



APBC

ASSOCIATION OF PET
BEHAVIOUR COUNSELLORS

Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors
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CHOOSING A GROOMER



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Even smooth coated dogs need coat care. As well as removing dead hair, rather than your dog shedding it around the house, it also helps to stimulate the skin and is a good bonding process for the partnership. Most of a dog's coat care can be done at home, but if you have a dog that needs clipping, scissoring or hand stripping you will probably need a professional groomer.

Finding a groomer that provides a caring service using non-aversive handling is important for your dog to ensure they don't have a bad experience. Below are a few points to think about:

- Ask your dog trainer/behaviourist if they can recommend anyone – if they use reward based methods they should know of groomers they are comfortable in recommending.
- Ask friends about their experiences with groomers – how is their dog after a visit to the salon? Are they happy or subdued?
- Before making an appointment, ask if you can visit the groomer – how do the dogs appear that are being groomed? The dogs should look comfortable and not fearful.
- Ask the groomer about techniques they use if a dog is resistant – they should take their time with fearful/reluctant dogs and use positive reinforcement to encourage the dogs to relax.
- Ask if you can stay while your dog is being groomed – this way you can make sure your dog is comfortable and not being harmed in any way.
- If you have a puppy ask if they do puppy introductions, short sessions to introduce the puppy to the bath, grooming table, scissors, clippers etc before they go for a full groom.

Good groomers are usually booked up well in advance, so you may have to wait a while for an appointment, don't leave finding someone until the last minute.

If in doubt about the attitude of the groomer – look elsewhere!