

Managing Your Rottweiler's Nails

Although the idea of trimming your new puppy's nails can be intimidating, it is important that their nails be maintained in order to avoid a variety of health problems, including infections from broken nails.

The easiest way to maintain healthy nails is to use a Dremmel tool to gently grind the nails down to the desired length. Before you even attempt to use this tool on your dog, it is important that you allow your dog to become familiar with the sight and sounds of the tool. Believe it or not, this is a process that should take place over several days, or even weeks, in order to be effective. **NOTE: Ballardhaus Rottweilers has been using a Dremmel tool on your puppy since the age of 3 weeks. So this process has been started for you already.**



If your pup or adult dog is new to this follow these easy steps: The first step in this process is to just let your dog look at and sniff the Dremmel tool. Then, turn it on and off while you are in the same room with your dog. Once this goes well, give him/her a treat. Next, have your dog lie down and touch the tool to one of his/her nails. DO NOT turn it on, just touch it to the nail and then give your dog a treat and lots of praise. Continue this exercise, adding on a nail (followed by a treat) each time. As your dog gets more and more comfortable, you can wean down the treats to one after each paw, and then to just one after all the paws. Again, this process could take as long as several weeks, and it's important not to rush it. Your dog being comfortable with the tool is the key to making nail maintenance a positive experience.

Now that you are ready to start actually grinding the nails, it's important to remember that you should wean your dog into this process, least you undo all your hard work getting them used to the tool. Start by grinding the nails on just one paw, and then just touch the tool to all the other nails as you did before and follow with a treat and high praise. Continue to wean them into the experience one paw at a time. It is also important to NOT focus on getting the nails as short as possible at this time. Your main focus is still getting the dog used to the experience.

Once your dog is completely comfortable, and you begin to focus on perfecting your technique, it is important to educate yourself on the anatomy of your dog's nails, which consist of three main layers – the outer shell, the meaty area between the shell and the quick, which will bleed if you accidentally grind into it. The shell is, for all intents and purposes “dead” material, and your dog has no feeling there. The meaty area is considered new growth, and while it's not as hard as the shell, it is still not a sensitive area. The quick is the portion of the nail that is truly a “part” of your dog, with nerve endings and blood flow.

It is important to understand that as you grind the nails, you bring the protective layers closer to the quick, and, in response, the quick will naturally recede. Your goal, therefore, is to continually grind the nails as close to quick as possible without nicking it, which will result in the actual growth of the nail becoming shorter and shorter over time.

The key piece to achieving the goal is mastering the angle at which you grind the nails. By grinding the nail tip perpendicular to the floor, you can grind closer to quick without being in danger of grinding into it. Once you've ground as far as you can go, gently grind off the sides and corners at the tip for a smoother look.

Here are step-by-step instructions:

Begin the process by going straight across the underside of the nail with the tool. Then, grind off the curling down point of the nail tip and bring it up to flush with the bottom of the nail, creating a straight line. Next, grind off the top front edge of the nail, somewhat at a slant, from the tip to the top of the nail. After that, start a straight vertical edge across the tip of the nail, coming back gradually to the quick. As you take back the tip, it will be solid, and then you will start to see a dual-textured arch – the hard outer shell on top and the meat under that (sometimes it looks grey or white in color). This is the quick, and you are now at the point where you should stop grinding. Lastly, grind off all the rough corners to give the nails a smooth rounded finish. If you choose, add a little Vaseline to create a nice black gloss as a finishing touch.

Throughout the grinding process, it's important to adequately support each toe and nail as you work on them. This allows you to be in control of the process and greatly reduces the risk of accidents and/or injuries. By applying slight pressure to the underside of the pad, the nail will extend out and allow for easier grinding.

It is vital that you maintain a regular schedule for grinding(ESPECIALLY IN PUPPIES) (between once per week and once every three days, depending on how fast the nails grow). If nails that are shortened are allow to re-grow, it can be almost impossible to get them back to an ideal short length without cutting into the quick and causing your dog to bleed and be in pain.

BALLARDHAUS ROTTWEILERS DOES NO USE NAIL TRIMMERS ON OUR DOGS! DREMMELE TOOLS ARE #1 HERE!!!



You can find a Dremmel Tool at any Home Depot, Lowes, and even Walmart stores. You do not have to buy the Dremmel Brand, but for Large Breeds Like the Rottweiler, It is suggested to get a brand meant to use in the home. Pet Stores sell some cheesy nail grinders that are not worth what you pay. DO NOT BUY THE PEDI PAW....It cannot grind an adult Rottweilers nails...it is too weak.