

7-Day Calm Grooming Practice Tracker

Short, low-pressure practice that helps your dog get comfortable with paw handling and grooming tools before a real nail trim or bath.

DOG'S NAME _____

START DATE _____

FAVOURITE REWARD _____

How to use this tracker

1. Do one short session a day, about 2 to 5 minutes, when your dog is relaxed.
2. Follow the day's small step. Reward every calm moment with a treat your dog loves.
3. End while your dog is still happy, before they want to leave.
4. Tick your dog's comfort level, note the reward and anything you noticed, then choose the next step.

Good to know

- The days are a guide, not a deadline. Repeat any day as often as your dog needs.
- Practise away from real grooming. No trimming or bathing is required this week.
- Your dog may leave at any time. Letting them leave builds trust.
- Never hold your dog down, scold, or push through.



Slow down or stop if your dog becomes uncomfortable.

If you see any "stop" sign below, end the session calmly, give a reward for something easy, and go back to an earlier step next time. If a paw seems sore or injured, stop and check with your vet.

✓ Relaxed: keep going

Loose body, soft eyes, takes treats gently, stays with you or comes back for more.

– Unsure: make it easier

Pulls the paw back, lip licks, yawns, turns the head away, or takes treats more roughly.

✗ Stop the session

Tries to leave, freezes, trembles, tucks the tail, growls, or stops taking treats.

Your 7-day gradual practice plan

DAY	FOCUS	SMALL STEP (STOP AFTER A FEW CALM REPEATS)
1	Settle and touch	Sit with your dog on a mat. Stroke the shoulder, then slide your hand down the leg toward the paw. Treat. Stop well before your dog pulls away.
2	Touching paws	Touch the top of one paw for one second, then treat. Try each paw your dog is comfortable offering.
3	Showing grooming tools	Bring out the clippers, brush or towel. Tool appears, treat, tool goes away. No contact with your dog.
4	Brief handling	Cup one paw gently and lift it an inch for one or two seconds. Release first, then treat.
5	Tool near the paw	Rest the closed clippers against one nail, or pour a little lukewarm water over one paw in a dry tub. Treat, then stop.
6	Short calm practice	Link the easy steps in the real grooming spot for two or three minutes: settle, touch, hold, tool. Finish on the easiest one.
7	Review and choose next	Repeat the step your dog found easiest, then pick one next step: repeat a day, or try a single nail tip or a short body-only rinse only if every earlier step was relaxed.

Daily practice log

One box per session. Tick the comfort level you saw most, and write the next step before you finish.

Day 1 Settle and touch

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Stroke shoulder, slide hand toward the paw, treat.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 2 Touching paws

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

One-second touch on the top of a paw, treat.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 3 Showing grooming tools

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Tool appears, treat, tool goes away. No contact.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 4 Brief handling

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Cup and lift one paw for one or two seconds, release, treat.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 5 Tool near the paw

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Closed clippers rest on one nail, or a little water on one paw. Treat, stop.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 6 Short calm practice

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Two or three minutes in the real spot: settle, touch, hold, tool.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat today ☐ Go back a step ☐ Move on

Day 7 Review and choose next

DATE _____

TODAY'S STEP

Repeat the easiest step, then decide what comes next.

DOG'S COMFORT

☐ Relaxed ☐ Unsure ☐ Uncomfortable: stopped

Reward used _____

NOTES

NEXT STEP

☐ Repeat this week ☐ One nail tip

☐ Short body-only rinse

End-of-week notes

Easiest step for my dog _____

Hardest step, to practise more slowly _____

Best reward _____

**Progress is not a race.**

Some dogs are comfortable in a week; others need a month or more. Slowing down or stopping when your dog is uncomfortable is part of the plan, not a failure.

Nail trimming, step by step

pupperguide.com/guides/how-to-trim-dog-nails

Reading your dog's signals

pupperguide.com/guides/dog-body-language-and-calming-signals

Bathing without a struggle

pupperguide.com/guides/how-to-bathe-a-dog

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