

Grooming Basics

Before your Team Evaluation and each visit, you'll want your animal to be clean and ready to visit.

- ▶ **Bathing:** Pet Partners' policy is that the animal should be bathed within 24 hours of the visit and kept clean until then. For cats, guinea pigs, rabbits, birds and rats, a sponge bath using water, cleaning wipe or dry shampoo designed for your animal immediately prior to the visit is acceptable.

Note: If you visit frequently, it might be impractical or harmful for the animal to be bathed before each visit. Animals should always be clean smelling with a clean coat, free of debris for any visit.

- ▶ **Coat:** The animal must be clean and groomed. Knots, snags and debris must be combed out of the coat. For animals such as horses or alpacas, the coat should be clipped or shaved, if necessary, to be debris free. For rats, extra attention should be paid to the tail to ensure it is clean.
- ▶ **Nails and Hooves:** Your animal's nails must be clipped to a safe length, and so that they aren't sharp or hooked. They should not pose a danger to the people that you visit, catch on clothing or interfere with the animal's ability to walk on various surfaces, such as tile or carpet. File rough edges. Hoofed animals should receive proper foot care, even if they wear shoes while visiting.
- ▶ **Breath:** If your animal's breath isn't agreeable, use only toothpaste or oral rinse that's specifically made for that species of animal. If your animal's bad breath is a result of eating strong-smelling pet food, consider switching to a premium pet food. Premium pet foods usually have a more agreeable odor, which will make a significant difference in your animal's breath.
- ▶ **Drooling:** Some breeds of dog are prone to drooling or slobbering. If you are visiting with an animal that drools excessively, carry a hand towel so that you can occasionally wipe your animal's mouth to prevent the client from being drooled on. Practice excellent infection control by using hand sanitizer after wiping your animal's mouth.
- ▶ **Eyes:** Normal drainage from the eyes must be cleaned.
- ▶ **Ears:** Ears should be clean and free of odor.
- ▶ **Feet:** Make sure that the animal's paws/hooves/feet are clean. Clip back any excess hair that mud or feces might adhere to.