How To Clip Your Dogs Nails At Home
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My Dog Better Nail Care

Clipping Your Dog’s Nails at Home

Grooming your dog is not just about keeping them looking good—it's an important part of their healthcare routine that makes a big difference to their comfort and well-being. A vital yet often overlooked aspect of grooming is nail trimming. While it may seem daunting, if you know what to do and have the right tools, clipping your dog’s nails at home does not have to be stressful for you or your furry friend.

Why cutting your dog’s nails is important

Dog claw clipping matters because long nails can cause a lot of problems for your dog. They can make walking uncomfortable, as the nails push into the soft tissue of the paw pads. Over time, this can even affect the dog's posture and gait, potentially leading to joint issues. Untrimmed nails can also split or break, which is painful and may require veterinary attention.

Making your dog’s nail clipping a positive experience

The key to clipping a dog’s claws successfully at home is to ensure it's an enjoyable experience for your dog:

- **Start Young**: If possible, introduce your dog to claw clipping when they’re a puppy. Getting your can be fun, and starting young will help them get used to the process.
- **Regular Handling**: Regularly handle your doggo's paws, so they become comfortable with the sensation.
- **Build their tolerance:** if you notice your dog is growing stressed or resistant after you have trimmed a few nails, give them a break. You want your dog to be comfortable getting their nails trimmed, so forcing them through it is unlikely to encourage them.
- **Use Praise and Treats**: Reward your dog with praise and treats during and after clipping so they associate nail trimming with something fun.

How to clip dogs’ nails: a guide

Choosing the right clippers and file

Getting the right tools is the first step to trimming a dog’s nails. There are two main types of nail clippers for dogs: guillotine and scissor-style. Guillotine clippers are better for smaller breeds, while the scissor-style works well for larger breeds with thicker nails. In general, the bigger your dog’s nails the tougher the tool has to be to cut the claw. Some people also find guillotine clippers easier to use. If you also have a nail file on hand this helps smooth any rough edges after clipping.

Cutting a longer nail

If your dog’s nails have grown too long, trim them gradually to avoid cutting the quick, a blood vessel running through the nail.

1. Start by taking off small amounts of the nail tip, avoiding the pinkish area where the quick begins.
2. If your dog has clear nails, you'll be able to see the quick. Be cautious and cut just a little at a time

Cutting a shorter nail

For maintaining your dog's nails:

1. Identify the curve of the nail which indicates where the tip ends and the quick starts.
2. Cut small bits of the nail at a time, angling the clippers to cut from underneath. If you do that you should be able to avoid the quick easily.

How to file the nail

After clipping, gently file the edges of the nail using a pet-specific nail file. This smoothens any points and prevents your furry friend from snagging their nails on carpets or furniture.

Trimming clear nails

The quick shows up more clearly on light-coloured nails, so it should be easy to avoid. Clip slowly and in small sections and stop before the nail starts to turn pink.

Trimming black nails

Black nails hide the quick, making them trickier to trim:

1. Cut teeny tiny amounts of the nail at a time.
2. Look at the end of your dog’s nail after each cut; when you see a dark spot in the

middle surrounded by white it means you’re getting close to the quick, so for your dog’s safety it’s best to stop trimming there.

How often should I clip my dog’s nails?

If you regularly check your dog’s nails, you will see when they are starting to get overgrown. Dogs typically need their claws clipped every three to four weeks, but this depends how quickly they grow and get worn down.

Reward your dog

After successfully clipping your pup's nails, always end the session with plenty of cuddles, praise, or a favourite treat. This reinforces the positive association and should make future nail-trimming sessions a breeze.

If you are patient and consistent, clipping a dog’s nails does not have to be difficult. Some dogs may take longer to get used to it, and that’s okay too. The goal is to ensure the health and happiness of your best buddy, one clip at a time. For more tips on dog grooming, check out our blog.

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