

Your dog's nails are very important. They help your dog walk and run, explore and play. And if they aren't taken care of they can cause a host of problems ranging from mild discomfort to punctures or even joint and bone problems.

This can easily be prevented by keeping your dog's nails trimmed. The question is, how frequently do you need to do it? Well, it depends. A lot of factors affect this number and it can range anywhere between three to even eight weeks.

Two things that affect your dog's nail trimming schedule are their location and their breed. The more active that a dog is, the less frequent their nail might be. Walking on rough surfaces can grind down the nail so city dogs and dogs that frequently walk on sidewalks and asphalt need less frequent trimming. Dogs who spend little time outside typically need more frequent trims. Some breeds and individuals have nails which grow faster than the average; for example, Dachshunds and Bassets may need to have their nails groomed more often.

A good rule of thumb is that if you can hear your dog's nails "click" when he walks, they need to be trimmed. You should also keep an eye out for any changes in your dog's walk as this might also indicate foot pain from lengthy nails.

Trimming your dog's nails is important to his comfort and good health. Overgrown nails can cause problems like:

- Ingrown nails
- Torn bleeding nails
- Splayed toes (deformed feet)
- Bone and joint problems
- Hip and back problems

Trimming your dog's nails is a must. But often, it is a stressful and unpleasant task for both you and your dog. We asked dog owners to tell us what they dislike most about trimming their dog's nails. Here's what we learned.

- Most people said their dogs made it difficult. Whether their dogs were scared or simply uncooperative, it was hard to safely trim their nails while struggling to restrain them.
- Pain and bleeding are a common complaint. There is a blood vessel running through your dog's nails called the quick. It is easy to see on light-colored nails (somewhat harder on dark-colored ones). When you cut into the quick, the nail bleeds. This is painful for your dog and it can also be a little scary for you.
- Painful cuts make dogs fearful of nail trimming. So they struggle and resist, making a tough job even tougher. Some dogs hate having their nails trimmed so much that they actually bite their owners.

It's not surprising that most dog owners would rather not cut their dog's nails. But professional nail trimming can get expensive. Many of the pet owners who groom their dog's nails at home prefer to use a [nail grinder](#) instead of clippers. It's frequently easier and safer and as an added bonus, the nail itself is left in better condition. Grinders don't cut off large pieces of nail. Instead they file it away in thin layers so it's easier to control the amount of nail being removed, and there is almost no risk of painful bleeding.