



Fur Friendly

PROFESSIONAL GROOMING

Handstripping

Handstripping is the preferred method for grooming most terriers and many gundog breeds. Handstripping preserves the rich colours and correct texture of the coat. The process, if done correctly, is painless although some dogs may be sensitive about having their bellies and neck stripped. The dead hair is removed using finger and thumb or a variety of stripping tools. Any tool that cuts the hair should not be used as this will irreparably damage the coat. Stripping out the dead hair stimulates the follicle to produce a new harsh textured guard hair which is essential if the coat is to remain weatherproof.

By its very nature handstripping is a labour intensive and time-consuming process and as such is more costly than clipping the dog. Generally speaking the coat will 'blow' twice a year, spring and autumn, this means that the whole outer coat is dead and needs removing. You can have your dog stripped twice yearly, this will probably take between 3 and 5 hours depending on what breed you have. For many dogs this may need to be done over 2 or 3 sessions for the dogs' comfort. The finished strip may be patchy depending on how good the undercoat is, and you should not expect your dog to look immaculate, the appearance will improve as the new growth comes through over the next few weeks.

Breeds that have beards and leg furnishings, Wire Fox, Lakeland, Welsh etc should be stripped more frequently, ideally 6 to 8 week intervals but no more than 12 weeks to keep the furnishings tidy. For pet dogs the head and leg furnishings are often clipped and scissored as this is more comfortable for the dog. Consequently, this will take less time, usually up to 3 hours depending on the breed. The finished effect will be much more presentable as there will be some layering of growth and much less chance of patchiness.

To keep a handstripped coat in tip top condition it requires 'rolling' this means that the coat is constantly worked, usually bi-weekly for show dogs, to remove any dead hairs and encourage new growth, for show dogs the process is timed to ensure the coat is the correct length and texture for a show day. This process usually only takes about an hour to complete. A rolled coat has several layers of growth creating a dense jacket with shorter areas on the neck and shoulders and will generally look pristine after each session.

There are occasions where handstripping would not be appropriate, if your dog has been neutered the hormones in the body are changed resulting in softer hair growth which cannot be stripped without causing your dog discomfort. We can continue to strip any hair that will come out easily (this is usually on the body) but as a rule the hair around the neck, hindquarters, head and legs will need to be scissored or clipped, this will also alter the texture and colour of the coat growth, alternatively you can choose to have all your dog scissored or clipped in a breed standard pet trim. Older dogs may also find handstripping uncomfortable and we would advise alternative methods for dogs 10 years and older. Dogs with skin problems and/or sensitive skin should not be handstripped. There are also some dogs that do not have the correct textured coat to be handstripped and we would recommend these are groomed using alternative methods.