

**D**o you have a grooming routine that you follow religiously each day before you walk out the door? A little personal upkeep goes a long way in making you feel happy and healthy — it's a similar story for our four-legged friends.

Although there are many responsibilities that come with owning a dog, practising good hygiene habits with your pet is one of the most important aspects of dog ownership and something every owner should be prepared to do. After all, grooming your dog will not only ensure it remains the best-looking pooch on the block, but it has many other benefits as well.

## The benefits

One of the main reasons grooming is an essential part of pet care is because it's good for your dog's health and wellbeing. As Lisa Stewart, a Certified Master Groomer (CMG) from Canine Master Groomers explains, brushing and bathing your dog in between trips to the professionals keeps your dog clean, removes dead hair, prevents the coat from matting and allows the skin to breathe.

Throwing nail trimming, ear cleaning and daily dental care into the mix will also prevent your pet from suffering from nasty infections and unnecessary discomfort.

Vanessa Pollari CMG from A Dapper Dog Grooming Parlour says that grooming also provides pet owners with an opportunity to check for any health problems that may be troubling their pet.

"Grooming allows you to become more aware of the condition of your dog's coat and skin," she explains. "This means that you can pick up bumps, sore spots, growths and parasites more easily, as well as how long your dog's nails are, ear and eye problems, and any injuries that you might not have been aware of otherwise."

Another advantage of having a well-groomed dog is that a clean pet also means that your

## Grooming kit essentials

- 🐾 Slicker brush
- 🐾 Metal tooth comb
- 🐾 Dog shampoo, conditioner and de-tangler
- 🐾 Nail trimmers and an emery board
- 🐾 Dog toothbrush and toothpaste
- 🐾 Cotton balls and gauze
- 🐾 Ear-cleaning solution
- 🐾 Towel
- 🐾 Spray attachment



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## Primped and Preened

Want your dog to look good and feel great? **Natasha Saroca** looks at why regular pet grooming sessions are a must, as well as a few canine care essentials that every dog owner should carry out at home.

home is more likely to be free of offensive doggy smells, furry flooring and muddy paw prints. A daily grooming routine also allows dogs and their owners to spend plenty of quality time together.

But, most importantly, by being clean and sweet smelling, your pet is sure to be shown lots of attention, given plenty of cuddles and make friends everywhere he goes.

## Grooming at home

How can you keep your pooch looking and feeling good until his next doggy grooming appointment? Read on for some handy hints from the grooming experts.

### Fight the fuzz

According to our grooming gurus, brushing your canine's coat is the most important aspect of dog grooming.

As Rebecca Krowiak, CMG from Furry Tails Dog Grooming Salon, explains, regular brushing will keep your dog's coat and skin in tip-top condition.

"If your dog's hair is matted or the dead coat is not removed, it's very uncomfortable for them, as their pores are blocked and the skin can't breathe, which can often cause knots, sores and bruises to form," she says.

"Use a good slicker brush to get the knots out and then go back through the coat with a metal tooth comb," Krowiak advises. "Start off by gently brushing through the coat, starting at one point and finishing at another — this will ensure you don't miss any knots or tangles."

"The brush should also go through the hair without snagging, which means you should be able to see the skin easily."

While Prue Garner, CMG from Woof the Original, advises that a daily brushing is ideal, your canine's coat also factors into the equation. As a general rule, dogs with long hair need a daily brush to maintain their smooth, glossy tresses, while medium-coated dogs can get away with a good brush every few days. Short-haired breeds should be brushed at least once or twice a week.