

Grooming A Havanese

By Havanese Rescue, Incorporated

Brushing

One of the most important parts of grooming your Havanese is brushing. Try to brush your dog daily. To brush, first lightly spray one area of the dog's coat with a fine mist sprayer. (Mix the water with a small amount of conditioner, 1 teaspoon is fine, or you can use plain water. Dry brushing breaks the coat.) After spraying an area, start brushing. Make sure you get all the way down to the skin because mats form near the skin. Do not only brush the outer coat. Use the line brushing technique.



Line Brushing



First separate the hair. Make a line with the hair going horizontally along the dog from the nose to the tail so you can see the skin.

Brush the hair up and then down, little by little, starting at the feet and moving up to the middle of the back. Brush down a row about a quarter inch at a time.





While brushing, hold the brush flat. Holding the brush at an angle will rip the coat and scratch your dog's skin. When brushing the legs, lift up the top leg and brush the under side of the leg on the bottom. When one side is complete, turn your dog over and do the same thing on the other side.

Your dog needs to be trained to lie on her side to be line brushed. Start training doing short sessions and brush very gently. Do not bear down on your brush. Talk to your dog and give her a lot of praise. Make it a relaxing time for both you and your dog.

After a while she will enjoy the activity and sometimes go to sleep. For a well-trained dog, line brushing, eye care, tooth brushing plus some foot trimming when needed should take under a half hour. It takes ten minutes for one owner.

The most popular brushes for this technique are pin brushes. The best brush is the one that feels comfortable in your hand. There is a list of vendors attached.

Sample Pet Cuts



You can pick a cut you like and either give a picture to your groomer or try it yourself. Remember that the hair on the face and tail grow more slowly than the rest of the coat so be careful not to cut too much off of those areas.





As a reference, this is 6-month old puppy who has not had a hair cut.

Baths

Not many Havanese enjoy their bath but it is a good plan to bathe them once a week. Sometimes every two weeks is adequate. It does not hurt a dog's skin or coat to bathe weekly. As a matter of fact, when professional handlers take a dog to a show, and want a better coat, they bathe the dog **twice** a week. Clean skin and hair makes a dog healthier. It is very important to brush your dog before the bath so he is mat-free. You can use any good quality shampoo and follow it with the same brand of conditioner afterward. Havanese have a dry coat. Try different brands of shampoo/conditioners until you find one you like and that gives the dog the look and feel you want. If you have a sink with a sprayer, don't spray his face. A plastic bottle or pitcher is a good dip and rinse aid. Be sure to rinse out all the soap. Soap left on the skin can cause itching. In areas where water has a lot of minerals, some people choose to use distilled water with a small amount (about 1 Tablespoon) of conditioner added as the final rinse. They leave this mixture in the coat and dry as usual. Be sure to warm some of the water before using this so it is a warm rinse.

Drying

A professional stand dryer is very useful. (See product list at the end for suggestions.) A table model works just as well. Put the table model on top of your washer, dryer or counter and put a folded towel down for the dog to lie on. This way you have a good surface and nice height on which to work. These types of dryers keep both your hands free to hold and work on your dog. Some people can work very effectively with a hand dryer tucked into their waistband and then bringing it to the desired spot by hand. There are also stands available for your hand dryer. Be very careful if you use a human dryer in a stationary stand. Be sure to use the dryer on low or medium temperature, as it can ruin the hair as well as burn a dog's sensitive skin. Some people find it helpful to let the dog dry a little in a crate. However you choose to dry your dog, be sure he is fully dry. Dampness

increases the chance of mats. You can add a bit of finishing lotion after drying to help control fly-away ends and keep the coat moisturized.

Eyes

There are many products for tear staining. Some people use a whitening toothpaste, applied to the eye staining and mouth stains the night before a bath. They leave it in overnight and wash it out the next day. Care should be taken not to get the toothpaste in your dog's eyes. Some people use a cotton ball dampened with Bausch and Lomb eyewash to wipe under the eyes. Some use an old toothbrush (one for each dog) dipped only in water and carefully clean under the eyes each day. It is important to clean the corners of the eyes as well as under them each day. If there is excessive tear staining, please check with your Veterinarian as this could indicate a blocked tear duct or other problem.

Teeth

It is a good idea to brush your dog's teeth daily. Poultry flavored toothpaste makes this task easier because the dogs love it. Your old toothbrush will work well for this but there are also a variety of toothbrushes available made specifically for dogs. Some have a longer handle, and some are made to fit on the tip of your finger to give you a little more control. Havanese can lose teeth, and have other tooth problems that can cause serious infections so this is another very important part of your grooming. If you take care of your youngster's teeth there is no reason why your older dog can't have clean white teeth.

Ears

To make ear cleaning easier, put some ear cleanser liquid in each ear before you start your dog's bath. This will loosen the wax and make it easier to clean out with either a Q-tip or a cotton ball. If you are afraid your dog won't stay still for this you can do it while he is on his side being dried or groomed. If your dog has hair inside his ears it will grow like the rest of his coat. If it becomes excessive you can pull it out using your fingers. Amazingly this does not hurt the dog. If the hair is not excessive then it can be left alone. Talk to your vet if you have concerns about hair inside of your dog's ears.

Toenails

This is the hardest part of grooming for a beginner (and sometimes non-

beginners). There are a lot of different tools available for nail clipping but the easiest for a beginner is the clipper type that resembles a wire cutter. With light colored nails it is easy to see the "quick" (the part that will bleed). With black nails you have to guess where the quick is. If you take just small bits of the nail off at a time you will know when you reach the quick. If you do actually hit the quick and it bleeds it will stop bleeding long before you stop feeling guilty. Having styptic powder nearby is helpful. Cinnamon can also be used, as it is a natural coagulant. In a pinch you can just apply pressure to the nail. With practice you can clip faster and with more confidence.

A rotary sanding tool can be used to grind the nails instead of cutting them. (See product list for "Dremel.") You need to be very careful to pull back all the hair from the nail area because if the whirring sander touches hair it will pull it out. (Ouch!). You can wrap the dog in a beach towel, using it as a straightjacket and pull one foot out at a time to grind the nails. You can also use an old fashioned dishcloth (available at Wal-Marts) to hold the hair back. Only the nails will poke through the holes in the cloth.

Feet

Using scissors, trim the hair between the pads of the feet and around the foot to neaten it and also to help cut down on stuff being brought into the house on their feet. It is very simple. Stand the dog up on a flat surface and trim around the feet. To trim the feet as your dog lies down, extend the dogs leg and brush the hair down evenly around the foot. While holding the hair in place, trim anything that is beyond the bottom of the foot.

Miscellaneous Problems

Debris: Pin brushes are the best way to brush out anything that gets caught in the hair of your Havanese. Leaves, twigs and the occasional poop-but dilemma are all much easier to handle with a pin brush. A small one in the car is very handy.

Chewing: There are some bad-tasting sprays you can use on things that you don't want to be chewed. Bitter Apple is one product. It can be sprayed on electric and phone wires, furniture, shoes etc. Often a single taste will discourage a dog from returning.

Soiled Carpets: For accidents, an enzymatic cleanser is best as it will remove

the stain as well as the scent so your dog (and others) will not return to the "scene of the crime". Nature's Miracle is one popular product.

Mats: Havanese don't shed, they mat. This is why daily brushing to remove dead hair is so important. Some dogs mat worse than others, having a coat-from-hell. The hair mats so badly that it seems like it is glued to the skin. If you have a dog like this the only answer is diligence and patience. Work the mats more with your fingers than with a brush. Separate the mat and brush small pieces out, gradually reducing the size of the mat until it is gone. Grab the mat with your thumb and finger of both hands and simultaneously gently but firmly pull to the left and right splitting the mat down to the skin. If you do it correctly you will not pull out any hair. You are separating the hair, not pulling it out. Brush into the center of the mat to the north, south, east and west until it is quartered. You don't have to do the whole dog in one sitting. Take several days and get out a little more each day. You can do this with the dog on your lap while you watch TV. For most Havanese, although they mat and must be brushed, the mats come out fairly easily. The areas that are most likely to mat are: behind the ears, on the neck, behind the legs and the feet. Keeping your dog dry helps to cut down on the number of mats.

Different Hairstyles

Cording: A Different Look For Your Havanese



Cords have the look of long ropes hanging on the dog. Loving the look of cords is very important if you want to try cording. Once you start you have to have a sincere commitment to follow through because it is a process that will take up to two years.

(Shaving the dog down is the only way to stop the process). Find a mentor who is familiar with cording. Bathing every two weeks for the first year is a must. Separate the matting hair into cords. Mist the hair daily. Enjoy running your fingers through those cords every evening! Watch the cords bouncing as your Hav *runslikehell* across the backyard and know that the time you put into cording was worth it. Negatives about cording are that it takes a long time to dry them and the dog must be kept away from sand, twigs debris... and cords on males need to be tied up so they do not become urine-soaked. Cording is a

big commitment but if you have the time and the desire it is an optional hairstyle.

Braiding

Braiding is one way to keep the hair out of your dog's eyes and braids hold the hair better than using a topknot. The hardest part of braiding is sectioning the hair the first time after a bath. When the hair is completely dry, using a comb, part the hair in the middle of the head. Part the hair again down to the edge of the eye. Put a band on one side to hold it out of the way and begin braiding. Re-divide the hair with a comb into three parts. Try to make each side even. Each day you will need to re-braid each section of hair. Many dogs enjoy this. If braiding for the show ring the braids have to be very small and end at the corner of the eye. Deeper and larger braids work great for keeping hair out of your Hav's eyes. Having a single braid go down the middle can also serve the same purpose.

Topknots

Soft cloth-covered scrunchies are helpful for this but the stiff ones you can sometimes find at drug stores hold the best. Pull the hair up to the top of the head using the scrunchie or soft band. Make sure that you don't make the topknot so tight that it pulls the eyes upward. Release a little of the tension by wiggling the scrunchie.

Havanese Hobbies and Habits

Playful and Alert - The Havanese is both trainable and intelligent with a sweet non-quarrelsome disposition. This is what the AKC Havanese standard says. So, do not be surprised if your Havanese has hobbies. Many do. There are also some breed specific habits that your dog may express.

RUNLIKEHELL is the name for the activity they all enjoy, preferably with each other. The name is pretty descriptive so if you see your dog dashing round suddenly for no reason, rest assured that he is acting like a normal Havanese.

Paper shredding is a real favorite pastime. Kleenex, toilet paper, and paper napkins are very popular, so low wastebaskets are risky. For these dogs the toilet paper needs to be off the roller and up high, sorry. And keep those

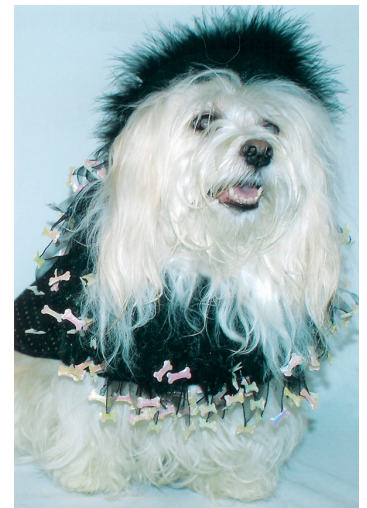
wastebaskets empty!



Havanese can also be collectors. Leaves are treasures. If you say "no" then you may find them hidden. Other "found objects" may find their way into your house. If you leave your bedroom door open during the day you may find some interesting things in your bed with you. Hoarding is another variation on collecting. These little characters like to pile their stuff (or yours) in one spot, like their crate.

Escaping is not really a hobby but it is not an unusual talent. Havanese do a lot of watching. They know how things work. Zippers, a nose in the gap and bingo...they are out of a carrier bag. Swinging doors and gates left unlatched are easy. Fences can be jumped or climbed. Havs don't like to be left out of any activities so they will try their best to join you. Be extra careful if you are away and have a house sitter. If a door gets opened your dog may slip out and run to try to find you. They are just trying to find you but it can be very scary for the person who is unaware of this little trait.

PARTIES! Oh yes, **PARTIES!** Havanese love parties! One new owner said, "these dogs get dressed in a costume and go to a party like it was the most natural thing in the world!" They usually get along great with each other and really enjoy the fun. Some say it is their Cuban Heritage, or maybe it is just their happy-go-lucky personality. Whatever it is, Havanese are a joy to live with and watch.



HEALTH CHECKS

You should schedule yearly visits with your Veterinarian to ensure your pet's health. Establish a rapport with your vet. Recommendations on selecting a good vet should come from friends, family or a site like: <http://www.healthypet.com> which will help you find a local accredited animal hospital.

Canine Eye Registration Foundation tests for cataracts (C.E.R.F.) This test is done by a board certified ophthalmologist and is recommended for Havanese on a yearly basis. If you go to the C.E.R.F. web site or to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals website they will list some of the clinics near you. These clinics are run by volunteers (usually from the local dog club, sometimes during a dog show) and are much less expensive than private appointments with an ophthalmologist. The clubs have very good doctors doing the testing.

HRI is There for You and Your Havanese

Your Havanese will **always** be our cherished Rescue graduate. HRI volunteers are available to help **for the rest of your dog's life**. Please let us know if things are going well and also if they are not. If you have a question about something, do not hesitate to contact us. We are available seven days a week. Our email help line is: assistance@havaneserescue.com.

Resource List – Supplies

This list was prepared by HRI volunteers. HRI does not endorse any products or retailers. Our volunteers have found these resources helpful and we hope you do, too. It is best to check prices among a variety of retailers. Most all retailers sell the same, or similar products. We like the particular brands mentioned.

Approx. Price
(as of July 2006)

Brushes

Not all pin brushes are alike. We strongly suggest you get one **without** plastic ball tips at the end of the pins. They can snag and break the coat. Here are some brushes we really like:

| | |
|---|---------|
| Chris Christensen pin brushes A120 or A020 or any you like..... | \$20.00 |
| Hindes through Cherrybrook | \$12.00 |
| PSI pin brush * *through Dressler's Dogs | \$5.41 |
| #1 All Systems - D2 Pin Brush Plastic Handle at PetEdge..... | \$6.56 |
| Four Paws (found at Petco) | |

Shampoo and Conditioners:

Pantene shampoo and conditioner is fine and available everywhere.
 Shimmer Lights by Clairol for white dogs
 Plush Puppy <http://www.plushpuppyusa.com/home.html>
 Vellus Products <http://www.vellus.com>
 Mane and Tail available in most drug stores.
 Sally's Beauty Supplies, stores throughout the country, Cure Care conditioner..... \$6.00
 Crown Royal Conditioner plus (Cherrybrook)..... \$14.95
 Fresh and Clean (Lambert Kay product)..... \$4.95
 Four Paws products (found at Petco)
 THE Stuff (This is a dematting product as well as a conditioner. Spray with caution as it can cause slippery floors).....\$6.99
 Finishing lotion (optional)
 Cowboy Magic-detangler and Shine- www.cowboymagic for local store

Top Knots & Braids

| | |
|---|--------|
| Small elastic bands Pet Edge..... | \$4.50 |
| Goody 'Ouchless' bands 14 in pkg (cloth-covered)..... | \$4.50 |

Hair Dryers

Oster makes a nice one. A table or standing dryer leaves both hands free to brush/control the dog. Pet Edge.....\$169.97
 Top Performance Professional Pet Dryer w. stand 1875 Watts\$ 21.99
 Rest Free Pro Grooming Stand with clamp from dresslersdog.com.....\$24.95

Eyes

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Eye Envy 2 oz -Cherrybrook..... | \$11.95 |
| Bausch & Lomb eyewash any drugstore | |

Teeth

| | |
|--|--------|
| Petrodex Poultry toothpaste 6.2oz JB Wholesale | \$5.00 |
| Finger Brush JB Wholesale | \$3.00 |

Ears

| | |
|---|--------|
| Oticlean-A Ear Lotion- 4 oz -Cherrybrook..... | \$5.50 |
| Biogroom - 4 oz -Dresslers Dog..... | \$4.79 |
| R-7 ear liquid - 4 oz - Dresslers Dog..... | \$5.42 |

Nails

| | |
|---|---------|
| Clippers Millers Forge Safety - Cherrybrook..... | \$5.95 |
| Small clipper Groomax - Petsmart..... | \$5.99 |
| Dremel grinder – Cherrybrook or Home Depot | \$29.95 |
| Styptic Kwik Stop-1 1/2 oz - Drs Foster & Smith | \$5.95 |

Other Products

| | |
|---|--------|
| Nature’s Miracle- for ‘mistakes’- DrsFoster&Smith, Petsmart, JB Pet supplies..... | \$4.25 |
| Bitter Apple- bad taste for discouraging chewing- Petsmart, Dresslersdog, JB Pet..... | \$5.25 |

On line Sources:

Though it is convenient to place orders via the web, we suggest that you request a paper catalog to better acquaint yourself with products and their uses.

Cherrybrook www.cherrybrook.com Request a catalogue

Plush Puppy <http://www.plushpuppy.net/index.html> informative website. See article on products for grooming Havanese

Chris Christensen- www.chrissystems.com 1-800-654-7006

Drs Foster and Smith www.DrsFosterSmith.com catalogue

PetEdge <http://www.petedge.com> Request a printed catalogue

Dresslers Dog www.dresslersdog.com 1-800-622-4669 PSI pin brushes

J B Wholesale Pet Supplies <http://www.jbpet.com/Shopping/default.asp> catalogue

Pet Food Direct <http://petfooddirect.com/store/> 1-800-865-1333

Showdog Store <http://www.showdogstore.com/> 1-866 322-9587.

Vellus www.vellus.com

<http://www.dog-training.com/dogbrush.htm> (864) - 348-3647 (DOGS) –

Stores throughout the country:

Petco

Petsmart

Sally’s Beauty Supplies

Dog Shows

Dog shows are often wonderful places to shop for supplies. Check Infodog at <http://www.infodog.com> or the AKC at <http://www.akc.org> to view a schedule of upcoming dog shows in your area.