



How to help your dog overcome toe nail trim fears

*Finding out what motivates your pet can help you with this process. Giving treats while going through these steps gives your dog the positive relationship between handling his feet and getting treats. Bring your treats with you next time you visit us! If your pet is motivated with treats, counter-conditioning can be easier than for those that are not treat-motivated. 😊

*If your pet is mostly scared of the vet's office, "happy" visits can be very beneficial! Please call us and we'll coordinate a visit where everyone is happy to see them and treats are the only "medicine" given!

This is a process to be completed **SLOWLY!!!** Moving too quickly through these steps can cause even more problems down the road.

To decrease the negative response to toe nail trims, we must start with your pet allowing you to play with his feet without reacting too extremely in any way. This can be done when you are relaxing with your pet and he is relaxed. If your pet does not like his feet being touched, using treats while just picking up a foot is a **BIG DEAL!!!** Let your dog get used to you playing with his feet before any nail clippers are even shown.

Once your dog is not reacting to his feet being touched, get the clippers and set them next to you while you go through the process again.

Next, have the clippers in your hand while holding your pet's foot with the other hand. Until your dog is comfortable with this step, **DO NOT TOUCH THE CLIPPERS TO THE FOOT!!!** We **DO NOT** want you to be bitten!!

Once your dog is relaxed with the clippers being in his area, start with just lightly tapping the nail with the clippers. This mimics what the dog will feel at the vet's office, and he may react poorly the first time the clippers make contact. Offer the treat **at the same moment** you touch the nail with the clippers.

When your dog has relaxed with you tapping the clippers to his feet, you can progress to actually clipping his nails. Take just the tip end of each nail: **DO NOT CUT THE QUICK!**

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask us! We want your dog's visits to be stress-free, and we love to see them more relaxed at the clinic!

The clinic atmosphere is vastly different than at home, so your pet may still have issues at the vet's office even if he is comfortable with nail trims at home. "Happy" visits can be a useful tool in these cases!

*If you do not have dog nail clippers, human toenail clippers can be used for the process if your pet is 20 lbs. or less. Larger dogs will need doggie nail clippers.

*We strongly recommend using the scissoring type of clippers, rather than the guillotine style that requires the toe nail to be inside the hole of the clippers.

Visit http://drsophiayin.com/resources/video_full/training_a_dog_to_enjoy_toenail_trims for a video demonstration of this process.

