VIRGINIA DOG TRAINER LLC

THE $100 GROOMING APPOINTMENT VS. YOUR HOME

What Every Dog Owner Should Know

Practical grooming, smarter spending, and a happier dog.



TRAIN LIKE A CHAMPION TODAY

Published November 1, 2026
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1 | The Real Value of Grooming

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COMFORT & CARE

Individual care • Practical judgment • A happier dog

Grooming is more than appearance. It is a chance to maintain your dog’s coat, check paws and ears, and notice discomfort or unusual changes. The goal is safe, repeatable care rather than a picture-perfect haircut.

Every dog is different. Coat type, age, health, temperament, and past handling experiences should shape the routine. A short-coated coonhound, a double-coated shepherd, and a curly-coated doodle do not need the same equipment or frequency.

The first job is to observe the dog. Relaxed posture and voluntary cooperation are different from freezing or tolerating something in fear. If handling suddenly becomes difficult, consider pain or illness before treating it as disobedience.

CHAMPION TIP | Match the routine to the individual dog; never sacrifice safety or comfort to save money.



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2 | Know the Coat Before Buying Tools

2

COAT TYPE

Individual care • Practical judgment • A happier dog

Short, smooth coats often benefit from gentle rubber tools and occasional brushing. Vigorous scraping can irritate the skin.

Double coats need careful removal of loose undercoat, particularly during shedding seasons. Aggressive de-shedding or routine shaving can damage healthy coat; seek professional advice before making major coat changes.

Curly and wavy coats can mat near the skin even when the surface looks fluffy. Work small sections and check with a suitable comb. Long and silky coats often tangle behind ears, in armpits, around collars, and between legs. Never force tight mats out or cut near skin with household scissors.

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3 | The Sensible Grooming Kit

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ESSENTIAL TOOLS

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Start with a coat-appropriate brush, a comb if needed, dog-formulated shampoo, absorbent towels, a nonslip surface, and a nail-care tool you know how to use. Avoid buying specialized equipment until you understand the need.

Keep tools clean and inspect them for rough edges, broken teeth, or wear. Organize everything before the session so you do not have to leave your dog unattended in a tub or on a raised surface.

The advertised $100 grooming appointment is an illustrative comparison, not a universal price. Actual costs and potential savings depend on breed, coat condition, location, frequency, and what professional services are still needed.

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4 | Bathing Without the Chaos

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BATHING

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Brush manageable tangles and loose coat before wetting the dog. Use lukewarm water, a nonslip mat, and dog-formulated shampoo. Avoid eyes and ear canals, and rinse thoroughly.

Dry carefully, especially in dense coats and skin folds. Very hot airflow can burn; a noisy dryer may need gradual introduction. Bath frequency varies by dog and any veterinarian-directed skin-care regimen.

Persistent itching, odor, redness, sores, or hair loss warrant veterinary assessment. Repeated bathing is not a substitute for identifying the cause.

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5 | Nails, Paws, and Ears

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PAWS & EARS

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Overgrown nails can affect comfort and traction. The quick contains nerves and blood vessels, and it can be hard to see in dark nails. Trim tiny amounts, stop when uncertain, and ask a professional to demonstrate safe technique.

Inspect paw pads and between the toes after walks and outdoor adventures. Check for cuts, debris, swelling, and irritated skin.

Look for ear redness, discharge, swelling, or unusual odor. Do not insert swabs deeply into the ear canal or use unapproved solutions. Painful ears require veterinary advice.

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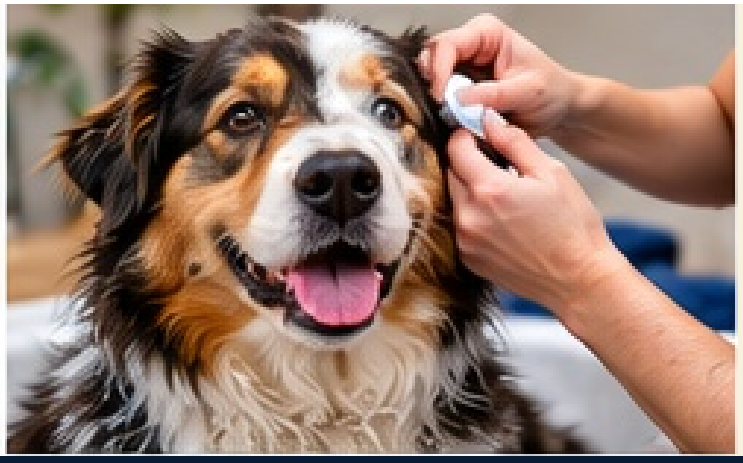

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6 | Confidence, Patience, and Fair Handling

6

FAIR HANDLING

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Teach a predictable place to stand or settle and keep sessions short. Reward calm cooperation, release pressure promptly, and end on a good note. Practice gentle body handling outside grooming time.

Fear is not willful disobedience. A trembling, avoiding, or panicking dog needs gradual exposure, repetition, and assessment rather than escalating force.

If a dog growls, snaps, or threatens to bite, stop the procedure and get qualified help. The Train Like a Champion standard requires timing, consistency, fairness, patience, and sound judgment.

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7 | When a Professional Is Worth the Money

7

PROFESSIONAL HELP

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Professional grooming is a wise choice for full haircuts, difficult mats, specialized coats, and nail or bathing procedures that cannot be done safely at home. Paying for expertise is not failure.

Ask what the service includes: bath, dry, brush-out, haircut, nails, ear care, and extra fees. Discuss age, medical concerns, and behavior history honestly before booking.

At-home maintenance and professional services can complement each other. Consistent brushing may reduce tangling between appointments, while the groomer handles clipping or more advanced work.

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8 | A Realistic Weekly Maintenance Plan

8

MAINTENANCE

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Daily or several times weekly: check mat-prone coats and friction areas, adapting the schedule to the individual dog. Keep the sessions brief and pleasant.

Weekly: inspect paws, nails, ears, skin, and equipment. Record any new sensitivity, coat changes, or handling challenges.

As needed: bathe according to coat, activity, and veterinary guidance; book professional services when appropriate. After grooming, check for irritation and note what went well and what should change next time.

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9 | Mistakes That Become Expensive

9

COMMON MISTAKES

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The wrong brush can scratch skin, and pulling a mat can cause pain. More shampoo is not always better, especially when rinsing is inadequate.

Forcing a nail trim can make future handling harder. Stop before the dog is overwhelmed and use professional help when the task exceeds your ability.

Do not mistake grooming for medical treatment. Recurrent ear problems, severe itching, hot spots, and unexplained odor need veterinary evaluation. The best value is safe, effective care, not simply the lowest price.

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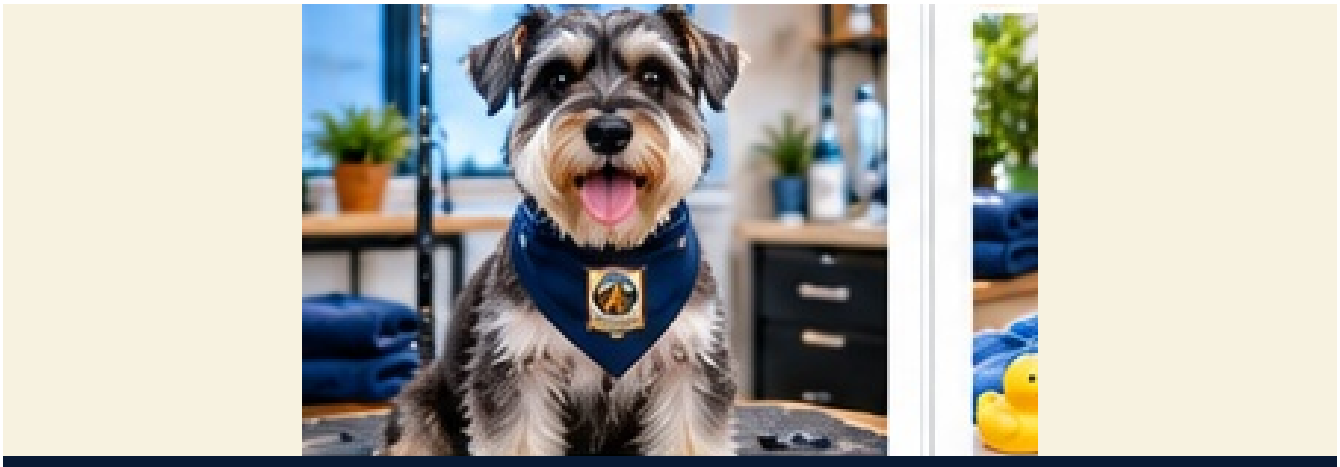

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10 | The Champion Grooming Checklist

10

FINAL CHECKLIST

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BEFORE: Select appropriate tools, check for pain, prepare the nonslip area, and have towels and rewards ready.

DURING: Work in short sections, watch stress signals, keep the dog secure without unsafe restraint, and stop if fear or pain increases.

AFTER: Dry and check the coat, inspect paws and skin, clean tools, and record any concerns. Make the next session easier by practicing what your dog can comfortably handle.

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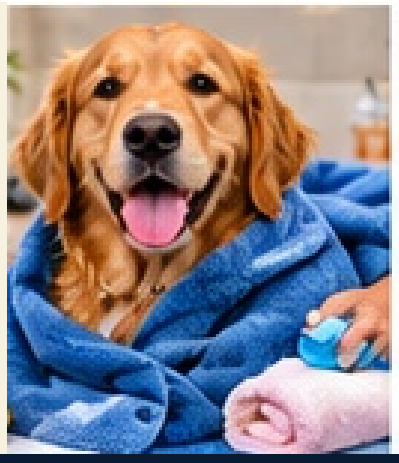

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