

Wash & Wear Bullies, by Penni Hansen

From a groomers perspective the Bully owner has it made. With a small amount of effort you can maintain a health and hygiene regimen for your four legged family member.

Bullies are really pretty maintenance free dogs except in the show arena but that's another subject. They have a short, flat, and harsh to the touch coat which does not mat and so doesn't require undercoat rakes or mat splitters. Bullies are blessed with no feathering or furnishings on their feet, chest, ear's or tail. Without that extra hair it means they don't collect dirt or water in their coats. Don't get me wrong now, I'm not saying they don't get dirty because they do. It's just that unlike so many other breeds bullies can walk through mud puddles and not bring one-half of it home. Never the less, hygiene is very important to our Bullies health and happiness.

I have come to realize over the years I've been in the grooming profession that it is very important to get into a routine of brushing, ear cleaning, nail clipping or grinding, bathing and brushing teeth. If you will do this, then you won't have to worry so much about nails that tear and scratch, or ear problems that require that trip to the 'dreaded' Vet. Everyone is much happier and bottom line your bully is healthier.

Once or twice a week I brush my two darlings with a curry comb, clean their ears with cotton balls or swabs and a cleaner, and lastly brush their fangs. Issadora hates to have her teeth brushed and whenever she sees that dreaded toothbrush, off she goes to hide in that far back, darkened corner of her house. With a little coaxing and schmoozing and an occasional cookie, she's finally okay with my request and away we go. Remember, she'd much rather be curled up on the couch watching the TV but these things are in her best interest and make everyone's life happier. She just doesn't know it!

Every four to six weeks I add a couple extra things to my regular routine. Now, I include expressing the anal gland (more on that in a minute), clipping or grinding nails, bathing (rinsing thoroughly) and towel and/or force air dry. Cheshire detests hot air being blown at her. She rears back on her haunches and tries to bite at the dryer nozzle. Whereas Issadora treats it like it was her favorite place in the house, the kitchens furnace register. Oh, our darling bullies! Now back to the anal glands. This is a very important task and if done regularly keeps everyone happy. First, I lift the tail with my left hand and placing the thumb and index fingers of my right hand at 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock at the anus opening, I massage carefully. This milking process produces a discharge that ranges from a light yellowish green to dark brown. If however you see blood, you've got a problem and your Vet needs to be contacted immediately. This process is best done in the bathtub with your bully lathered in suds. If you are hesitant or the slightest bit squeamish, by all means have your Vet or a qualified groomer do it for you.

I highly recommend that you get to know your bullies body. When you pet that bundle of love, run your hands all over their person, checking for lumps. Keep an eye out for rashes and abrasions and most of all smother them in as much love and affection as they will

tolerate. Be watchful for allergic reactions in the form of hives caused by bites or ingesting something they shouldn't. These people are very important members of our families and need to be watched and protected for the children they are.

Last but not least I thought I'd add products that every bullies home should not be without. Shampoo just for sensitive skin is a must. I try to keep an oatmeal , tea tree oil or puppy tearless on hand for my girls. These can be bought off the shelf of your local pet store. Your Vet also carries products like Sebolux anti bacterial so if you prefer, that's another alternative. I also keep a rubber curry comb and nail clippers or grinder in my girls cosmetic kit. My pooches prefer the quiet rechargeable type Dremel grinder, over the noisy version. Along with cotton balls and Q-Tips for those stinky dog ears I also keep on hand a reliable cleaner. Two of my favorite ear cleaner/deodorants are OtiClean and Pro Ear. These can be purchased at your local pet store. Another option that you have for keeping those ears healthy and smelling sweet is to use good old Listerine mouth wash or witch hazel. Remember, use any of these products sparingly and wipe like you would a babies ear. You're not digging for gold. Next, for that extremely sensitive bully skin I always keep Gold Bond Powder on hand. You can also use corn starch in a pinch. For that more complex problematic rash, cut or abrasion I prefer Desitine which is over the counter or Panalo **Wash & Wear Bullies, by Penni Hansen**

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Now that we've cleaned every inch of that bullie person from nose to tip of tail, you should have a healthy happy family member. I hope I have helped guide you in a useful

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