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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DOG HAIR MATTING

Matting is a hair condition that occurs when your dog's fur gets tangled around itself and becomes tightly knotted.

If your dog has hair or fur, they can mat. But breeds with a *double coat* or curly hair are the most prone to this condition.

Did you know? *Double-coated* dogs have a dense undercoat of short hairs (wooly in texture) under a top coat of longer hairs called guard hairs.

SOME EXAMPLES OF BREEDS THAT NEED REGULAR GROOMING TO AVOID MATTING

DOUBLE-COATED BREEDS

- Border Collies
- Golden Retrievers
- English Springer Spaniels
- Siberian Huskies
- Havanese
- Pekingese
- Shih Tzus
- German Shepherds
- Sheepdogs
- Bichon Frises

CURLY-HAIRED BREEDS

- Poodles (all sizes)
- Labradoodles
- Golden Doodles
- Bernadoodles
- Water Dogs
- Airedale Terriers

THERE ARE 3 IMPORTANT THINGS OUR GROOMERS WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT MATTING:

1. It's not just an unsightly cosmetic hairdo, it's a serious condition that can lead to health problems, like, infections or skin irritations.
2. Mats AND the process of dematting are very painful for your dog.
3. Matting is 100% preventable! There are easy ways to keep your dog's hair from matting.

Let's dive into the specifics so you can learn how to help keep your dog mat-free!

HOW DOES HAIR GET MATTED?

It happens when your dog's hair gets tangled and the knots are not brushed out. The longer the mats stay tangled, the closer they get to the skin. And the closer to the skin the matting gets, the more difficult they are to brush out.

Usually, mats show up on the parts of your dog that experience regular friction. That means around where your dog's collar sits, in their armpits, under the chin, between toes, on the back of rear legs, and where their harness rubs are common places for mats to form.

But they can also form from allergy-induced licking and itching and flea-induced scratching. And for dogs who shed and get a summer coat, loose hair mixed with dead skin creates the perfect environment for mats if they aren't regularly brushed.

Moisture can increase the chances of fur becoming matted because when your dog's hair gets wet, it's more likely to curl and get wrapped around itself. So bathing, swimming, sweating, or being in the rain, especially if you don't thoroughly dry and brush your dog after getting wet, can lead to matting.

Tip: If your dog has matting, DO NOT bathe them. Adding water to mats makes them tighter to the skin.

1. MATTING CAN CAUSE SERIOUS HEALTH ISSUES

Skin irritations like hot spots, bacterial and fungal infections, inflammation, and rashes can be caused by matted hair that is left untreated. Additionally, matted fur can become the home for ticks, flea infections, and maggots.

In extreme cases, mats can interfere with normal airflow to your dog's skin, which prevents your dog's body from being able to regulate its temperature. This can lead to overheating and even heat stroke.

2. MATS = PAINFUL

A matted coat is a painful coat to wear! Similar to when human hair is tangled, matted fur binds and pulls on the skin. And it can make brushing, laying down or moving, depending on the location of the knots, very uncomfortable. Plus, the skin under a matted coat often is inflamed, raw, and more sensitive. And because matted hair does not dry properly, the skin and fur can start to break down.

When dogs are matted, our groomers first try to brush the mats out. This is a long, uncomfortable, and sometimes stressful process for your dog.

Did you know? Because dematting requires an extra level of care and attention, Happy Dog charges for dematting services, in addition to the regular grooming price, depending on how long it takes the groomer to safely and carefully work out the mats.

If you've ever had someone try to brush a knot out of your hair, remember how slowly and gently you wanted that person to brush? Unfortunately, your dog can't say, "Ouch!" or take over the brush themselves, so it's not a fun process.

If your dog is extremely matted, our groomers will have to resort to using clippers to shave down off the mats. This is not a more comfortable solution because of how close the mats are to your dog's already inflamed skin.

And to make an already uncomfortable situation worse, dogs who have a double coat (and many long-haired breeds are not meant to be shaved. Their hair is an all-season coat that works to keep them cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Also, called a double coat. Disrupting the natural coat can damage your dog's hair, preventing it from cooling and warming like it's meant to.

3. THE GOOD NEWS: YOU CAN PREVENT MATTING!

You guessed it: Regular brushing and grooming is the only way to prevent your dog's fur from matting. Our philosophy at Happy Dog is to help our fur clients get on a regular grooming schedule that proactively keeps their coats healthy. It's also more cost-efficient for you to stay ahead of matting!

Depending on your dog's breed, brushing should be part of your routine, whether that's daily, weekly, or monthly. We recommend keeping a comb and slicker brush on hand to help promote a tangle-free, clean coat. Remember to be gentle and reward your pup with lots of treats, a lick mat, or plenty of belly rubs. Check out our [Combs, double slicker brushes, and single slicker brushes](#) online or in our store!

SCHEDULE A GROOMING APPOINTMENT

Give us a call at 410-814-0964 to get your fur baby on our books! And if you're not sure how often you should be brushing and grooming, ask one of our groomers at your dog's next appointment. We'd love to advise you on how to keep your dog comfy, cute, and, most importantly, happy.



PREVIOUS

NEXT