



Bathing Techniques for Dogs
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Bath time doesn't have to be a chore for you or your dog. These six steps will make brushing, shampooing, washing and drying easy — and even a little fun.

1. Choosing a Bathing Spot

Generally, little dogs are easier to bathe than larger dogs. You can even bathe them in a laundry room or kitchen sink. Of course, when weather permits, you can always bathe your dog outside in a wash tub or even in the driveway.

Before you start bath time, gather your supplies:

- Brush
- Mild dog shampoo
- Towel

To prevent clogging drains with your dog's hair, be sure to use a hair catcher in the drain.

2. Get Your Dog Used to the Water

If your dog is already familiar with bath time, it's just a matter of taking him through a proper bathing technique. If your dog is a novice, get him used to the idea of standing in the bath without water first. You could even make standing in the tub a game that earns him treats.

3. Brush Before Wetting Your Dog's Hair

The mistake almost all dog owners make at one time or another is trying to wash their dog before they remove any matted or loose hair with a brush. Shampoo is a surface-cleaning agent and will only clean the dirt it can touch. By not brushing first, you'll never wash the dirt trapped within the matted fur. In fact, you may be tightening the hair, making it harder to remove the next time you bathe your dog.

4. Shampoo and Lather Your Dog's Hair

Stay away from human shampoo. The pH levels are usually too harsh for a dog's skin and can cause problems later on. Use a shampoo specific to your dog's skin condition. Ask your vet to recommend a good-quality tearless shampoo. With the exception of medicated shampoos, you should feel free to dilute the shampoo; it will lather easier and last longer.

5. Wash Your Dog

Start by wetting the dog all over, leaving his head, face and ears for later. Shampoo his hind legs and tail, and be sure to wash the "you-know-where" parts. Continue by shampooing the body, chest and front legs.

Using extra care, wet the head, face and ears. Cup your hands over his ears to prevent water from entering the ear canal. Lather these areas with care because even tearless shampoo is uncomfortable in the eyes.

Rinse thoroughly, and when you think you've done a good rinse job, rinse and rinse again.



6. Dry Your Dog

After you finish washing your dog, quickly wrap him in a towel. To keep your dog from getting a chill, wrap a blanket around him and towel-dry every part of his body.

If you can get an extra pair of hands to help, do so. Every little bit helps. All it takes is a splash of water, a dab of shampoo and a lot of tender loving care to get your dog smelling fresh. That is, until he discovers the mud puddle next door...

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