

# ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

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## How to Effectively Brush Your Pet

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

Brushing can be one of the most enjoyable times you spend with your pet. But, if not done often enough, it can be one of the most trying times to your relationship as well.

How often you brush your dog or cat depends on several factors, the length of the hair, the type of hair, (thick or thin, straight or curly, wiry or cottony) and how often your pet is professionally groomed or bathed. The only way your pet's hair can be left long is if you take it upon yourself to brush the pet and keep it free of mats and burrs. Unfortunately, most people think that when they take their pet to the groomer, all the mats will be removed and the hair left long and beautiful.

Groomers don't like to have to put your pet through the torture of trying to brush out the last two or three months worth of tangles in a single day just to keep the hair long. Our goal is to make your pet's grooming experience as pleasant as possible. In order to keep life less stressful for everyone, we need to have a good, honest working relationship.

When brushing your pet, the proper tools are most important. Personally, I like to use a comb because it gets down to the skin easier than a wire slicker brush. Technique, believe it or not is also important. Brush with the hair coat first, getting out all the tangles especially behind the ears, under armpits, belly, groin and the rear end. Then brush against the hair or "back brush" to assure that you've gone all the way to the skin. Finally, go over the body one last time to lay the hair back down. Always remember to be as gentle as possible so as not to irritate the skin of your pet. Think of it as if you were combing tangles out of your own hair. If done frequently, it shouldn't take more than 10 minutes or so.

Also, frequent trips to the groomer help to keep your pet's hair coat healthy. For most breeds that require grooming, every 4 to 6 weeks is best, but check with the groomer to see what is recommended for your pet.

As always, if you have any questions, just call the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. 