



How to Brush Your Pet's Teeth

Dental homecare is an important step in maintaining your pet's oral health. For best results, you should brush your pet's teeth every day.

Dental homecare does not replace the need for a professional cleaning once a year, but it will slow the progression of dental disease that occurs as your pet ages.

The following are some steps to make dental homecare something that you can incorporate into your pet's daily routine:

01

Go Slow. Start with offering the toothbrush with flavored toothpaste specifically developed for use in pets. **Do not ever use human toothpaste to brush your dog's teeth.** Human toothpaste creates suds, and dogs can't rinse their mouth and spit. Fluorides and other ingredients can be toxic to animals if ingested.

02

Toothbrushes work better than finger brushes.



03

Let your pet lick the toothpaste off the brush and enjoy the flavor. This will help you determine how well it likes the toothpaste. It will also help your pet to get used to the taste, making it more likely to accept brushing.



The best dental homecare you can do...is the homecare that you actually perform!
Start when your pet is young. The ideal time to start brushing a dog's teeth is when it is a puppy. You can start as early as eight weeks of age. Starting young can help your pet to become accustomed to the feel of the brush and the act of brushing.



WATERHOUSE
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

PHONE: (559) 434-4000



Once your pet has gotten accustomed to chewing the toothbrush, try brushing ONE tooth at a time. The best tooth to start with is the large canine tooth. The canines are easy to get to without having to handle the lips or tilt the head. During each brushing session try a different canine tooth. (Top right, Top left; Lower right; Lower left) Once your pet lets you brush the canine teeth, slip the toothbrush into the teeth in the cheek pouch. Try not to handle the lips or tilt the head, some dogs really are offended by the touching of their face. When you start brushing the back cheek pouch, your pet will chew on the brush, that is okay. This way they are also getting the bottom teeth cleaned.

04

Positive reinforcement training. It's okay to give a treat before or after a brushing session. They will associate brushing with the treat giving trick.

Throughout the process, praise your pet in a calm voice while brushing.

05

Make it fun

- If it is not fun for you and your pet, neither one of you will be motivated to continue with the routine.
- This should be a time of love and attention from you for you pet.
-

06

Try to brush your pet's teeth everyday!

- Daily brushing is the GOLD standard and most effective at keeping your pets mouth clean. Aim to brush them daily to achieve overall healthy dental care.
- Incorporate dental care into your daily routine just like feeding, walking or playing ball with them.
- If you cannot brush them daily, then use a Veterinary Oral Health Council approved product or diet.
- There are many different types of products to benefit your pet's dental health. (Water additives, Chews, Wipes, Diets, etc.) Look for the Veterinary Oral Health Counsel (VOHC) seal on products. This is a group of Veterinary Dentists that review and approve pet dental health products. www.VOHC.org



**WATERHOUSE
ANIMAL HOSPITAL**

PHONE: (559) 434-4000