

## Tiptoe Through Rottweiler Grooming

**Overcome your Rottweiler's grooming apprehension with quick tips to routine.**

*Eve Adamson*

Your Rottweiler loves you, loves its toys, loves to go on long walks, and even loves to be groomed because this natural breed with an easy-care coat requires very little grooming beyond a weekly brushing. There is one thing most Rottweilers are distinctly unhappy about: nail trimming. However, your Rottweiler needn't necessarily be destined to weekly panic at the sight of those trimmers. A weekly grooming exam can comfort your Rottie, allowing you to perform the necessary low-maintenance grooming as well as stay in tune with his overall health.

Follow these tips, recommended by Joan Sweeney, a Rottweiler rescue and care expert, who has bathed and combed 2,400 rescued Rottweilers during the last 13 years in addition to grooming her own six show dogs. You'll soon have a well-groomed Rottie who is a better socialized pet and a more relaxed veterinary patient.

One of the most important things any Rottweiler puppy owner can do is to handle those Rottie feet every single day when your Rottweiler is small and easy to handle. Hold paws, press paw pads, and wiggle toes. Use clippers or a dremel tool for grinding to take off just the tips so your puppy becomes accustomed to pressure on its toes. Follow with praise and rewards. Once a week, spend 15 minutes in a thorough grooming exam session. Important for large breeds, the weekly grooming exam accustoms your Rottweiler to handling of his feet and his entire body, by you, a veterinarian or groomer when necessary. Rottweilers crave routine, so hold your grooming exam session on the same day, at the same time, every single week.

During the weekly grooming session, continue to handle your Rottie's feet, even into adulthood trimming or grinding off the nail tip once a week if necessary.

Next, examine your Rottie's eyes and ears for dirt, parasites, and irritation. Lift lips and examine teeth and gums, running your finger or a toothbrush along the gum line to keep tartar at bay, gums in shape, and your Rottie accustomed to mouth handling.

Feel your Rottie's coat and skin all over, palpating as if you are giving a massage. Move your hands over the back, hips, legs, chest, and head, feeling for lumps and bumps, dry skin patches, or sensitive spots.