

GROOMING YOUR AFFEN

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One of the appealing characteristics of this breed is its appearance. We, the Affenpinscher Club of America, want to assist you in learning how to maintain your Affen's coat, health, and overall condition. Grooming your Affen as your pet is simple, and with a minimum of interest, time, and your personal desire, can be done by you.

Perhaps by now this little "monkey dog" has found its way onto your chair, onto your couch or even into your bed. If so, you might enjoy its company more if your little friend is a bit cleaner, less smelly and doesn't bring twigs and leaves with its beard and whiskers onto your pillow.

We've created this step-by-step guide for the pet Affen/owner/groomer.

Rules:

1. Be Patient
2. Be Persistent
3. Be Patient
4. Be Persistent

Okay, now that you have established who is the Alpha dog (that's you), let's proceed!



a pair of untrimmed Affens

Using a secure grooming table, with an arm and a noose, place your dog on the table with its head in the noose. Using a small, soft bristle, “slicker”, brush the entire dog in a layered manner, starting at the chest and working up under the chin, under the belly and down the inside of each leg. Brush in a downward motion, work up the sides to the spine, down each leg and out to the tip of the tail. Brush the cheeks, whiskers and beard in layers forward towards the mouth. Brush the hair on the top of the head forward towards the nose.



Figure 1 slicker brush and greyhound comb

Now with a “greyhound comb”, comb through these same sections in the same order as you brushed. If you catch a mat or snag, STOP. Put down your comb and break apart the mat with your fingers. Then, using the teeth on one end of the comb, go through small sections of the mat until it combs through easily.

Okay, the easy part is done. Now, let’s trim.

To keep your Affen shaggy but neat, the long, blown unruly hairs will have to be “plucked”. The coat on the shoulders and body should be approximately 1”. It should be longest right behind the withers and shortest at the rear. The hair of the Affen will only grow to a certain length before it “blows”. Much of this blown coat will come out in the slicker and the comb before you get to this stage of trimming. The remaining long hairs can easily be plucked. It does not hurt. Remember these hairs are “dead”.

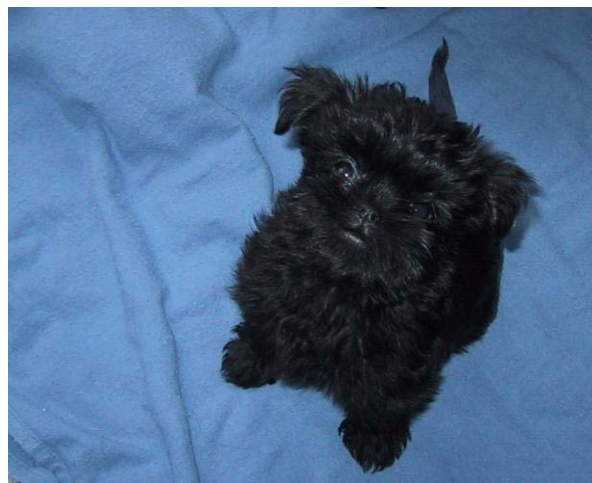
This is achieved by lifting up the long unruly hairs with your hand or a comb or brush. Now, pluck the end of the targeted hair with your index finger and thumb in a quick motion. With your other hand pull the skin taut in front of the area where you are working. When you look at the hair you’ve plucked you’ll see it has a bulb on the end. That’s good. It means you got the entire hair! Want a tip? Wear a latex exam glove on the hand you pull with. It makes it easier to grab the hair.

Now rake through the coat from the base of the neck to the base of the tail, down the sides with a medium stripping knife to loosen and grab any additional dead hairs that are ready to come out.



Figure 2 cape as it blends into the back coat

Blend the length of the coat as you work. It should be longest behind the shoulders and down the rib cage, becoming shorter as you work towards the rear. The longer hair across the shoulders called the “cape” is one of the hallmarks of the breed. On the mature Affen this strong hair blends into the back coat at the withers area. Blend these hairs to create a neat outline. If your Affen has an undocked tail, use thinning shears to cut the hair on the tail in the shape of a curve, somewhat like a quarter moon. Trim a docked tail like an inverted ice cream cone.



I don't need grooming yet! – I'm just a cute puppy!



Figure 3 trim tail in a slight curve

Comb the hair on the inside of the legs inward, and shape all four legs straight to look like little columns. Clean the hair around the anus with blunt nose scissors for cleanliness.

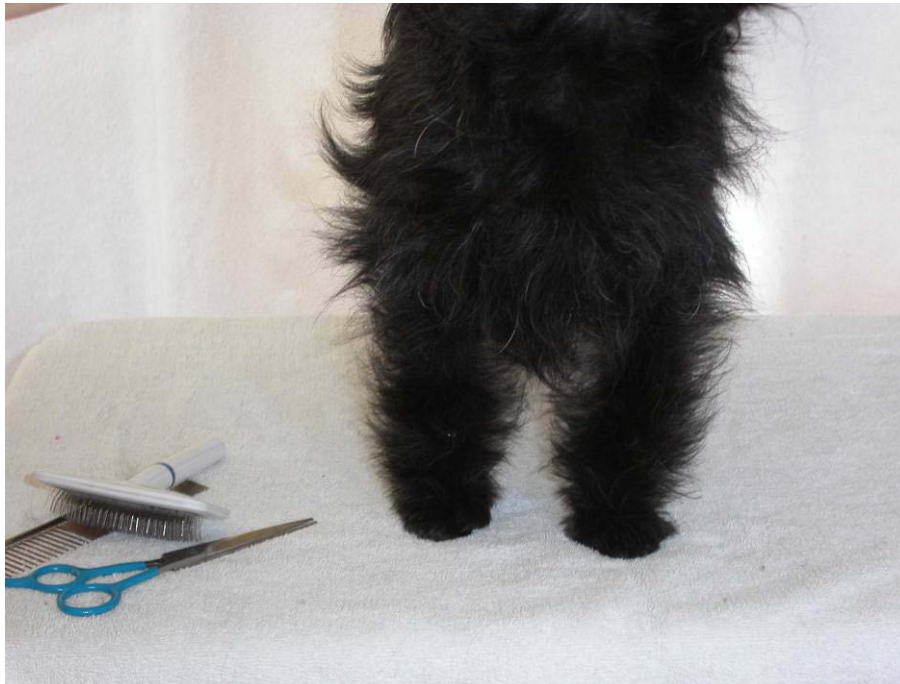


Figure 4 shape legs like little columns

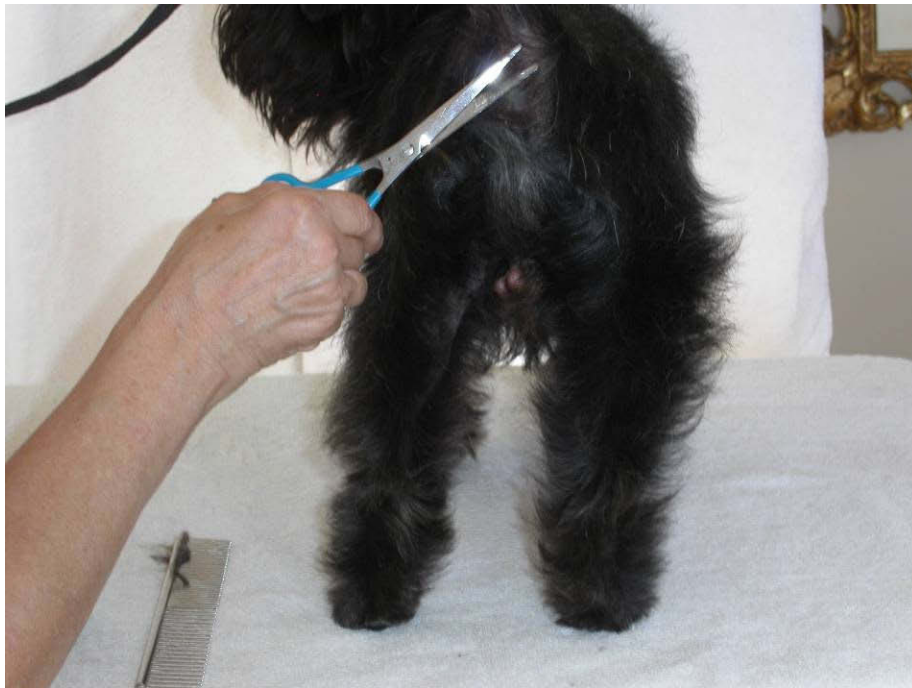


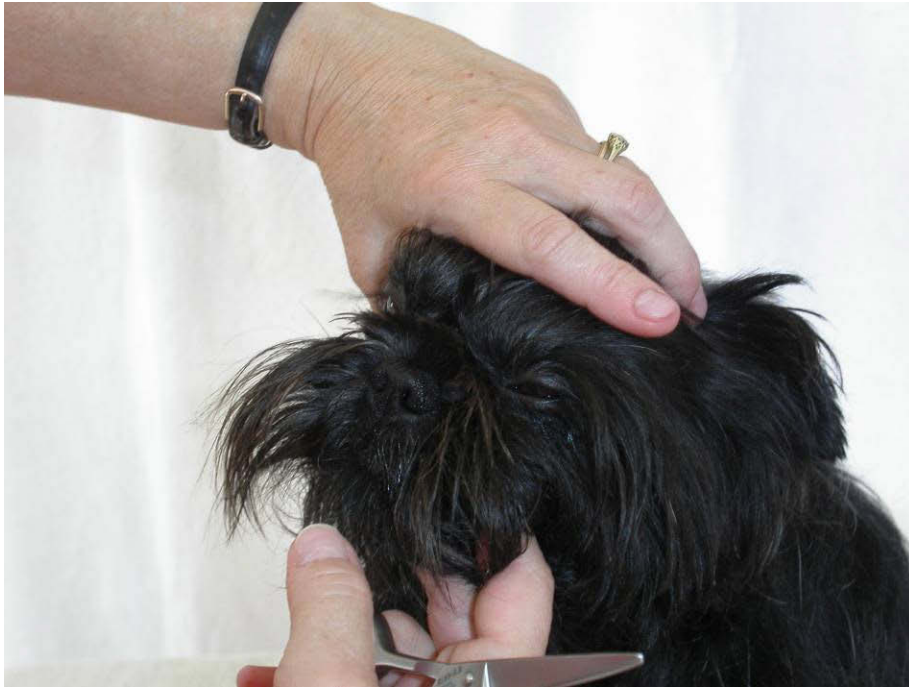
Figure 5 trim around anus

Head – Brush the hair on the top of the skull from behind the ears forward over the eyes. Make a cut by drawing an upside down U starting at the corner of each eye.



Figure 6 brush hair forward over eyes

To keep the eyes exposed, make a “fan” at the stop (bridge of the nose) with curved blunt edges scissors.



Figures 7 & 8 trim hair over nose in fan shape

Affen translates from German to English as to “ape” or “mock”. Pinscher translates to Terrier. This “monkey-like terrier” is easily identified by several facial features, namely, eyebrows, whiskers and beard. Hair from the top of the skull should blend into the cheeks, forming the eyebrows, the cheeks into the whiskers and the whiskers into the beard.



Figure 9 facial hair blended to emphasize the “monkey” appearance

Trim hair on the outside edges of the ear with blunt scissors, close to the ear leather, being careful not to cut the ear.



Figure 10 trim the hair at the ears



Figure 11 close-up of ear trimming

Clean excessive hair from the inside of the ears with blunt scissors. Often hair grows heavily in the ear canal. It should be removed on a regular, as needed basis. After applying ear powder which helps dry the ears and provide traction for pulling, use forceps, grab a small section of hair, twist, rotate and pull. Continue until completely void of excess hair. Now is the ideal time to check for ear problems. If black debris comes out with the extracted hair, or if the ears smell, seek care from your Vet. It could be a sign of yeast or bacterial infection or perhaps mites. Routine ear care is most important for your dog's well being.

Now, let's trim the nails. Most dogs resist this, so be prepared. Place your dog on its back and wrap it in a towel or baby blanket. Swaddle it tightly with the blanket, leaving one foot exposed at a time. Using a small Dremel grinder or a nail trimmer, clip or grind to just before the "quick", the blood vessel that runs through the nail. Take small snips or taps at a time, looking for a white thread in the middle of the nail. Try not to cut the quick for it will bleed. If this happens, apply a styptic to stop the blood. Do the same to the remaining nails. Trim the long hair on the bottom on the feet so that it is even with the pad. Trim around the foot to make it appear round.

Now the bath! Place your dog in a basin or laundry tub on a rubber mat for sure footing. Using a sprayer or hose attachment wet the entire dog. When wetting the face, place the sprayer right against the skin. Most Affens object little when done this way rather than spraying water at their faces. Use a tearless shampoo on the head and an all-purpose pet shampoo on the body. Rinse until clear, then shampoo and rinse a second time. Now check the teeth for tartar buildup. If present, use a toothbrush or small terry cloth and rub across the gums until clean. Towel excess moisture from the coat. Put the dog back on the grooming table with its head in the noose. With a hand held dryer and a brush blow the coat in the direction you want it to lie until dry.

You Are Done! CONGRATULATIONS!



Figures 12 & 13 the finished product!

Hopefully you have found this experience tolerable. It does get easier with practice, for both you and your dog. This can be a great opportunity to gain your dog's trust and deepen your bond with him. It's also an ideal time to note any health issues. You will feel good about your achievement and your dog will feel good when clean.

If you are planning on showing your dog in conformation, we suggest you contact its breeder for further assistance. Additional trimming may be necessary to have your Affen look competitive in the show ring.

Regardless of how you choose to keep your Affen groomed, whether it be by yourself, by a professional groomer, by your breeder, or by a professional handler, routine maintenance is your responsibility. Your pet's health should be monitored by routine care of its ears, nails, mouth and skin.

HAPPY AFFENPINSCHER!

