

# Nail Trimming 101

## NAIL CARE

When nails grow so long that they're in constant contact with the ground (listen for a "click clack" sound on hard surfaces), they can become quite uncomfortable for your dog. In addition to causing discomfort, nails that are too long are at risk of being torn off or split, which can be quite painful and cause infection.

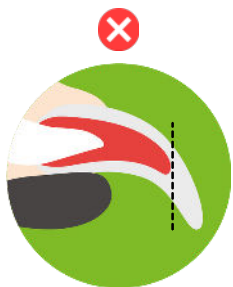
The frequency of nail trimming is somewhat dependent on your dog's activity level. During the spring and summer seasons active dogs tend to file their nails on walks along the concrete, but in the winter months nails will need to be trimmed more often. Trimming is recommended every 2-3 weeks depending on the season and the activity level of your dog.

The longer the nail, the longer the quick, so if your dog has overgrown nails you need to be very cautious when you do get around to trimming them. If this is the case, trim weekly. When you maintain nails regularly, the quick will recede and the nail will naturally be shorter.

## HOW TO SAFELY TRIM A NAIL

Nails should be trimmed in thin slices at a 45-degree angle rather than in large chunks. This makes the trimming experience more comfortable and allows guardians to visualize the nail more accurately and ensure they do not cut too close to the quick.

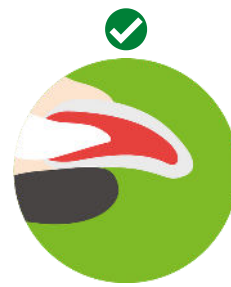
It is important that nail trimmers are always sharp. If trimmers become dull, then it can be painful for your pet to have their nails trimmed. Safari and Millers Forge are our recommended brands. Nail files are often used once nails have been trimmed to file down any sharp corners or edges. However, files can also be used on dewclaws for dogs that prefer to use scratchboards.



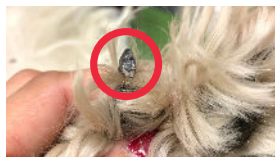
*Trimming at a sharp angle increases the chance of clipping the quick*



*Instead, trim in thin slices at a 45-degree angle*



*A properly trimmed nail has smooth edges and space between the quick and the tip*



For black nails, seeing the "target" chalky layer and outer nail shell is an indication to stop. Light coloured nails do not show this layer as clearly, so go very slowly and be careful when trimming these. When in doubt, STOP. A hand file can be used to finish the nail and smooth its edges without the risk of making the nail bleed.

Remember to take only small slivers of nail during your trimming sessions, and always wait for your dog to give consent before proceeding. Keep sessions short, positive, and fun. **There is no need to trim all your dog's nails in one sitting!**

In the event you accidentally cut the quick and your dog's nail bleeds, you can use styptic powder to stop the bleeding or use a clean cloth and apply pressure to the nail until it clots. Bandaging the paw for an hour or so to prevent traumatizing the clot is recommended if your dog will allow it.