

# Bathing Your Dog

- Regular bathing can help keep your dog's skin and haircoat healthy.
- Medicated shampoo may be prescribed by your veterinarian.
- Try to make bathing a pleasant experience for your dog.

### Good Reasons to Bathe Your Dog

Regular bathing can help keep your dog's skin and haircoat healthy, and if you can teach your dog to enjoy being bathed, it can be another way to strengthen your relationship with your dog. The ASPCA recommends bathing your dog about every 3 months; however, certain breeds and dogs that spend a lot of time outside may need to be bathed more often. Some medical conditions may benefit from medicated shampoo products that your veterinarian can prescribe or recommend.

### Preparing for a Bath

Mats and tangles are easier to remove by brushing before bathing. Try to make bathing a pleasant experience for your dog: use warm water and a mild shampoo made for dogs or a veterinarian-prescribed medicated shampoo; provide toys, treats, and calm praise as rewards for good behavior. You can bathe your dog indoors in a tub or outdoors. If necessary, place a rubber bath mat under your dog to keep him or her from slipping. Wear old clothes, and have plenty of large, absorbent towels and/or a blow dryer on hand. You'll also need a spray hose or a large plastic pitcher or unbreakable cup.

### The Bath

1. Use a spray hose to thoroughly wet your dog, being careful not to spray directly in his or her eyes, ears, or nose. If you don't have a spray hose, use a large plastic pitcher or unbreakable cup.
2. Gently massage the shampoo into your dog's haircoat from head to tail. Follow your veterinarian's instructions.
3. Thoroughly rinse your dog with a spray hose, pitcher, or cup, taking care to avoid the ears, eyes, and nose.

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4. Dry your dog with large towels or a blow dryer. If you use a blow dryer, you may need to slowly introduce your dog to the sound of the dryer. Also, make sure that the blow dryer doesn't get too hot for your dog. Your veterinarian can answer any questions you may have.
5. Give your dog a toy, treat, and/or calm praise as a reward for good behavior.

### Caution!

**If you use a blow dryer to dry your dog, make sure the dryer does not get too hot.**