

# Nail Care for Your Dog

By Young Rhee

Caring for your dog's nails is important for your dog's health. Untrimmed nails can cause a variety of problems such as:

- Difficulty with walking or running which in turn can lead to soreness of the leg
- Broken nails bleed profusely and are painful
- Overgrown nails can curl back towards the foot pad and pierce the skin
- Dewclaws, which are commonly overlooked, can also grow and curl back towards the leg, piercing the skin and becoming infected

Not only is trimming your dog's nails an important part of grooming, it also will result in less scratching of furniture and floors. Your dog's trim nails also will less likely scratch you and hurt you.

So, how often should you trim your dog's nails? The answer depends on how fast the nails grow and on your dog's reaction to having his nails trimmed. In general, dogs' nails should be trimmed about once every one or two weeks. A good indication is if you hear a click-click-click when your dog is walking across the hardwood floor or on concrete then his nails are too long. If your dog is not used to having his feet touched or handled, you may want to start out slow. Start with gently caressing your dog's feet and rewarding him with praise or treats. Lift his paws up and massage them so that he becomes accustomed to having his feet being handled. Go slowly and make these sessions fun. However, if your dog won't tolerate having his feet touched or if you are uncomfortable doing it yourself, then it would be best to have a professional trim your dog's nails.