

Nail Trimming

Things you need:

SHARP Nail Trimmers or Dremmel Tool, Styptic Powder or Pencil

1. **Patience:** Teach nail trimming slowly. Trim one nail per night if that's what it takes. If your pet has never had a bad experience or hasn't yet "taught you" to let him go when he struggles, trimming nails isn't going to be difficult to introduce. If, however, your pet already gets upset if you even mention a pedicure, you may need some help.
2. **Consistency** Never, ever let your pet go when they are struggling. Fluffy only receives freedom when she's being a good dog and holding still in a quiet, calm manner. She may have you convinced that you're amputating a leg, but you're not. Approach nail trimming in the same calm, matter of fact manner every time. Don't call your pet to you to trim their nails. Ignore negative behavior (struggling, screaming), praise the positive (silence, relaxation, lack of struggling).
3. **Persistence** If you do not desensitize your pet to nail trimming, expect a struggle every time. Use a muzzle if needed. Obtain medication from your veterinarian to help calm your pet if necessary.
4. **Knowledge** Nails should be kept short enough that they are not "clicking" on the ground. Excessively long nails can make it difficult to walk (especially for senior pets) and can cause arthritis in the toes and muscle soreness along the legs. Nail trimming DOES NOT hurt (if done properly) regardless of what the Pedipaws commercial may have led you to believe :-)

If you can see the quick (the pink area where the blood vessels and nerves reside) - you're in luck. Simply don't cut into it! If the nails are dark and you cannot see the quick, only cut very small bits off the end at a time. It's time to stop when you begin to see the grayish colored quick in the center of the cut surface of the nail. Only cut the "curved" portion of the nail, never the "straight line".

If you accidentally cut the quick, gently apply a moderate amount of styptic powder to the cut surface. Hold pressure for 30-60 seconds. Apply more if needed. Remember, this isn't a good thing, but it's also not the end of the world. Don't let it cause you anxiety that will be passed on to your pup. Be careful not to accidentally pull hair or pinch pads/skin.

Don't forget the dew claws!

5. **Goals** A trusting, calm pup who will allow you to trim their nails without pitching a major fit.

