

An Owner's Manual to:

THE ALL-PURPOSE GROOMING TOOL KIT

by the
AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB



ABOUT THIS SERIES

At the AKC, we know better than anyone that your dog can't be treated like a car or an appliance, but we've named this series "An Owner's Manual" because sometimes you probably wish your lovable companions came with one.

These concise guides give you the tools, tips, and direction to be a responsible and confident dog owner who brings out the best in your dog. Give them a test drive!



You notice your dog is looking scruffy and smelling stinky. You just know he's got a tangle behind his right ear, and his nails are tapping on the floor when he walks. Which of the following best describes what happens next?

- A. You wonder where you put the dog brush, the comb, or the nail clippers. You spend 30 minutes looking for them.
- B. You get everything ready for a bath, put your dog into the tub, and then realize you are completely out of dog shampoo.
- C. You think to yourself, "I really should probably go buy a brush, a comb, a nail clipper, and some dog shampoo."
- D. You grab your handy grooming toolkit and get right down to business.



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If you answered D, you can stop reading right now. If you answered A, B, or C, then you, like most of us, could probably use a little help getting organized. With the right tools at your fingertips, grooming is easy.



BE A GATHERER, NOT A HUNTER

Grooming tools can be hard to keep track of. If you've got the dog-shampoo bottles in the shower, the brush out on the deck, and the nail clippers in the drawer under the bathroom sink, you could make the case that everything is in the place where you will use it. But if you have all the necessary tools neatly organized in a waterproof caddy that you always keep in the same place, you'll never waste a single minute trying



to find the right tool for the right job. In that spirit, let's put together a grooming toolkit for your dog. You might already have everything you need, so assembling your kit will just be a matter of rounding everything up and putting it together. Or you might realize you need to add a few important supplies. Let's begin by considering what your grooming toolkit should contain.

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TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

The Basics

A toy Poodle who visits a professional groomer every month won't need the same tools as the Labrador Retriever who gets his baths and brushing at home, but there are a few things every dog will need in a home-grooming toolkit. Gather what you have and make a note of what you need from the following list:



- **Brush**

Depending on your dog's coat, he may need a natural-bristle brush (for short coats), pin brush (for long and curly coats), slicker brush (for double coats and heavy shedders), or all three, depending on how much hair he has and what you want to do to it. A sleek Italian Greyhound might need just a soft-bristle brush, while a fluffy Pomeranian might benefit from a bristle brush, a pin brush, and a slicker brush. At a bare minimum, slicker brushes can remove shed hair from any kind of coat, so they are always good to have handy.



- **Comb**

A steel comb with fine and coarse teeth can be handy for any coat, from long and curly to short and smooth. Combs can help pick out fleas, tease out tangles, and smooth the coat all over.

Top: Getty Images/Hemera; Bottom: Kate McCroary/©AKC





- **Nail trimmers or an electric nail grinder**

Choose scissors-style or guillotine-style nail clippers, whichever you prefer, in a size appropriate for your dog, and keep them sharp. Some people prefer electric nail grinders, but avoid them for long-

coated dogs because hair could get caught in the rotating mechanism.

- **Clotting agent**

If you accidentally clip the quick, don't panic. A styptic pencil or powder will stop the bleeding.

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- **Toothbrush and paste made for dogs**

If you aren't already brushing your dog's teeth, it's never too late to start.

Clean teeth equal better health and less expensive and extensive annual cleanings at the veterinarian.

- **Dog shampoo**

Even if you don't regularly bathe your dog at home, it's always a good idea to have a bottle of dog shampoo on hand, just in case she gets into something stinky and you can't take her to the groomer immediately. Choose a formula suited to your dog's individual needs, such as hypoallergenic, or a formula for a specific coat color or type.

- **Ear wash**, for dogs prone to dirty ears.



- **Cotton balls**, for wiping runny eyes and for keeping ears plugged and dry during bath time.

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SPECIALIZED AND BREED-SPECIFIC

Different breeds and coat types may have additional needs. Consider adding these tools to your kit, as they are relevant for your dog.



If you clip your dog's coat at home:

- Electric clipper/trimmer

For dogs who need stray hairs clipped:

- Blunt-tipped scissors

For dogs who need stray hairs trimmed and for trimming excess ear and paw hair:

- Small, battery-operated clipper

For heavy shedders:

- Coat rake or other de-shedding tool



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To cut through mats in long coats:

- Mat splitter or sharp scissors

If you choose to strip a wire coat:

- Stripper knife

For rubbing and polishing smooth coats:

- Hound glove/mitt or rubber curry comb

For a quick once-over or for dirty paws:

- Bath wipes/baby wipes

For long or curly coats; also useful for dry, brittle coats:

- Crème rinse

For preparing long or curly coats for brushing and combing:

- Conditioning spray, or an oil-based coat spray



Kate McCroary/©AKC



ALSO:

- Blow dryer with low/cool setting
- Spot-on flea control product, if you use it
- A towel used just for your dog

And if you like this sort of thing ...

- Accessories, such as grooming bands for tying up a topknot, bows, barrettes, or other doggy bling



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Every time you use the kit, check that all tools are in good shape and that you have enough shampoo, conditioner, or other products.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you've assembled the contents of your grooming kit, purchase a waterproof container that will be spray-proof when your dog invariably does that after-bath shake and it's easier to clean, too.

Some good options include a plastic caddy with a handle (a shower caddy or even a beach bag), a makeup box, or even a toolbox. A box with several compartments makes everything easy to find.



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Keep your grooming toolkit in a handy spot like the bathroom closet or a shelf by the back door. When it's bath time, brushing time, nail-trimming time, or time to take your dog on vacation, you'll have everything you need exactly where you need it.



Sometimes, one simple organizational step can make a world of difference. With a grooming toolkit, you might just groom your dog more often, and that's good for everyone.

Originally appeared in [AKC FAMILY DOG'S](#) "Good Grooming" column by Eve Adamson





THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

WHO AND WHAT WE ARE:

The AKC is a not-for-profit organization and the largest purebred dog registry in the world. We are the sports-governing body for over 22,000 dog events a year, including conformation (dog shows) and exciting sports like agility, obedience, rally, tracking, lure coursing, earthdog, herding trials, among others.



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But the AKC is so much more! Here are just some of the ways we support and enrich the lives of dogs—purebreds and mixed-breeds alike—and their families. We:

- Created the [AKC Humane Fund](#), which supports breed rescue activities, assists shelters that permit domestic-abuse victims to bring their pets, and educates dog lovers about responsible dog ownership.
- Offer the [Canine Good Citizen®](#) program: A 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 725,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens, and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program's merit and importance.
- Founded [AKC Reunite](#), which has brought more than 400,000 lost pets back together with their owners.
- Created the [AKC Canine Health Foundation](#), which funds research projects and clinical studies. Since 1995 the AKC has donated over \$24 million to the CHF. (The AKC is the only registry that incorporates health-screening results into its permanent dog records.)
- Conduct thousands of kennel inspections annually to monitor care and conditions at kennels across the country and ensure the integrity of the AKC registry.
- Offer the largest, most comprehensive set of DNA programs for parentage verification and genetic identity to ensure reliable registration records.
- Support one of the world's largest collections of dog-related fine art and artifacts at the [AKC Museum of the Dog](#), and we have the world's largest [dog library](#) at AKC headquarters in New York, both of which are open to the public.



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THANK YOU FOR READING!

We hope this information was valuable to you in helping your puppy live a long, healthy, happy life. Below, find additional books in our Owner's Manual series designed to strengthen the bond between you and your furry family member.



THE FIVE COMMANDS
EVERY DOG SHOULD
KNOW



CRATE TRAINING



PUPPY FOOD
& NUTRITION



PUPPY
SOCIALIZATION



WHY DOES MY DOG DO
THAT?



WHAT'S HE THINKING?



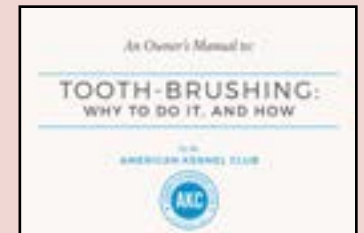
10 ESSENTIAL SKILLS:
CGC TEST ITEMS



FIVE TRICKS YOU'LL
WANT TO SHOW OFF



THE ALL-PURPOSE
GROOMING TOOL KIT



TOOTH-BRUSHING: WHY
TO DO IT, AND HOW



WHAT TO DO IF YOUR
PET GOES MISSING



WHAT ARE ALL THESE
VACCINES?