



Grooming Your Cat

Keeping your cat's coat in tip top shape will keep her looking and feeling beautiful! Though cats do a good job of keeping themselves clean, assisting with grooming will help keep cat fur off your furniture and floor. Routine grooming will keep a cat's coat healthy and shiny, removing dirt and dead hair, and spreading natural oils. It can also prevent or minimize tangles before the fur becomes matted.

Brushing

Try and make grooming as fun and stress-free as possible. A cat who has never seen a brush may initially find grooming frightening. Keep grooming sessions short, and end on a positive note, until you know your cat enjoys them. To start, find a moment when your cat is already relaxed and happy, and spend a couple minutes brushing her. End with a delicious cat treat or spoonful of canned food and she will soon learn to appreciate these sessions. Gradually lengthen the time you spend grooming your cat as she learns to enjoy these sessions. If you notice your cat becoming stressed, stop and try again later. You don't want your cat to associate grooming with stress or pain. If you have adopted a kitten, you can teach your kitty to enjoy handling and brushing at a young age by incorporating grooming into all petting and play sessions.

Shorthaired cats have less grooming requirements than a long haired cat, and are less at risk for mats or tangles, but can still enjoy the benefits of brushing. Owners of shorthaired cats are recommended to brush their kitty once a week. Use a metal comb to work through the hair and eliminate any potential mats or tangles, and then finish up with a rubber toothed comb to remove loose hair.

Medium and longhaired cats have require more grooming since their longer fur is more at risk of becoming matted or tangled. Cats with longer coats should be brushed daily. Use a long toothed comb brush, paying special attention to areas that are more likely to mat such as legs, belly, and behind the ears. Don't forget the tail! Once the coat has been smoothed out, you can use a rubber toothed comb to help remove loose hair.

Nail Trimming

Trimming your cat's nails is a great way to keep your hands safe during play time, and keep them from snagging fabric and carpet. Before trimming your cat's claws, accustom her to having her paws handled and squeezed. You can do this by gently petting her legs and paws while giving her a treat. This will help to make it a more pleasant experience. Gradually increase the pressure so that petting becomes gentle squeezing, as you'll need to do this to extend the claw. Continue with the treats until your cat tolerates this kind of touching and restraint. It may take a little longer if she's not used to having her legs or paws handled.

To trim a cat's nails:

- Apply a small amount of pressure to the top of the foot and paw pad, this will cause the cat's nails to extend
- Use sharp, high-quality cat nail scissors cut off the tip of the white nail.
- Take care to avoid the quick, a vein that runs into the nail. This pink area can be seen through the nail.
- If you do accidentally cut into this pink area, it may bleed. Apply styptic powder to stop the bleeding.

You can have a friend or family member help by holding the cat while you trim her nails, but until you and your cat have become accustomed to the routine, one foot a day is enough of a challenge. Don't push to do all four at once, or you'll both have only negative memories of claw clippers!