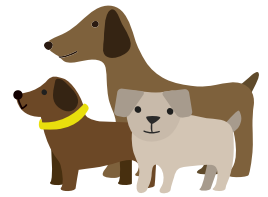


Maintenance: Brushing, Combing, Dematting



We love your babies and I know you do too! Here is some information on brushing, combing, and matting. Included is also what we can do for you if your pet is already matted/tangled! Brushing and combing your pet's hair is like brushing and combing a toddler's hair. At first they hate it, but when done consistently every day or every other day, they learn that it isn't so bad. For our curly haired toddlers, they never really learn to love it as their hair tangles quicker, but they tolerate it as long as it's done on a regular basis and with the right products. We don't give up on our toddler's hair because they don't like it, we stay patient and consistent because we know they will have to live with their hair for a very long time. We can do the same for our pets.

Luckily for us, our toddlers will grow older and learn how to take care of their own hair. Unfortunately, our pets do not have opposable thumbs, so therefore the job falls on us. Brushing and dematting can be stressful and painful for your pet if you don't stay consistent, which can then create a bad or anxious grooming experience when we try to do it all in one appointment. We want to give you all the information you need so that we can keep them as happy as possible during their appointment.

First things first, what is a tangle? It is when your pet's hair rubs together and creates friction causing the hair to stick and tangle together. This is a natural occurrence and happens to humans and pets alike! Matting usually starts at the skin while they are laying, playing, rolling around, scratching, have clothes on etc., so by the time you see it, it's too late. This is why you want to brush and comb every day. It can sometimes start at the ends as well, which is easier to see and prevent.

Prevention is key! Keeping your pet's coat well maintained is your first step in a happy puppy, a happy grooming appointment and in avoiding any extra matting fees. To properly prevent matting, you will want to line brush and comb your pet every day or every other day just like you would your own hair or your toddler's hair. The brush is for getting the bulk of the tangles out, and the comb is to check your work and catch any small tangles that could form back into bigger matting. If you keep your pet short, sometimes only a comb is needed, but don't forget to brush and comb the long parts such as tail, ears, and head. If you forget for a few days and you get busy, it's ok! Start in sections if you've gotten behind so that they don't have to sit for the entire session. One day you can do the legs, the next day their body, and the next their head and ears until you are caught up! By maintaining your pet's coat on a regular and consistent basis, your pet will get used to the process and possibly come to love it. This will mean they will love it at their grooming appointments and will be much happier. You don't typically bring yourself to your hairdresser with severely tangled hair, so we don't want to bring our pets in this way either. We also teach owners how to brush in person as well so if you are unsure if you're doing it correctly or do not know how to do it, please ask and we would love to show you!

Maintaining your pet's coat with baths and haircuts is important as well. This all depends on the length of coat left on your baby. Well maintained pets come in for haircuts on a 4-6-week basis based on length of haircut. Long haircuts are recommended for 4 weeks or less and short haircuts are recommended for 6 weeks or less with proper brushing at home. Bathing is recommended based on length of hair as well. Every pet should come in once a month for a bath to maintain healthy skin and coat but if your pet's hair is exceptionally long, then we recommend coming in every 1-2 weeks to maintain the health of the coat. The hair cycle for dogs is every 21 days which is why we recommend having a bath every 3-4 weeks. Keeping your pet's skin and coat healthy is also a prevention for tangling. If the hair shaft is healthy and has no breakage, it is harder to tangle up when it rubs together. Dematting causes breakage of the hair which is why they seem to tangle easier and quicker after dematting and why sometimes it's healthier for the hair to be cut and to start over.

How often your pet sees us will affect their behavior as well. Pets who see us 12 times a year get to know us and trust us easier versus pets we only see 3-4 times a year (12-16 weeks between appointments). They don't have a chance to get used to the grooming process and build trust with us when not brought often. It can be very scary for some pets to get groomed when they aren't used to it. They must go see a stranger that speaks like an alien and has large and loud tools that they rub all over their bodies. They have to start over every time they see us when they don't come often so this is why it could possibly take longer to groom them. We want to keep them relaxed and calm and rebuild their trust in us, by going slow and taking our time to introduce each tool and each stage of the process.

Bathing at home is okay as long as you are using a conditioner along with your shampoo, and you are properly brushing and combing your pet before the bath and after they are dry to make sure all tangles are gone. If you bathe your pet with tangles or mats still in the coat, it will make the tangles or mats worse. If they are severe enough, the mat will never fully dry and it will create a hot spot underneath the hair.

Maintenance – Pg. 2

We offer some dematting during your appointment depending on how bad the matting or tangles are. We include 15 minutes of minor dematting with all appointments. Any dematting over 15 minutes is \$1 per minute of dematting. This is due to the extra time it takes and the stress it causes to our bodies. It takes a physical toll on the groomers to brush out a lot of matting which is why it is best done in small amounts of time between appointments at home. We will not detangle a dog who bites for brushing or stresses when being brushed. Your pet's wellbeing is our number one priority, and the look of the hair is not worth the stress it can cause high anxiety wigglers and biters to brush out matting. We will let you know if your pet is not a candidate for dematting. If they do wiggle or bite for brushing, you can work on them at home by going calmly slowly, and giving them rewards when they stay still or do not bite you. I recommend getting a trainer if you are having a hard time at home with it, they can definitely help you.

We do offer a way to save moderately matted hair by doing what we call "Wet Shaving." This is for pets that have moderate matting that hasn't pelted to the skin yet and the process starts with getting your pet wet. Then we cut them wet with the longest blade or guard comb that we can get underneath the matting. Wet hair is stretchy and more malleable, so we are able to use a slightly longer length when wet. Then we wash them and when we dry the coat, it allows it to fluff out slightly longer since the hair has stretched while being cut and once dry we can go a bit longer for the haircut than a complete shave.

This process does take extra time to get the guard comb or blade through the matting so even though we are not brushing out any tangles we are still taking the time to get the mats out a different way than brushing, and there will be an extra charge based on how long it takes to get the guard through. This is an extra step in our normal process, and we still have to do a full haircut after the pet is dry, which is why it costs an extra charge, but saves some of the pet's coat so they don't have to be shaved to the skin.

Fully pelted coats must be shaved for the safety of the pet. When hair gets that tangled and matted, it tightens so closely to the skin that it cuts off blood circulation and can cause skin issues as well as itchy skin. It is common to find hot spots and red skin underneath pelted fur. It can also cause the dog to scratch or itch which can then cause them to create wounds on themselves which appear the next day or a few days after. It is best to put a cone on your pet for a few days if they had a severely pelted coat shaved off. The safest blade we have is a 10-blade due to the width of the teeth and the closeness of the cutting blade to the teeth so for severely pelted pets we use the safest blade to ensure minimal nicking and cutting. Unfortunately, if the coat is extremely bad, it is common to accidentally nick, or razor burn the skin because the hair is so tight and the skin is so taut. If this situation arises, we recommend grooming at a vet to minimize injury to the pet, or if the pet is injured there is immediate care available.

We love long haircuts at Jinx Merlot, and we love giving you your ideal haircut for your fur baby! Seeing your face light up is one of the reasons we love our jobs! Prevention is key when it comes to matting. We know brushing at home can be difficult and lives get busy so if you'd like a longer haircut, we recommend either coming in for baths in between grooms, or having a short and manageable haircut for your lifestyle. We can direct you in a length you like that is more manageable for you to take care of. If you feel like your pet isn't matted and we tell you it is, we promise to show you where they are matted and help in teaching you how to prevent it in the future. We also promise to never shave your pet without your permission. You are always more than welcome to come pick up your pet from the shop and get the tangles out at home and then reschedule their appointment once they are dematted. Sometimes it is not necessarily that it is impossible to dematt or detangle them, it is just not possible to do it in one grooming appointment, especially keeping it pain free and low anxiety.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of the information here, please do not hesitate to call or email us. We love to educate all pet owners on all things related to your pet, the more educated we all are, the happier and healthier your pet is!

Thank you so much for reading and we can't wait to see you at your next appointment!

-- *The Jinx Merlot Team*

