushing, bathing, nails, ears, teeth and coat.

Gather grooming supplies

- [ ] Choose the right brush or comb for your dog's coat type.
- [ ] Get a gentle, dog-specific shampoo and conditioner.
- [ ] Have dog nail clippers or a grinder and styptic powder ready.
- [ ] Keep a vet-recommended ear cleaner and cotton pads on hand.
- [ ] Prepare a dog toothbrush and dog-safe toothpaste.
- [ ] Set out towels, a non-slip mat and plenty of treats.

Brushing and coat

- [ ] Brush in the direction of hair growth to remove loose fur.
- [ ] Work through tangles and mats gently before bathing.
- [ ] Brush more often during shedding seasons.
- [ ] Check the skin for fleas, ticks, lumps or irritation.
- [ ] Trim long hair around the eyes, paws and rear as needed.
- [ ] Reward calm behavior to keep brushing positive.

Bathing

- [ ] Brush out the coat before getting your dog wet.
- [ ] Use lukewarm water and a dog-specific shampoo.
- [ ] Lather thoroughly while avoiding the eyes and inside the ears.
- [ ] Rinse completely so no shampoo residue remains.
- [ ] Towel dry and use a dryer on low if your dog tolerates it.
- [ ] Keep your dog warm and calm until fully dry.

Nail trimming

- [ ] Handle the paws gently to get your dog comfortable.
- [ ] Trim a little at a time and avoid the quick.
- [ ] Keep styptic powder nearby in case of a small cut.
- [ ] Smooth rough edges with a file or grinder if needed.
- [ ] Reward your dog throughout to build a positive habit.
- [ ] Listen for nails clicking on the floor as a trim reminder.

  If you are unsure or your dog resists, a professional groomer or your veterinarian can help.

Ears and eyes

- [ ] Check ears for redness, odor, discharge or excess wax.
- [ ] Clean visible areas with a vet-recommended ear cleaner.
- [ ] Never insert cotton swabs deep into the ear canal.

- [ ] Wipe around the eyes with a damp, soft cloth.
- [ ] Trim hair near the eyes carefully to keep vision clear.
- [ ] Report persistent redness, discharge or head shaking to your veterinarian.

Dental care

- [ ] Introduce tooth brushing slowly with dog-safe toothpaste.
- [ ] Brush along the gumline using gentle, small motions.
- [ ] Aim for regular brushing, ideally most days of the week.
- [ ] Offer dental chews or toys as a helpful supplement.
- [ ] Watch for bad breath, red gums or trouble eating.
- [ ] Schedule professional dental checks with your veterinarian.
- [ ] Important: This is general information, not professional advice. Consult a professional groomer for coat-specific grooming and your veterinarian for skin, ear, dental or any health concerns.