

Professional Dog Grooming

Think grooming a dog involves washing it in the bathtub? Think you don't need a groomer?

Dog groomers do far more than just fluff and dry; they address several vital health practices regarding your dog's eyes, ears, and anal glands. Of course, it's not impossible to take care of these grooming concerns yourself, but in many instances it's safer and more practical to let a professional handle these sensitive areas.

Proper ear care requires periodic ear cleanings. Veterinarians and professional dog groomers use an agent that dissolves earwax, or saline solution to clean dogs' ears. These cleaning agents are usually put into the ear before bathing. It is crucial for the groomer to keep the dog's ears dry. If water runs into a dog's ear during the bath, a drying agent containing isopropyl alcohol, acetic acid, or boric acid must be put into the ear. Professional dog groomers recommend using a wash rag instead of Q-tips to help dry out the ears. Using Q-tips increases the chance of injuring the dog's eardrum. If the cleaning requires reaching places that are out of a wash-rag's reach you should seek professional help.

Dog groomers usually apply an ointment to the dog's eyes before bathing in order to protect the cornea. However, the trend is to move away from these practices because some professionals believe the ointment may trap irritants that run into the eyes during the bath. Closing, redness, squinting, and excessive tearing are good indicators of eye problems.

Another part of proper dog grooming that the professionals see to is expressing the anal glands. Have you ever noticed your dog dragging its bottom across the carpet? If you have, you know how important it is to take it to the dog groomer. What it is trying to do is release the fluid that has built up in tiny sacs located under the base of his tail. If he is successful, you will know it by the rank smell. Since the sacs are fragile (and discoloration of the fluid could indicate infection), this part of grooming should be left to a professional or a veterinarian.

Adequate grooming is absolutely necessary to maintain your dog's health. If it's something you want to do personally, educate yourself on the finer points. But using a professional dog groomer will be the most beneficial to you in the long run.