

than to de-matting and trying to salvage a neglected coat.

### **Should I bathe my dog before taking him to my groomer?**

One of the worst problems that confront groomers is that of working on a dog which has been bathed without being brushed out completely. The result of such a practice is a coat which is so firmly matted that clipping is sometimes the only solution. Ask your groomer if bathing at home prior to grooming is recommended, and always brush your dog properly before bathing.

### **How old should a dog be before he has his first grooming appointment?**

Even though a three-month-old puppy is not usually in need for grooming, he should be taken to your groomer to get him used to full grooming gradually. In this way, he will learn to accept grooming as a happy experience that he will enjoy.

### **Should my cat be groomed?**

Long-haired cats need combing occasionally to prevent matted fur. Many cats also need bathing at times, if they are not capable of achieving the neatness that is usually attributed to cats. Check to see if your groomer provides this service for cats.

Remember that your professional ABKA groomers are especially qualified to advise you about the type of grooming and grooming equipment that is best for your pet. They can advise you of techniques for grooming your dog at home, and can provide the finest service available at their kennel or grooming shop. Many times, your groomer will be able to detect potential health problems, which should be handled by your veterinarian, before you might ordinarily notice them. Problems such as possible

ear infections or mites, skin disorders, unusual growths, parasites, etc., are more easily detected as a result of regular grooming. Your groomer is familiar with the type of grooming which will make your pet look his best and can also provide special baths for fleas and ticks, dry skin problems, and, in cooperation with your veterinarian, medicated baths for special problems. Good health and good looks go hand in hand with good grooming ... and nobody likes a dirty dog. The best team for accomplishing this is your veterinarian, your ABKA professional, and you.

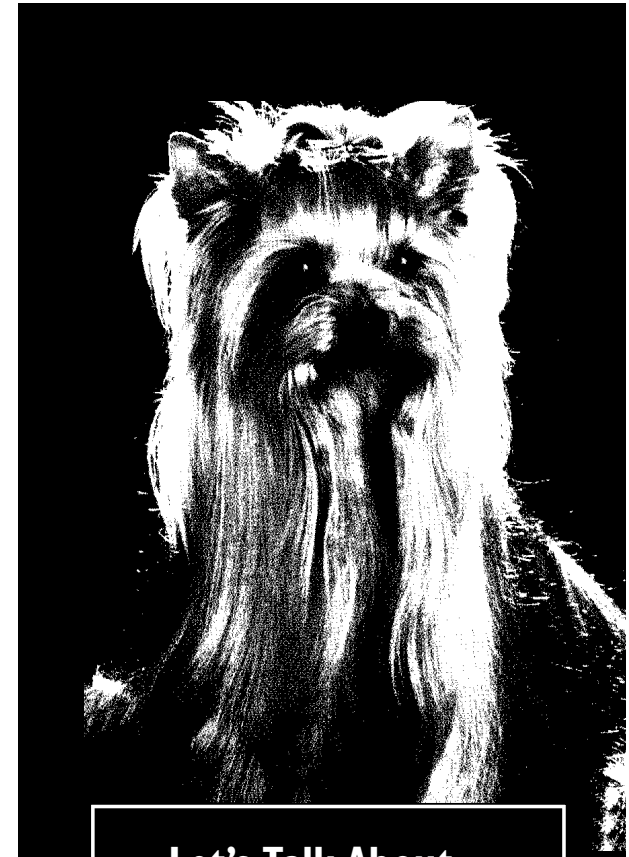


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**Let's Talk About...**

*Grooming*  
**Your  
Dog**

*Grooming is an extremely important, but much misunderstood art/science. Your ABKA professional groomer would like you to understand more about this service which can improve your dog's health, appearance and social acceptance. The following questions are the most frequently asked, and the answers should help clarify some of the more common misconceptions about grooming.*

**Why should I have my dog groomed? I thought that only poodles needed grooming.**

Most pet owners confuse “grooming” with “clipping.” Clipping (which is commonly done to poodles, spaniels, terriers, as well as to mixed breed dogs), is only one procedure in the grooming process. Grooming also includes combing and brushing, clipping nails, plucking hair from ears, and parasite control. (Many groomers feel that teeth cleanings are best left to veterinarians, and in some states, groomers are not permitted to clean their customers’ pets’ teeth). Although the most obvious result of these procedures is an improved appearance, the major benefits to your pet are increased comfort and social acceptability, and perhaps even improved health.

**Do all dogs need grooming?**

All dogs need an occasional bath, but it is more important to keep your dog combed and brushed, especially if he has long hair. Matted hair can easily cause skin problems and unnecessary discomfort for your pet. If neglected for too long, it might eventually necessitate a lengthy grooming session, which could be uncomfortable for your pet, and expensive for you. Regular brushing, on the other hand, improves his skin tone and his circulation, and makes his coat healthier and more attractive.

**My dog has a very strong odor. Bathing doesn't seem to do any good. Why?**

It's possible that his teeth, his ears, or his anal sacs are responsible for the problem. Your groomer will be able to help you to determine the nature of the problem, and refer you to your veterinarian, if necessary.

**What are anal glands?**

They are small sacs located on either side of the rectum. They sometimes need to be expressed or emptied. Some groomers accomplish this as a part of the grooming service. If this is the cause of your dog's odor problem, bathing alone will not solve it. Your groomer will be happy to explain this procedure in more detail.

**My dog doesn't smell bad, but I bathe him once a week. Is that enough?**

More than enough. Most dogs do not need to be bathed more than once a month. Some do not need to be bathed more than once every six months, unless they get extremely dirty. However, longhaired dogs should be brushed out properly at least once a week, in lieu of a bath.

**What kind of brush should I use?**

That depends on the type of coat. Please ask your groomer about the equipment which is correct for your pet.

**My dog scratches all the time, but I can't find any fleas on him. What's the problem?**

Scratching is often caused by dry skin and not fleas. This could be the result of excessive bathing, dry climate, nutritional deficiency, or the wrong type of shampoo. Discuss this problem with your groomer.

**Why do my dog's nails get so long?**

Because he isn't on hard surfaces often enough to keep them worn down. You should have them checked at least once a month. Walking on pavement will help wear them down naturally.

**My dog doesn't behave when I try to brush him. How do you get him to stand still?**

Most dogs tend to be on their best behavior with groomers, especially when they sense the firm yet gentle touch which marks the experienced professional. It is rare for a groomer to encounter a dog with a drastic temperament problem. In these infrequent cases, the groomer might ask the owner to have his or her veterinarian administer a mild tranquilizer prior to grooming. This protects the pet from injuring himself and enables the groomer to complete the grooming quickly. (ABKA groomers do not administer tranquilizers unless they are prescribed and provided by the animal's veterinarian, since undesirable side-effects sometimes occur.)

Many times, a dog which reacts badly to grooming at first, will learn to accept and appreciate the process as he becomes more at ease with the groomer, and as he realizes how much better he feels after grooming. Younger animals (puppies) learn to accept grooming faster and enjoy it more than a pet that is not groomed until an adult age, and groomed infrequently.

**I have my dog clipped every six months, but he doesn't look as pretty as my neighbor's dog. Is that my groomer's fault?**

Your neighbor probably has a regular six to eight week appointment with the groomer, and keeps her dog well brushed between appointments. This kind of regular attention enables the groomer to devote more time and effort to beautifying her dog, rather