

[A Guide To Trimming](#)

Adult English Springer's have beautiful, long, well feathered ears and profuse silky hair on their chest, legs and underbelly. All this needs to be regularly groomed and kept clean and free from knots.

Once your English Springer reaches about six months old its coat will start to become much thicker and you will have to start trimming the excess hair so your dog retains its natural shape and looks.

For a pet trim, the areas you will need to work on are around the inside of the ears, the top of the head, the top of the outside of the ear, the chest & throat and, the feet and hocks.

If you were going to show your dog, then you would have to learn to trim in a more specialized manner and you should get further advice on this from your nearest

You can learn to do a basic trim yourself or you can take your dog to a [grooming](#) parlor. Words of warning here though - make sure the parlor knows how to trim an English Springer properly. Always ask for your dog to be hand stripped.

If you do choose to learn to trim your own dog, the easiest way is to be shown in a practical demonstration. If you have bought your puppy from a reputable breeder they will probably be only too willing to give you a demonstration. If this is not the case, once again, ask your nearest Breed Club secretary to put you in touch with someone who will. For trimming at home you will need some specialized grooming equipment in the form of:

- a pair of straight edged scissors;
- a pair of thinning scissors;
- an ordinary toothed steel comb;
- a close toothed steel comb (known as a spaniel comb);
- a soft [bristle brush](#);
- a hard bristle brush;
- a slicker brush (with "L" shaped metal teeth);
- Two rubber thumbs (the kind cashiers use to count notes!) or a rubber glove; and a trimming table or bench with a non-slip [rubber mat](#) on (It is much easier to groom a dog on a trimming table or workbench rather than at floor level. The dog soon associates the table with the grooming routine, and it is much better for your back).

To ensure your English Springer co-operates with you on the trimming table, remember to start your grooming routine early on in its life. Use brushes and combs early on in the routine, and pretend to trim using scissors at the same time so the pup gets used to the noise they make. This practice usually pays off later on when using them for real.

With patience on your part, your pup will undoubtedly grow to love the whole routine and the extra attention it involves.

Below you will find some pictures demonstrating the various aspects of grooming.. (The pictures are taken from The English Springer Spaniel - An Owner's Guide - Author: Mrs. Yvonne Billows - courtesy of HarperCollins; David Dalton was the photographer)



Use the spaniel comb and slicker brush on the ear feathering

Use the combs and brushes to remove all dust, dirt, tangles and dead hair from the coat. The close toothed spaniel comb and the slicker brush are particularly effective on the ear feathering. Don't be rough with your dog when you are grooming it - remember there's real live skin under the hair!



Carefully trim inside the ears with some thinning scissors

Inside of the ear around the entrance to the ear canal, the hair should be trimmed quite short to allow air to circulate freely into the ear. You should use the thinning scissors to do this. They can also be used to trim the hair on the outside of the earflap. The hair from the top of the ear to about a third of the way down should be thinned out. After thinning, use the spaniel comb to remove all loose hair from the ear.



Thin out the hair from the top of the ear to one third down

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Pluck out any dead hair on top of the dog's head, wearing a rubber glove or rubber thumbs

The hair on top of your dog's head is likely to go a lighter shade and stick up when it is dead hair and therefore, needs to be trimmed out. All you need to do here is pluck the dead hair out using your thumb and forefinger. This is where the rubber thumbs or a rubber glove is useful as they give you a better grip on the hair. You can use this action to remove any dead hair from other parts of the dog's coat.



Use a brush to remove dust and dirt from the coat. Gently tease out any tangles and knots.

The hair on the chest and throat will, at some stage, need thinning out and you will once again do this with the thinning scissors and a comb.



knots

Comb through the feathering on the chest carefully, teasing out any

As with any aspect of trimming always work against the natural lie of the hair.



Trim any hair growing between the toes and under the foot

The feet should be trimmed using a pair of straight edge scissors; the aim is to make the each foot look tight and rounded. This also means trimming flat any hair growing up between the toes, and any growing underneath the foot. The hair on the hocks should be trimmed close using the thinning scissors.

The finished Springer

