

Cleaning Up After Your Dog

Dog Fancy readers share their expert tips for cleaning up after a canine roommate.

When it comes to keeping your dog-friendly home from going to the dogs, as reader Jan Trober puts it, you overwhelmingly suggested three key strategies: preventive grooming, old towels by the door, and furniture covers you can whisk into the laundry. Great (dog-loving) minds do think alike! Our thanks to everyone who wrote to share bright solutions and endearing pictures.

Read on for more useful ideas, and keep it all in perspective with Words to clean by.

Linda MeggisonSturgis, Mich. Consider installing commercial carpet with no pad underneath very easy to vacuum and steam-clean. Cover dogs beds with crib-sized comforters easy to remove and wash. Once a month, bathe dogs, and launder their bedding, clothing, and nylon collars and harnesses. Train dogs that lay on people beds to lie in one spot, on an animal blanket that can be frequently laundered.

Patricia BakerBettendorf, Iowa Brush your dog often [to catch loose hair before it lands on the floor and furniture]. If your dog is uncooperative, put a very thin layer of peanut butter in a heavy food dish, and take the dish and your dog to a bathroom with a [non-carpeted] floor. Shut door, put bowl on floor, and brush your dog until the peanut butter is gone! Repeat as needed. Use placemats under dog dishes. Use baby wipes for quick cleanup on paws, coat, and rear end. Simmer mulling spices in water on the stove to combat general doggie odor in the house. Pour one-half to one cup of clay (not clumping) kitty litter on vomit or diarrhea in the house or yard. It makes pick-up easier in the house and helps you avoid stepping in it when in the yard. Keep a stack of old T-shirts or hand towels near each entry wipe paws before entering house.

Cheryl LucenaCumberland, R.I.

After my two Boxers, Ginger, 3, and Apollo, 4 months, eat their meals, I wipe their mouths with a paper towel and rinse their bowls clean. (They eat from dishes placed on a boot tray to catch drooly messes.) Obedience training is important in keeping them clean when eating. I teach them to wait when I put their food down, so they don't make a mess by knocking it out of my hand, and they come when I call them to have their faces wiped after eating.