

NAIL CLIPPING



Dog Training & Behaviour Modification

It is important to be calm and relaxed when clipping nails. You want your furry friend to have a positive association with nail clipping as this will make the task an easy one. If it would make you feel more comfortable, seek assistance from a professional or veterinarian.

Before clipping:

1

Do their nails need clipping? For many dogs who get adequate exercise or who walk on concrete and roads, won't need their nails trimmed (these rough surfaces work like an emery board). It is impossible to clipper a nail so short that it will not scratch the owner if they jump up.

2

Do you have a large dog with big and hard nails? If so, it will be easier to clipper their nails after a bath as the nail would have softened.

3

Does your dog have huge nails? Or have their dew claws curled right around? In this case you can use the scissor style clippers (pictured left). Otherwise, the guillotine nail clippers are preferred (pictured right).

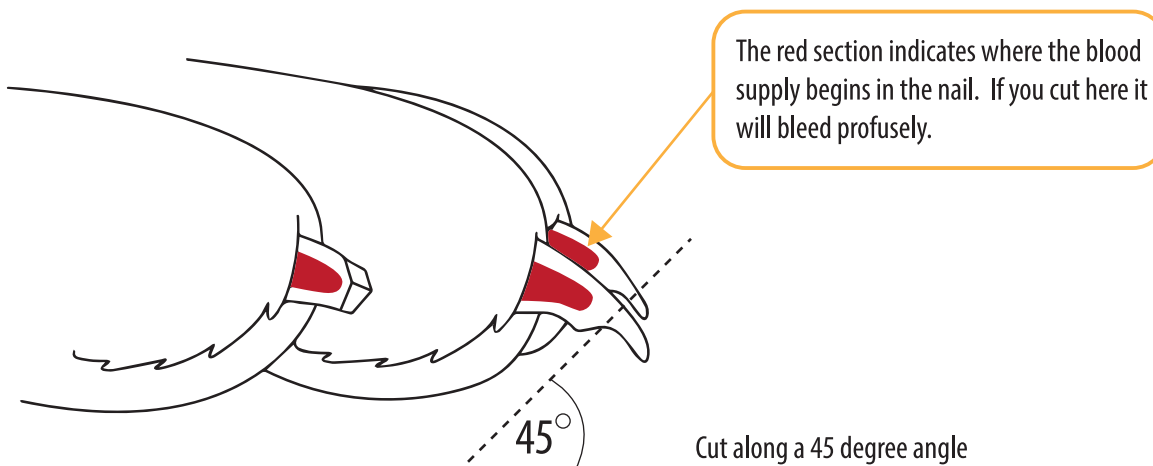


Scissor Style (for huge and long nails)



Guillotine Clipper (for general clipping)

If the nail is clipped too short, it will bleed so please see the diagram below to understand where to cut. Potassium permanganate (available at chemists) or a handful of flour or a block of dry soap held against the wound will stop the bleeding. If bleeding persists and you are worried, please contact your vet.



NAIL CLIPPING



Dog Training & Behaviour Modification

CONDITIONING YOUR DOG TO ACCEPT THE NAIL CLIPPER

REWARD : Handful of treats and soothing praise

- 1 Minimise any potential distractions to your dog such as turning off fluorescent lights (these are much noisier to dog's ears than to our own), turning down a loud movie in the background, putting their toys away etc. Aim for a tranquil environment before proceeding with this exercise.
- 2 Grab a bag of treats and the clippers and invite your dog over **REWARD**
- 3 Show them the clippers and if they are inquisitive, let them investigate and have a sniff **REWARD**
- 4 Find a comfortable place on the floor for you both, making sure you are positioned to easily reach all paws **REWARD**
- 5 Help relax your dog with a gentle body massage **REWARD**
- 6 Gently massage down one of their legs until you are touching their paw **REWARD**
- 7 Do the same thing again but this time wrap your fingers around the paw **REWARD** then let go
- 8 This time, wrap your fingers around the paw and hold it for a few seconds **REWARD** before gently letting go
- 9 Introduce the clippers again, repeat the last step and gently touch the foot with the clippers **REWARD**
- 10 Pick up the paw and place the clipper over the nail (without cutting) **REWARD**

YOU ARE NOW READY TO CLIPPER THE NAILS!

- 11 Pick up the paw, place your clipper against the nail at a 45 degree angle, then clip **REWARD**

The first time, to avoid cutting the blood vessel, make several very shallow cuts. Below are the signs that mark the beginning of the blood vessel. Do not cut past these points.

A dog with light coloured nails, will have a black dot in the middle of the nail



If your dog has dark nails you may have a change in texture or a dark or pink dot



When you have finished, reward your dog once again with a different kind of treat, e.g. tummy scratch/cuddles/praise, a game of fetch, playing with his favourite toy, a yummy brisket bone or even a walk.

If at any stage your dog becomes distracted or anxious, take a break – whether it is five minutes, five hours or the following day. You want your dog to have a positive association with nail clipping and this can take some patience as all dogs take to things differently and in their own time.