

A GUIDE TO

GROOMING YOUR

Bolognese



AMERICAN
BOLOGNESE
CLUB

The ABC would like to thank Fredrika Rönquist and Jessica Manders for their valuable insights and contributions toward this document.



For the love of the breed:
A word from *Marsha England*

founder of the ABC

Preserving the Bolognese begins with protecting its distinctive, rustic, and natural appearance. Proper grooming is not about trends - it is about honoring the breed's history and integrity.

Thoughtful grooming maintains the Bolognese's authentic expression and soft outline. When people encounter a Bolognese that looks true to its heritage, curiosity follows. That curiosity opens the door to education and appreciation for this rare Italian companion breed.

For families who prefer a companion (shorter) cut, guidance is available on our website. With simple adjustments - keeping the body shorter while allowing the ear and tail furnishings to remain longer - owners can maintain a practical style while still respecting the breed's natural character.

Every well-groomed Bolognese represents the breed as a whole. Thank you for helping preserve its beauty and legacy.

The Bolognese Coat

The correct structure of the coat is essential. A natural, rustic appearance is key; Over-grooming can destroy the breed's charm. The coat should look natural and not overly styled, unlike the Maltese or Bichon Frisé.

The Bolognese coat consists of two types of hair:

- Primary hairs: These are slightly thicker and coarser.
- Secondary hairs: These are soft, woolly, and more prone to breakage

The black arrows show the thicker, harder and glossy hair.



The signature crinkled texture of the Bolognese coat is achieved when the secondary woolly hairs gather around the primary hairs.

The Convenience Cut



Head: The head coat should flow seamlessly into the ears, with no visible break between the two. This contributes to the soft, natural expression that defines the breed. While some separation may occur naturally as the coat grows, excessive trimming should be avoided. Minimal use of chunker shears can help maintain a rustic, unsculpted appearance.

Face: The Bolognese is naturally an untrimmed-faced breed. While light trimming may be done on companion dogs for ease of care, preserving the natural facial expression is preferred. The bridge and sides of the nose should never be shaved, as this alters the breed's characteristic look.

Ears: The ears should appear long, full, and natural, with no visible trimming lines. The ear coat should blend into the neck and chest, contributing to the overall soft outline.

Stomach: Light thinning may be done underneath to reduce matting, particularly where friction occurs. This should not affect the outer appearance of the coat.

Body: Maintain at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of coat over most of the body for a companion cut, preserving a soft, natural outline.

Tail: The tail coat is left long and natural, enhancing the breed's overall balance and expression.



The Convenience Cut

Using chunker shears sparingly on the head can help maintain the natural, rustic look.

The coat on the head should flow seamlessly into the ears.

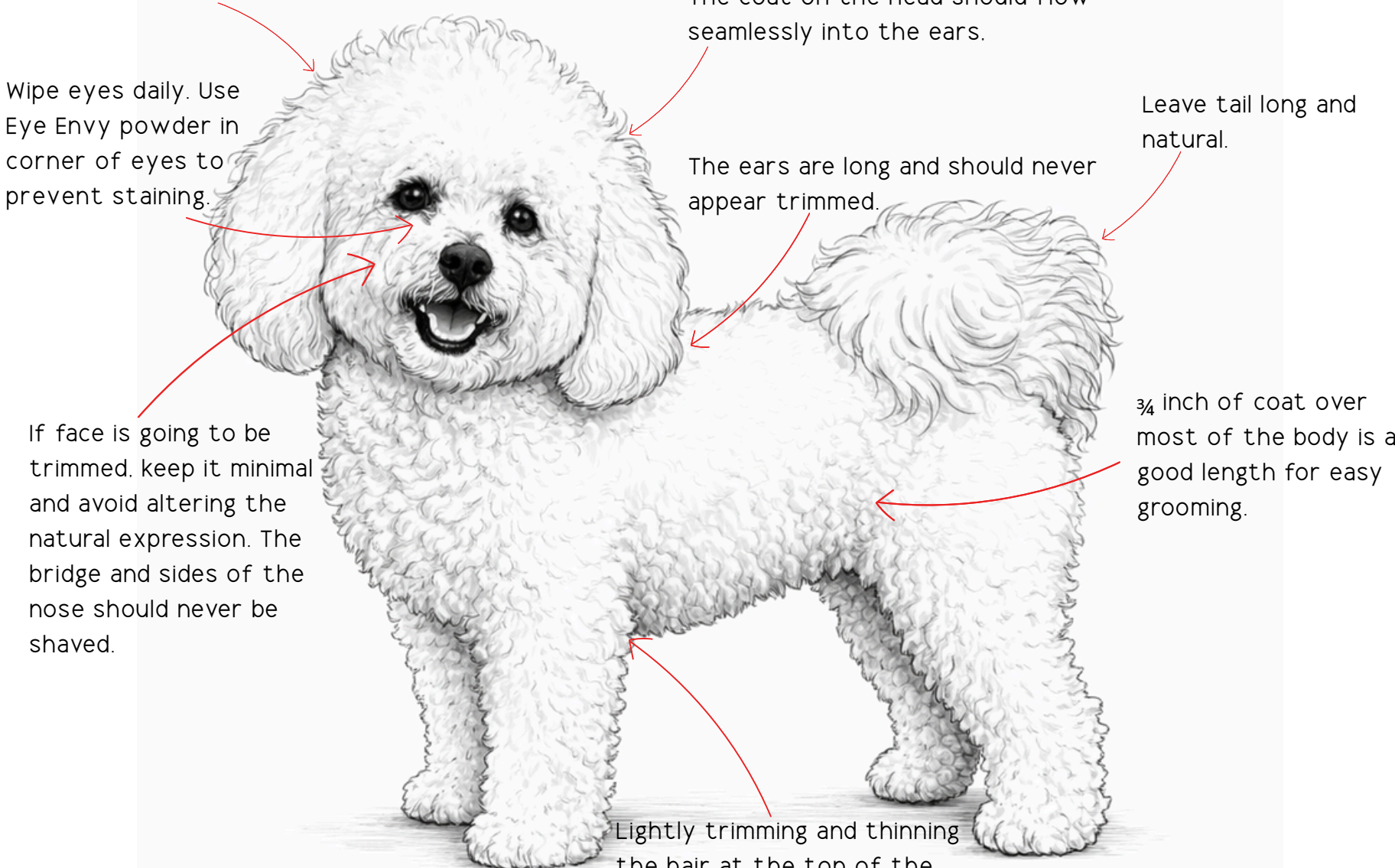
Leave tail long and natural.

The ears are long and should never appear trimmed.

$\frac{3}{4}$ inch of coat over most of the body is a good length for easy grooming.

If face is going to be trimmed, keep it minimal and avoid altering the natural expression. The bridge and sides of the nose should never be shaved.

Lightly trimming and thinning the hair at the top of the front legs where it rubs against the body helps prevent matting.



How to Get That Bolo Groom

The Exhibitor's Groom

The key to this show ring look is to keep the dog looking "as natural as possible".

Please do not scissor the coat for a overly-groomed look for exhibition.

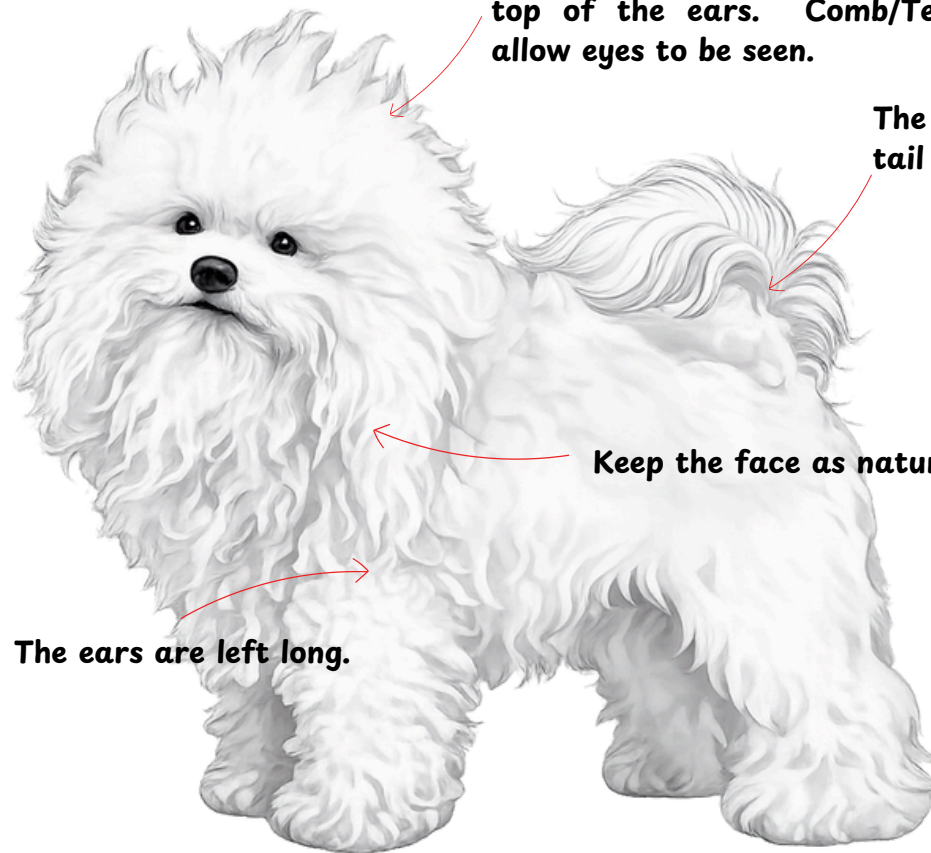
**Note-The curl will have more consistency in the adult subject, than in the puppy.

Don't cut the hair around the eyes. Comb the hair around the nose and between the eyes downward as it grows.



Leave coat on head longer than body. The hair on the head should flow right into the top of the ears. Comb/Tease upward to allow eyes to be seen.

The hair on the tail is left long.



Keep the face as natural as possible.

The ears are left long.



It is advised to let the dog's coat air dry rather than blow-dry it to maintain its natural texture for shows. Between shows, you may brush the coat out to prevent it from tangles and knots.



Each Bolognese is different, but if trimming is needed, it should be done about a month before exhibiting so the coat retains its natural, rustic appearance.

The Exhibitor's Groom



Head: The coat on the head should flow right into the top of its ears. You should not be able to tell where the hair on the head ends and the ears begin. When exhibiting, the hair should be brushed back/upward.

Eyes & Nose: Do not cut any hair around the eyes or the bridge of the nose. As the hair grows, comb it down and let it grow long. The coat on the head should be brushed upward so that the eyes are seen when exhibiting the dog.

Ears: The hair on the ears is long and flows into the neck/upper chest hair. You should not be able to tell where the ears begin or end.

Chest: The chest hair should remain long. Muzzle hair under the chin and ear hair should flow smoothly into the chest hair.

Body: The hair on the body is left long. When the tail is curved over the back, it gives the appearance of a straight topline.

Tail: The hair on the tail should look uncut and long.

AVOID

IN THE RING:

- Yellow markings on the coat
- Coats without ringlet (keeping in mind age, e.g., puppies)
- Bolognese that are over-groomed or have coat brushed straight
- Artificial cosmetics
- Topknots, clips, rubber bands, etc.



COCCHETTI, F. (2020, APRIL 30). BOLOGNESE: SESSIONE DIDATTICA ENCI (POWERPOINT PRESENTATION). ENTE NAZIONALE DELLA CINOFILIA ITALIANA (ENCI).

Advice from European Exhibitors



HUNKY-DORY KENNEL

Fredrika Rönquist, breeder & exhibitor at **Hunky-Dory Kennel** in Sweden, combs her dogs out before the bath. Her comb of choice is the pink HP Sprenger comb. She then allows the dog to dry naturally.



Fredrika's Favorite Supplies

She assisted us in compiling a list of recommended products available in the U.S. that she personally uses and trusts. For maintenance baths, she prefers Tauro Pro Line Intense Hydrate, and for show preparation, she uses additional products from the Tauro Pro Line. She speaks highly of the Tauro slicker brush, noting that it is exceptionally effective, anti-static, and gentle on the skin. Their combs are also excellent for managing the Bolognese coat.



- GENTLE SCRUB SHAMPOO
- INTENSE HYDRATE SHAMPOO
- ULTRA NATURAL CARE INTENSE HYDRATE MASK



TAURO PRO LINE ULTRA NATURAL CARE DETANGLING LEAVE-IN CONDITIONER



TAURO PURE NATURE 2-N 1 TOOTHPASTE



TAURO PRO LINE ERGONOMIC NON-SLIP, WOODEN ROUND SLICKER



TAURO PRO LINE BRUSH, PEAR WOOD 27 MM TEETH



TAURO PRO LINE COMB

TAURO PRO LINE COMB METALLIC, WITH TAIL



Advice from European Exhibitors

Jessie Manders, a breeder and exhibitor from Little White Wonder in the Netherlands, utilizes the grooming tools displayed in the photo below.



JACKIE "KRISTA"
LITTLE WHITE WONDER KENNEL

While air-drying produces the desirable exhibition "curls," it also increases the likelihood of knotting. Therefore, Jessie recommends brushing and blow-drying the coat to maintain manageability between shows.



MARTE TORRE DELLE PASSERE

DETANGLING
FINISHING
SPRAY
GROOMING TABLE

TOENAIL CLIPPERS

ACTIVET
BRUSH

PIN
BRUSH

SLICKER
BRUSH

WIDE TOOTH
COMB