

Bathing Dogs in the Shelter

Keep yourself safe during the grooming process:

Always ask staff before bathing a dog. Do keep in mind that most dogs do not like bathed.

Read your dog's body language to prevent the dog from biting or injuring itself or yourself. With a very nervous dog you should remain calm, move slow, and use water on a low-pressure setting. Dogs' usually give you warning signs before they growl or bite so keep the dog and yourself safe, respect your dog's body language and listen! A lot of dogs do not like their paws to be rubbed so please use caution and listen to your dog.

If you do not feel that you can safely bathe the dog, simply give some good treats, some gentle attention (perhaps with some soft brushing of their coat) and return the dog to their kennel.

Dog washing instructions:

- Working in teams of two is very helpful.
- Take dog into a play yard to stretch and eliminate before bathing.
- Brush out any loose fur and interact to see if the dog has any handling issues.
- Safely lift the dog into the tub
 - Remember proper lifting technique.
- Tie the dog securely into place.
- Check the water temperature away from the dog until it feels lukewarm.
 - A watering can may be used if pressure seems too much for the dog.
- Wet the entire body of the dog.
 - Try not to spray the water into the dog's ears.
- Read instructions of the dog shampoo to make sure the dilution rate is correct before applying to the dog's coat.
- Lather up the dog's body
 - From the neck down
 - In-between dog's paws
 - The underbelly
- Rinse all soap off until the water runs clear.
 - You may apply a second shampoo if needed, and rinse again.
- Apply special tearless shampoo to dog's face, trying not to get into dog's eyes and ears.
 - Pay special attention to any folds in face make sure you clean these folds out well.
- Apply conditioner if needed.
- Gently rinse dog's face and conditioner off the body until water runs clear.
- Dry the dog well with a towel.
- Clean the dog's ears with ear cleaner and cotton balls.
 - Sopping the cotton ball enough that some of the ear cleaner will run down into the dog's ear canal.

- Allow the dog to shake his head after you apply the ear cleaner.
- Wipe out the ear with the cotton ball moving in an outward motion of the ear so that you do not shove anything back into the canal.
- Use a new cotton ball for each ear.
- Safely lift the dog out of the tub.
- Towel dry dog once again and blow dry if needed.
- Another trip out to the play yard is in order.

What physical health issues should I report to a staff member?

During the grooming process of a dog you may notice things you normally would not, just because you are paying attention to the dog's entire body. How does the skin look? Is it red maybe having some scabbing or flaky areas? A special shampoo can be used for such skin problems.

If any of the following are present, check with staff before continuing:

- Starting with eyes do they look red, or cloudy, do they have a lot of mucus around the eye?
- The ears - do they look red, or do they smell bad, do they have too much hair in the ear canal to clean well?
- Any there unusual lumps on the dog's body.
- Paws - are nails really long? Is there too much matted into the paw pad? Is there tree sap of gum stuck in-between the paw pad?
- Report any heavy matting and do not wash a really matted dog. The coat will not be able dry properly with a heavily matted dog.

Cat Grooming

Always ask a staff member before doing any more invasive grooming than simple brushing on a cat.

Healthy cats should be able to groom themselves. However, some elderly cats lose the ability to groom themselves like they used to. Regular brushing should be done with longhaired cats to prevent matting.

I usually try to wipe cats down with non-scented baby wipes before giving them a bath. Maybe their rear-end needs wiping? It is much easier to spot clean a cat than giving them a bath. Always use extra caution when grooming cats! Cats don't give you many signs before letting you know that they don't like something. A heavily mated cat should be shaved down from a professional groomer or veterinarian. The same unusual physical signs should be reported as we talked about in the dogs.