

## Shaving Curly Dog Coats

**An owner is angry after a dog groomer shaved her Golden Retriever-Poodle mix.**

*By Kathy Salzberg, NCMG*

**Q.** We just purchased a Golden Retriever-Poodle mix, our first family dog, a month ago. Because he had been mistreated by his breeder, we opted to wait a while to groom him. I just took him for his first grooming yesterday. When I returned he was completely shaved. I'm very upset because he does not look the same, but I am mainly concerned about whether his coat will return to look the same as before. I'm also concerned because we live in Ohio and right now it is snowing and very cold. Is there anything we can do for him?

**A.** I know your heart was in the right place to want to wait until your dog settled in and became more secure in your loving home before you took him to the groomer, but if you were not brushing his coat regularly, it doesn't surprise me that he had to be shaved down.

If a curly coat like his is badly matted, that really is the most humane course of action. If the groomer had tried to demat him, splitting all those tangles with a razor-sharp dematting tool and pulling them out, keeping the youngster on the table for an extended period, I think it might have upset him more than his new look upset you. More than likely he would be a nervous wreck when you took him back to be groomed in the future. So now your dog is a "smoothie" but his beautiful golden curls will grow back and will not be damaged by his "buzz cut." That's one advantage of the Poodle in him.

Once his coat starts growing in, get him used to regular brushing at home, then his groomer will be able to leave him as fluffy as you like. The only thing you can do for him now is make sure he has a warm place to sleep and a nice fleece coat. And please tell him he looks very handsome. That will help build his confidence too!

Kathy Salzberg, NCMG, is a Certified Master Groomer and writer who has been grooming pets since 1976. With her daughter Missi, she owns The Village Groomer in Walpole, Mass. She has also written extensively on pet care for several consumer magazines and authored three books on dogs and careers with pets. Kathy lives with her pets on Cape Cod.

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