



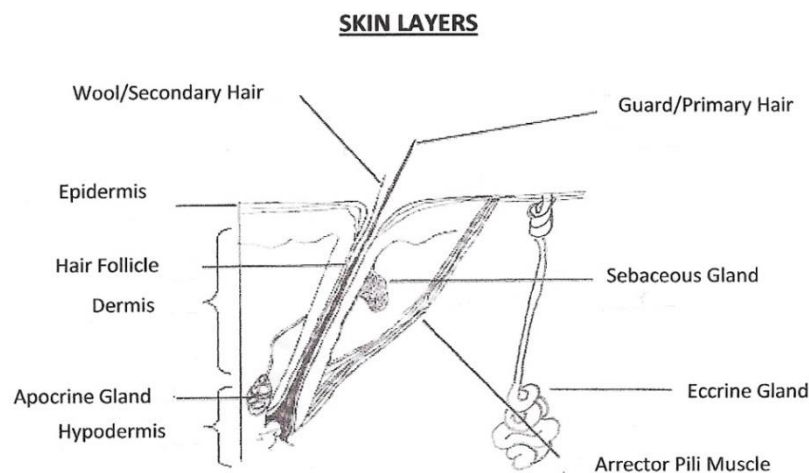
**BATHER 2
DOUBLE COATED DOGS**

STUDY GUIDE

BATHER 2 – DOUBLE COATED DOGS

The double coated dog requires special treatment of its coat to maintain it and keep it in good health.

A dog's coat consists of two layers of hair. The Primary Hair Shaft, also known as guard hairs, topcoat or outer coat and the Secondary Hair Shaft, also known as the undercoat. The topcoat will be long, shiny, and stiff and depending on the breed it can be coarse and/or soft. The dog's coat protects the skin from water penetration and the sun's rays and other environmental concerns.

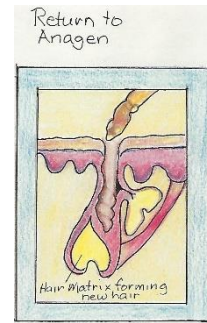
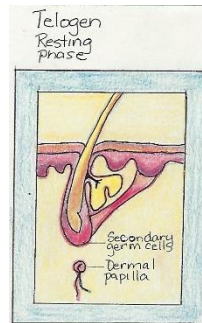
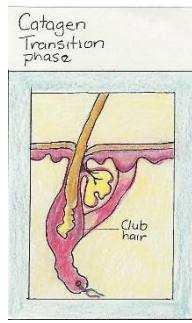
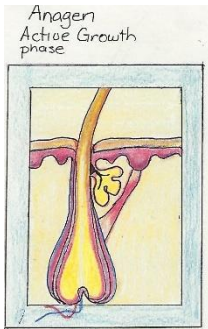


The undercoat provides an insulating layer that is short, fluffy, and thick. It helps the dog regulate its temperature from the hot sun or the cold.

Human hair grows one strand per follicle. Dog hair grows several strands per follicle, typically one primary hair and several secondary hairs. Their coats protect the skin, help regulate body temperature and help to defend it from sustaining injuries. Water is blocked from reaching the skin by the naturally produced oil. In the case of bird hunting and retrieving breeds, the double coat assists them in working through water without becoming too cold or wet.

All dogs shed their hair. It is a natural progressive cycle that occurs on its own. All dogs, except hairless and single coated dogs, have undercoat, even non shedding breeds such as Poodles and Bichons. Many factors affect coat quality, volume of shedding and molting patterns as well as whether shedding is 'normal' or 'excessive'. This varies from breed to breed and include hormones, gender, environment, stress, health, diet, genetics, neutered/spayed or not.

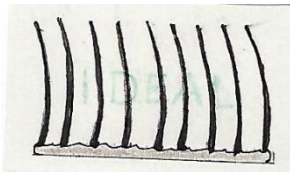
SHEDDING CYCLE PHASES



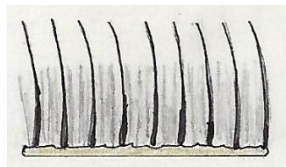
A double coat consists of two layers of fur. These grow independently and at different stages and to different lengths. The undercoat is soft, shorter, and grows much faster than the topcoat and with the northern breeds, is shed twice a year. The topcoat is longer and grows slower than the undercoat.

Double coated dogs will “blow their coat”. This is different from year-round shedding and happens twice a year in preparation for a change in the seasons. At this time, the shedding will be heavy for a few days and can be helped with bathing and frequent brushing.

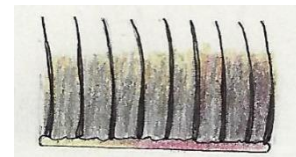
The sebaceous gland of the skin produces an oily substance called sebum. It seals in moisture and aids in regulating body temperature, water proofing and protecting the skin.



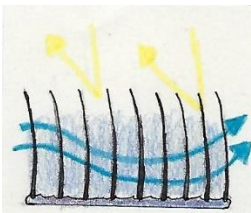
A single coat or double coat that is properly groomed and free of any shedding.



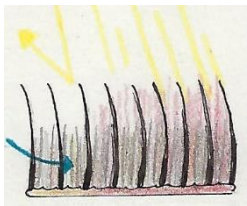
A double coat with little undercoat, buildup or tangles.



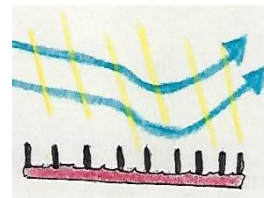
A compacted, shedding undercoat with mats and tangles. Visible early signs of dander and skin irritation



Cool air can circulate and reach the skin when the shedding undercoat and mats are removed.



Cool air gets blocked and as the undercoat grows the body heat rises. The more porous undercoat absorbs the sun's rays, trapping in the heat like a thermal blanket.

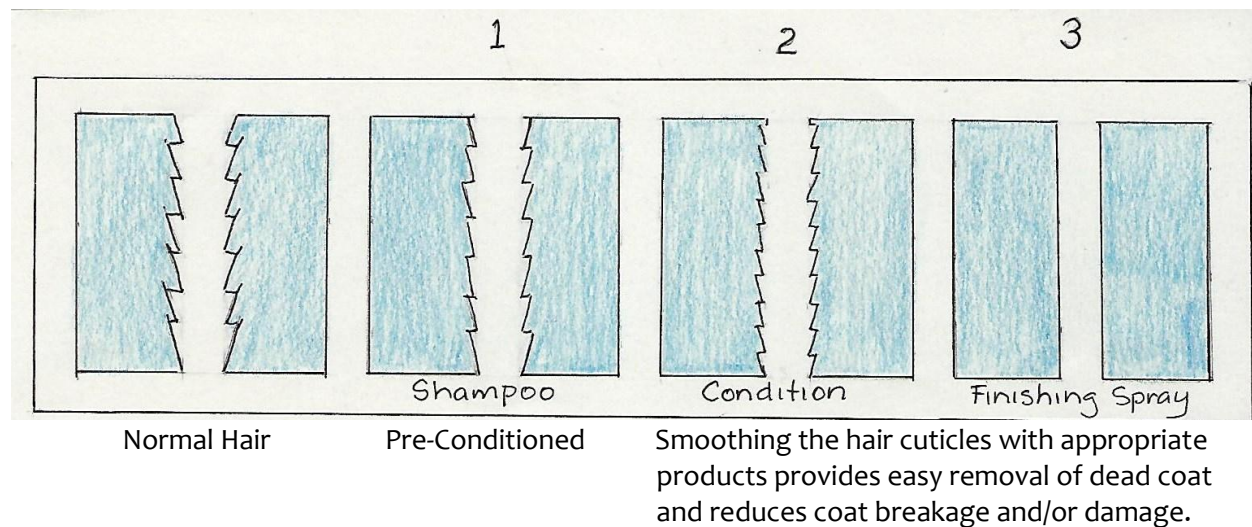


Shaving off guard hairs will expose the sun's rays and cool air can no longer circulate and the remaining thin undercoat absorbs the heat and the body temp rises. Dog skin is only 6-10 layers (humans 16-20) it sunburns very easily.

BATHING THE DOUBLE COAT

There are many ways to wash a double coated dog. Whether you wash by hand, use a bathing system, or do the Close-Open-Close method of washing. Shampoo will remove the sebum in the undercoat along with any oily debris. It will result in dry, lifted cuticles that trap shedding undercoat. Shampooing must be followed by using an appropriate conditioner to release any trapped undercoat. Conditioner will close the lifted scales on each hair shaft creating more slip to the coat. Manipulating the cuticles with shampoo and then conditioner is essential to the general maintenance of the coat, making it more manageable with the desired shine and finish.

If a double coat is left unmanaged, it can lead to shedding problems. Use of the conditioner will assist in loosening the dead undercoat in the bath and a force dryer will greatly reduce any pulling or tugging. A fair amount of de-shedding can be done in the tub while the hair is still soft and flexible. But take note, a force dryer should not be used prior to the bath. It will only serve to embed dirt and debris deeper into the undercoat and any mats or tangles. It also creates an unhealthy environment full of dead skin and debris which should not be inhaled by the groomer or the dog. Care should be taken to ensure that the double coat is thoroughly dry. A cool feeling coat is still damp. A damp coat cannot be brushed out effectively. We do not strive to remove all the undercoat from a dog when de-shedding, but only the dead coat. Not all the dead undercoat will be removed by the force dryer and brushing; more effective brushing and combing must be done after the bathing and drying process. When using a force dryer, care must be taken to not allow the coat to fold back on itself as this will cause whipknots.



SHAVING DOUBLE COATED DOGS

Many pet owners think of their dogs in the same way as they do themselves. When they remove layers of clothes to cool down, they feel the same should be done for their dog. Dogs have a different way of regulating their body temperature as they do not sweat through their skin the way humans do.

In cooler months when hours of sunlight are shorter, the undercoat will become denser. In the summer months, the undercoat is triggered to release and provide more space between the guard hairs. The guard hairs reflect the sunlight and air is able to flow against the skin so the dog can keep cooler. For dogs that spend the majority of their lives inside and under artificial lighting, the cycles may be inconsistent, and the dogs may shed more than nature intended.

It is often thought that shaving a double coated dog will reduce or eliminate shedding. This is not true. When the coat is shaved, the undercoat grows back quickly but the guard hairs do not. This leaves the undercoat to act as the main coat, but it will not reflect the sunlight and instead it will trap the heat which will make the dog warmer and raise their temperature.

Shaving can damage the condition of the topcoat and the cycle of the hair making shedding times unpredictable and, in some cases, never ending. The topcoat can take up to two years to fully grow back. In severe cases, it can result in alopecia which means the topcoat may not grow back to normal length or it may not grow back at all in some spots causing patches. It can also require having to shave the dog for the rest of its life.

The dog can also become susceptible to sunburn, frostbite, and skin cancer. Shaved skin is too exposed to the sun's rays and may require clothing or sunscreen to protect it. If the dog lives outside, a strip may be shaved on the belly to allow them to lay on cool surfaces to get maximum coolness. Other risks of shaving the coat are that the dog could develop razor burn, hot spots and/or irritated skin due to excessive licking and scratching after the groom. Dog skin is far more sensitive than human skin as it is built to have a layer of fur for protection. Human skin is on average three times thicker than dog skin. Exceptions for shaving a double coated dog can be in the case of a coat that is too matted to brush. If a dog is too old or sick for regular thorough brushing, or is prone to hot spots, fungal or bacterial conditions or surgery. In the case of surgery where an area had to be shaved, veterinarian instructions to care for the skin and future hair growth must be followed. Also, there are some double coated breeds that are commonly shaved such as the American Cocker and the Schnauzers. Shaving of the sanitary area is permitted to help keep mats from forming over the rectum and genitals, as well as shaving the matting from behind the ears.

CARDING

This is a process to remove the dog's undercoat. This is the soft, downy, short and dense hair under the top (or outer) coat. The undercoat insulates and protects the skin in colder weather.

The tools used for carding are a fine-toothed blade, a stripping knife and an undercoat rake. The shedding tool will grab, pull, and remove (or thin out) the dead or unmolted undercoat hair which may not fall out on its own with the warmer temperatures. Removing this undercoat will allow air to circulate better through the coat and make the dog more comfortable.

TOOLS FOR DOUBLE COATS

There are several different tools that can be used to groom a double coat. Using the wrong tool, over brushing or using a correct tool incorrectly can damage the coat or not do a proper job. Another term for removing the undercoat is “carding”.

Pin Brush – this type of brush is good for all types of coat textures and lengths. The wire prongs may or may not have plastic or silicone beads on the tips. These will give a more comfortable sensation and are ideal for long coats as they will not pull.



Bristle Brush – these are best for the shorter length coats. They are efficient in separating the hair follicles which motivates blood flow while removing dead hair.



Slicker Brush – This brush contains many bent wire bristles set in a rubber pad. This is the most common brush used by the professional pet stylist as the “everyday brush”. This type of brush comes in many different shapes and sizes. The line-brushing technique is the most effective method for double coated breeds with long or dense coats.



Metal Comb – A greyhound style comb that has both a fine and a medium or coarse end, is the most common type of comb. The metal comb should flow smoothly through the coat and is ideal to check the work of your slicker brush.



Silicone Glove/Rubber Brush/Rubber Curry – the rubbery texture of the prongs are excellent at grabbing the dead hair at the top coat, but will not loosen the undercoat.



Shedding Blade – a shedding blade is a good tool for double coated dogs. It is not recommended to take out tangles or mats as it could painfully rip them out. These should be dissected before brushing.



Undercoat Rake – these are a long-pronged brush usually made of metal. Some of these have teeth that rotate which is gentler on the skin and very effective for de-shedding in the tub. These are very good at getting well into the undercoat to find dead hair. However, never remove all the undercoat. The use of a comb will tell if all the dead hair has been removed.



Curved Bladed Rakes – These tools have curved metal blades that are used after the brush and comb can move freely through the coat. This tool is designed to assist in the removal of undercoat. It must be used with care as the top coat and the skin can be cut or damaged from overuse or from inadequate skill.



Stripping Knives & Carding Knives – These metal tools are helpful in removing some of the dead undercoat in medium and shorter hair dogs and some combination coats. Care must be taken not to damage the skin or coat.



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