

## How to Groom Your Portuguese Water Dog

Bathing and brushing your Portuguese Water Dog are both important habits to form. You can brush your Portuguese Water Dog without bathing him, but you should never bathe him without brushing.

When it's grooming time, get all your supplies together first. You'll need a comb, a slicker brush (which has bristles made of fine, bent wires), dog shampoo, a wash cloth, several towels and a dryer. Optional supplies include scissors or clippers if you trim your Portuguese Water Dog's hair, yourself; and nail clippers, if you trim her nails.

1. Thoroughly brush your PWD.

When it's time to brush your Portuguese Water Dog, do so in sections to make sure you get all of his hair brushed. You can lightly spray his coat with water before you brush to prevent his hair from breaking. Push the hair against the grain, and then brush back into place. Gently work loose any tangles.

2. (Optional) If your Portuguese Water Dog's coat needs trimming and you're comfortable doing so yourself, now's the time.

You can use either your scissors or clippers. If your PWD is in a retriever clip, her hair should be about an inch and a half in length all over. Use your scissors, or a clipper with a #2 or #4 blade. If your dog is in a lion clip, use a #7 blade. If you're using a clipper, make sure the blades don't overheat and burn your dog.

Most owners of a Portuguese Water Dog prefer to let a licensed, professional groomer give the haircuts. There's no reason to be embarrassed if you can't do it on your own. Even dull scissors can cut your dog's skin, and learning isn't work risking injuring your dog.

3. Get the water ready for your dog's bath.

Run the water in your tub so that it's lukewarm. Set the water temperature before you put your dog in the tub. You don't want to scald his toes.

4. Clean your Portuguese Water Dog's ears first.

PWDs have very oily ears. Use the washcloth and a small amount of shampoo. Gently clean the inside of the ears. Never poke, push or probe the washcloth into the ear. Rinse her ears thoroughly.

5. Wet the rest of your PWD and apply shampoo.

If you don't have a shower attachment with a spray head, you can use a small pan or a pitcher to pour water over your dog. Pour shampoo into your hands and work it into your dog's coat. Get shampoo all the way down to his skin. Make sure you wash your dog's feet, the joints where the legs join the body, and the tail. Rinse.

6. Repeat the sudsing process.

Rinse thoroughly. Rinse until the water runs clear. Adding some vinegar to the final rinse will help clear the soap from your dog's coat. Leave your dog in the tub for a minute or two to see if she'll shake off some of the water.

7. Put a towel over your PWD and squeeze and blot, soaking up as much water as possible.

Do not rub your Portuguese Water Dog as it will snarl his hair. Lift your dog from the tub, or support and guide him over the edge. Don't let him jump out unassisted; he could get hurt.

8. Dry your dog.

In warm weather, you can let her air dry, but her hair will dry tightly curled, and it will take a fairly long time. If you decide to use a hair dryer, use a special dog dryer. If you have to use one made for humans, set it on "air only." As you dry the coat, brush the hair up and out, drying from the base to the tip of the hair.