

# Hair off the Dog (and Cats too) News

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[www.hairoffthedogandcatstoo.com](http://www.hairoffthedogandcatstoo.com)

Our website is designed not only to give you a personal view of our work and what we do but also to provide a place of **information** and **education** on your pet's grooming needs and general well-being. Check out our **pet supplies** where you can purchase many of the products we currently use in our salon. All offerings are products that we know and trust. Featured items for sale include **pet first aid kits** and our newest product **Urine-Off** as well as many other products that you will find useful in your home. Check it out and share it with your family and friends! 🐾



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### DANGEROUS TOYS

Fluffy may love her ball of yarn, and Rover may chase after that darn stick all day, but pet owners must be cautious when offering toys to their pets. Many household items that become pet toys, either with or without your knowledge, can be dangerous-even fatal-to your furry or feathered friend. If not used in the appropriate manner, some store-bought pet toys, too, can cause problems.

Pet owners should take note of the following potential toy hazards:

- Sticks and bones can splinter and cause choking or vomiting, or they can perforate the mouth, throat, or intestine. Hard bones can easily damage teeth. Instead, use hard, non-splintering chew toys to play fetch or to allow your pet to gnaw.
- Soft, latex toys can be shredded by a chewing pet. If the toy includes a squeaking mechanism, the squeaker can be easily swallowed or cause choking.
- Superballs can cause intestinal obstruction if ingested. Other types of balls, such as tennis balls or handballs, may be too small for the pet playing with them and cause choking.
- Towels, socks, underwear and other similar clothing or materials can be swallowed by a rambunctious pet, causing intestinal obstruction.
- Some dogs like to chew on or eat rocks-bad idea! Rocks can cause broken teeth and serious intestinal obstruction if swallowed.
- Be careful if you offer your pet rawhides, as these can also cause intestinal obstruction if swallowed, and some are preserved with arsenic, which is toxic to pets.
- Some cats enjoy hiding out in plastic bags, but if they get their head stuck in the handles and panic, choking or suffocating could occur.
- String, yarn, feathers, and rubber bands often offer enticing play for cats, but these can be swallowed whole, possibly lodging in the intestinal tract and causing blockage. If only partially swallowed, this,

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## Em's Grooming Tips

### ***Brushing your dog***

You've seen your dog roll around on the floor, lick or nibble at his fur, or even chew on a tangled area of his coat. Well this is his way of grooming himself, but unlike his vain counterpart the cat, dogs don't sit around the house and do this several times a day everyday because, to be quite frank, dogs couldn't care less about what they look like and would be happier rolling in something very smelly that they've come across in the garden.

Dogs need a little extra help in this department to keep them looking their best, even between professional grooming. Brushing your dog is the easiest way to maintain a clean, healthy, shiny coat. Regular brushing spreads the natural oils throughout his fur, removes dirt, loose hair, prevents mats, and removes tangles, keeping his skin irritant free. Of course, what type of fur your dog has will determine how often he should be brushed. For example:

If your dog has a smooth short coat, like that of a Labrador, Boxer, or Beagle once a week is just fine.

If your dog has a dense coat that is prone to tangles like that of a Golden, Setter, or Collie, once a week is good. However, if he manages to find himself swimming a few laps in the pool, he should always be brushed when he gets out. This will separate the hair, preventing any nasty tangles and help him dry faster.

If your dog has a long luxurious coat like that of a Shih Tzu, Maltese, or Yorkshire terrier, he should be brushed at least three times a week to keep those tangles away.

I'm going to keep it simple and suggest two of my favorite tools of the trade:



A Slicker Brush



A Greyhound Comb

A few pointers:

- Always brush the coat in the direction the fur grows.
- Use the Slicker brush to gently, tease out any tangles using short strokes.
- Tangles can often be found behind the ears, on the tail, in the armpits and on the backs of the legs, so you should give these areas special attention.
- Use the Greyhound comb after the initial brush-out to detect any tangles that may have been missed.
- You will know you have done a good job when you can take the Greyhound comb through your dog's entire coat without hitting any snags.
- If you have a dog with a curly coat such as a Poodle or Bichon, when you are finished brushing him and have all the tangles out, you can take the Greyhound comb and comb his fur in an upward motion. This will make the fur stand up nicely and make your pooch look extra fluffy.
- Brushing your dog on a regular basis also gives you the ideal opportunity to check for any potential problems such as hot spots, foxtails, cuts, fleas, and ticks.
- Keep brushing sessions short, at first five to ten minutes, and gradually lengthen the time until it becomes routine.
- You can help your dog become comfortable with being touched and handled by brushing and petting every part of him, especially potentially sensitive areas such as his feet, belly, tail, and ears.
- Most important of all is to pile on the praise, talk to him, and reassure him while brushing him keeping lots of his favorite treats at hand.

## SHOW YOUR PET HOW MUCH YOU CARE

We love our pets more than ever. They are no longer just a diversion. In fact, they have become like children in the home for many of us. From the stories that website visitors share with us, it seems that you feel the same way. Pets entertain us, make us laugh, and love us unconditionally. What can we do to show them our thanks?

Following is a list of things you can do to show your pet how much you care:

- Spend quality time with them by going for a walk, hanging out in the back yard, playing games with their favorite toys, or snuggling with them as you watch TV.
- Always get them immediate veterinary care if you suspect that something is wrong. If you don't have a solid relationship with your veterinarian, work on that for the sake of your pet. In this time of managed human health care, your pets often get better, more consistent, individualized care than we do. A respected veterinarian is your greatest ally.
- Feed them healthy food intended for their consumption, not potato chips, cookies, and other fatty human foods.
- Protect them from home hazards and from extremes of weather. They cannot protect themselves.
- Update your pet's identification tags. Many of us move or change phone numbers but forget to update the tags. Perish the thought, but if your pet gets lost, it's one of the best tools to ensure a safe return. On that note, fix that fence if it is a problem. And if you have a master escapee in your home, talk to your veterinarian or a noted trainer in your area regarding appropriate, humane behavior modification for your pet. 🐾

**PET ID TAGS NOW AVAILABLE!**  
**TO PLACE YOUR ORDER, VISIT OUR WEBSITE**  
**OR**  
**SPEAK TO US AT YOUR NEXT GROOMING APPOINTMENT!**



### How to Make Your Christmas Tree Pet-Safe

Christmas trees pose all sorts of hidden dangers for dogs and cats. Learn how to minimize the risks.

#### Step One

Cover your tree stand with a tree skirt to prevent your pet from drinking the water in the base. This liquid can make your animal sick.

#### Step Two

Have pet treats on hand to distract your pet away from the tree. The needles can easily get lodged in the animal's throat, making it hard to swallow.

#### Step Three

Place decorations that contain mistletoe, poinsettias and holly only in high sections of the tree, where your pet will be unable to get the tempting leaves and berries. They can cause heartbeat and blood pressure to drop.

#### Step Four

Remove strings and ribbons from gifts that are left under the tree. These items may seem like toys to an animal, but can easily choke him or her.

#### Step Five

Avoid using tinsel, since your dog can choke on it. Also understand that some of the older tinsel contains lead.

#### Step Six

Remember not to use chocolate ornaments if there's a chance that your pet could pull them off. An ingredient called theobromine can have a toxic effect on dogs.

#### Step Seven

Tape the electrical cords of your Christmas tree lights to the wall so your pet won't chew them.

#### Tips & Warnings

- Realize that lit candles may capture the attention of your dog or cat. To avoid any accidents, leave your pets in the other room if you plan to light candles.
- Keep wrapping paper out of reach since many pets are tempted to chew on it. 🐾

too, can result in severe problems. For instance, one end of the string can wrap around the cat's tongue while the rest of the string is swallowed. If you ever see your kitty with string (or a similar object) caught in its mouth, NEVER try to pull it out. If the string is lodged internally, pulling it can cut the cat's intestines, killing him. Instead, see your veterinarian immediately.

- Be aware of sharp objects that can cut skin, feet, eyes or ears.
- For birds, bells can be problematic. Most medium-sized or larger parrots can take apart a bell and choke on the clapper.
- Leather, if not specially tanned, can be toxic to birds.
- Paint and wood preservatives can also be toxic to your feathered friend.

"Probably the most common hazards are toys that are inappropriately sized for the pet," says Dr. Jennifer Zablotsky, an AAHA veterinarian. "Generally, the toy is too small for the size of the pet and can be destroyed and cause choking."

If you notice anything unusual about your pet's behavior or health, call your veterinarian right away. If a toy or part of a toy is swallowed, signs of problems (like intestinal upset or blockage) may occur within minutes or hours; other times, you may not notice anything unusual for days. The obstruction may pass through with no more signs than vomiting or diarrhea. Or it may cause blockage, in which case your pet may be constipated or not want to eat. In any case, if you even suspect that your pet has swallowed a foreign object, call the veterinarian immediately.

Used appropriately and with common sense, many household and store-bought pet toys can provide hours of entertainment and exercise for your pet. It's a good idea, however, to supervise your pet during play. Not only will this minimize the chance of accidents happening, but you'll also be providing your pet with quality time spent with his or her favorite toy-YOU! 🐾

## HOW TO CHOOSE A VETERINARIAN

It's important to choose a veterinary hospital before you need one. Ask family, friends, and neighbors for recommendations. Once you find a hospital, take some time to check it out. Ask for a tour of the facility, and use your eyes and nose to detect cleanliness. Also, check if the facility is well lit. Does it have laboratory equipment? Is there gas anesthesia? If it doesn't meet your expectations, turn around and leave.

Hospitals that are accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) meet high veterinary care standards. Each hospital voluntarily completes a detailed evaluation of its services and equipment. Then a trained practice consultant thoroughly inspects the hospital to make sure it meets AAHA's high standards in areas such as surgery, medical records, anesthesia, and dentistry. About 17 percent of the small animal veterinary hospitals in the United States and Canada are accredited AAHA members.

In addition to the facility, you'll also want to make sure the veterinarian meets your expectations. It's important that you and your pet are comfortable with the doctor. The veterinarian should be able to communicate with you and make you feel comfortable asking questions. Even if the doctor is highly qualified, if you don't hit it off, you may need to go elsewhere.

Finally, when choosing a veterinary hospital, make sure the office hours and payment policy are convenient for you. Ask for a hospital brochure or welcome letter that explains the hospital policies and procedures. 🐾

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**HOTDACT News**

## Groomer Humor



### A Cat's Favorite Christmas Carols

By Daryl Hillen

10. Up on the Mousetop
9. Have Yourself a Furry Little Christmas
8. Joy to the Curled
7. I Saw Mommy Hiss at Santa Claus
6. The First Meow
5. Oh, Come All Ye Fishful
4. Silent Mice
3. Fluffy, the Snowman
2. Jingle Balls
1. Wreck the Halls!



A nursery school teacher was delivering a station wagon full of kids home one day when a fire truck zoomed past. Sitting in the front seat of the fire truck was a Dalmatian dog. The children fell to discussing the dog's duties.

"They use him to keep crowds back," said one youngster.

"No," said another, "he's just for good luck."

A third child brought the argument to a close. "They use the dogs," she said firmly, "to find the fire hydrant."

### A Doggy Wonderland



Dog tags ring, are you listenin'?  
In the lane, snow is glistenin'.  
It's yellow, NOT white - I've been there  
tonight,  
Marking up my winter wonderland.

Smell that tree? That's my fragrance.  
It's a sign for wand'ring vagrants;  
"Avoid where I pee, it's MY pro-per-ty!  
Marked up as my winter wonderland."

In the meadow dad will build a snowman,  
Following the classical design.  
Then I'll lift my leg and let it go Man,  
So all the world will know it's  
Mine-mine-mine!

Straight from me to the fencepost,  
Flows my natural incense boast;  
"Stay off of my TURF, this small piece of  
earth,  
I mark it as my winter wonderland.

A woman saw an ad in the local newspaper, which read:  
"Purebred Police Dog \$25."

Thinking that to be a great bargain, she called and ordered the dog to be delivered.

The next day a van arrived at her home and delivered the mangiest-looking mongrel she had ever seen.

In a rage, she telephoned the man who had placed the ad, "How dare you call that mangy-mutt a purebred police dog?"

"Don't let his looks deceive you, ma'am," the man replied, "He's in the Secret Service."

A woman brought a litter of Golden Retriever puppies to the veterinary clinic for inoculations and deworming. As the look alike pups squirmed over and under one another in their box, the veterinarian realized it would be difficult to tell the treated ones from the rest. The veterinarian turned on the water faucet, wet her fingers, and moistened each dog's head when she had finished.

After the fourth puppy, the veterinarian noticed the usually talkative woman had grown silent. As the veterinarian sprinkled the last pup's head, the woman leaned forward and whispered, "I didn't know they had to be baptized."