

Brushing a Pomeranian's Coat

Tips for brushing a Pomeranian's undercoat and outercoat to achieve the perfect look.

By Kathy Salzberg, NCMG

Q. I just adopted a beautiful seven-month-old Pomeranian. He's gorgeous and has a thick, pretty coat for his age. I am not sure if his coat is going to change or if it already has. When I brush him, do I comb his hair backwards? I've read of so many different ways, and I know there must be a special way of getting through both layers correctly. How do you do it?

A. Your Pomeranian with his thick double coat would do best with daily brushing, but a minimum of two thorough brush-outs a week would be ideal. No, you should not brush backwards but rather out from the body. Start at the same point each time using a technique we call "line brushing," holding a section of the coat in one hand as you use your curved-bristle slicker brush to work downward from the "part" where the skin is visible. Systematically work your way around the dog, using this "pat-and-pull" technique, being careful not to scratch his sensitive skin with the wire bristles.

Check your work with a double-sided stainless steel comb to make sure you have not left any packed pockets behind. When you give his coat a final once-over, little or no hair should show up on your brush. Pay particular attention to the chest, face-framing frill or "ruff," the spots behind the ears, the "pants" or thigh-rump area, his puffy little butt, and that distinctive bushy tail.

A Pomeranian's coat is softer in puppyhood, changing in adulthood to the harsh outercoat and soft fuzzy undercoat. Your goal is to keep the coat from becoming matted or packed with shed hair, not to entirely remove the thick undercoat that permits the topcoat to stand up and out from the Pom's body, giving him a delightfully full and round appearance.

If you find a long, full coat to be too much work, have your groomer do a "thin and trim," sculpting those bouffant feathers down with either scissors or a blade attachment to trim some length while still preserving his profile and topcoat. I never recommend shaving this dog down to the skin because it can irreparably damage hair follicles and result in a horrible "patchwork" look.

If you bathe him at home, make sure his coat is mat-free before getting him wet. Use a puppy tearless shampoo and a nice mild conditioner in the final rinse to make blow-drying easier after the bath. Since he looks his best when fluffy, have a partner help hold him on a table so you can direct the dryer's airflow to the area of the coat that you are brushing, then you will be fluffing like a pro!