



## Grooming Your Griffon

### 3. Hand stripping your Rough Griffon

#### What is Hand Stripping?

Hand stripping is the term used to describe the process of gently pulling out the dead hair in the Griffon's coat by hand. The rough Griffon does not shed coat. When the coat dies it stays in and if left can cause skin irritations. The dead coat needs to be pulled out so that health new hair can grow through.

*A rough Griffon head that has been hand stripped*



#### Why Hand strip instead of clipping?

The rough Griffon has a double coat. When it is clipped the top coat is cut off and the undercoat is left. The undercoat is usually softer and paler so clipping over a long period of time will lead to a softer paler coat. This is acceptable for pet dogs but for show dogs the coat is expected to be harsh with a coarse top coat. Regular hand stripping leads to a deeper richer colour. This is especially obvious in red Griffons.

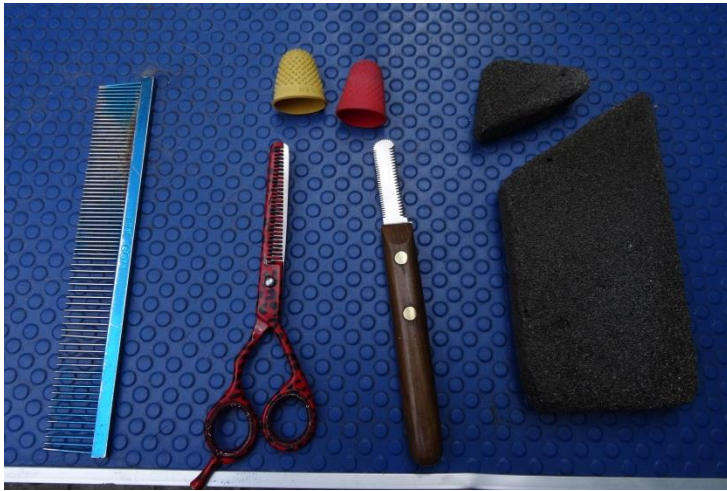


*A Griffon who has been hand stripped. See short coarse texture of the coat on the dogs back*

#### Does it hurt the dog?

If the dog is hand stripped properly it will not hurt the dog. This is because you are only pulling out dead hair. If the dog is hurt then the stripping has not been done properly. Some dogs fall asleep while they are being stripped.

## Tools you need to Hand Strip



- A comb with fine and coarse teeth
- Thinning Scissors with teeth on one side only. The teeth should be as fine as possible
- A stripping knife. (this one is a 3 way stripping knife by Greyhound and is the most versatile)
- Thumb stalls to help grip the coat
- A Grooming block ( coarse pumice stone)
- Some people also like to use 'finger condoms' which help grip the coat as well.

### To Begin

1. Never strip a clean coat as the hair is slippery and does not grip as well. It is better to strip a dirty coat and wash after the strip.
2. Place the dog on a table which is about waist high

*Hairy Griffon on table prior to stripping*



3. Comb the hair on the dog into place, making sure there are no knots or tangles. Pay special attention to under the arm pits, the legs and the beard





4. Then comb the hair in the opposite direction to see the longer hairs stand up from the body. It is these longer hairs that you will pull out. (In this photo you can see the longer wispier hairs on the dogs leg)

### To Strip the Dog

#### The First Strip

The strip being shown here is called a **rolling strip** and if this strip is done

regularly 2-3 times a week then the dog will always have a rich coloured coat and will always be able to be shown. The strip shown is the first strip when all the hair has to be taken out. You can also do this strip with puppies. Once you have done the initial strip, you can maintain it regularly and start to shape the coat to show the dog's best features for showing.

The head and nose roll can be stripped and trimmed first. This can be seen in detail in Article One. When stripping the head the hair should never be pulled out below the level of the eyes

1. Gently pinch up the skin to lift the hair and pull the wispy hairs out from the tips. ALWAYS pull in the direction of the hair growth. It is essential that you only pull the hair by the tip as this way you will get the dead hair. If you pull by the roots you will hurt the dog by pulling out new hair. You can see in this photo how the groomer has spread the hairs and is only taking a small amount at a time. In this photo the groomer is wearing 'finger condoms' to help grip the coat.



<http://youtu.be/oZKQPcE50-E>

This video shows the coat being pulled. Note that the groomer is gently pinching the skin up to make it easier to grip the hair. You can also see how the hair is pulled by the tips and how the groomer constantly pushes the hair up in the opposite direction to see the loose hairs. Note also the relaxed dog who is calm and not at all bothered by the process.



2. Never pull a clump of hair like this as it can hurt the dog. Always spread the hair before you pull it.

3. If the hair is ready to come it will come out easily with very little pressure. If it does not come out easily it will be because:

- a. The hair is not ready to come
- b. You have taken too big a

clump of hair

c. You are pulling the hair too close to the root and need to go to the tips

4. Continue to comb and then pull the wispy hairs. This Griffon has an easy coat to strip and the wispy hairs can be seen easily. If the dog has a softer coat then they may be a little harder to see and you will have to keep repeating the comb process where you comb against the hair to lift the dead hairs.



5. Go all over the body evenly pulling out the longer wispy hairs by the tips, always pulling in the direction of the hair growth. This photo shows the leg hair being pulled. As can be seen the hair is being pulled from the tip in the direction of its growth.

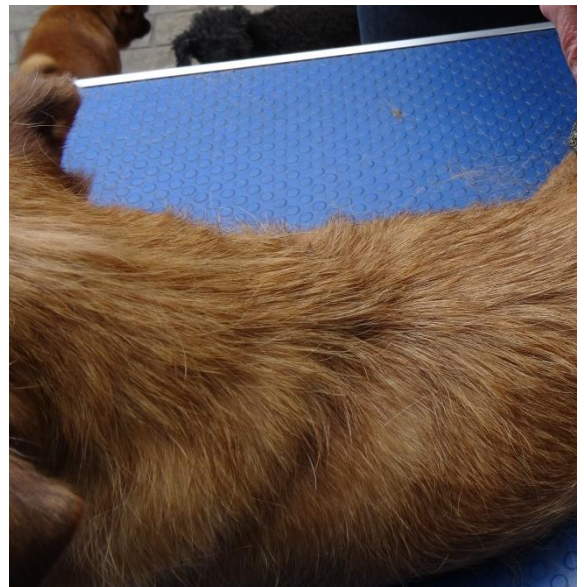




6. Here is the chest hair being pulled, again in the direction of the growth. As can be seen in the photo the dog is quite relaxed and enjoying the fuss. The stripping is not hurting her at all. You need to continue to pull the hair out all over the body so that the hair is even. You do not need to pull the hair on the belly or back of the legs near the genitals as that can be painful. I prefer to use thinning scissors in these areas

7. When you have gone over the whole body evenly you should have a smooth even coat underneath with the new hairs coming through. Here you can see the coat half stripped. There are still some longer wispy hairs on the shoulder but the body coat on the back is now even and shorter.

If you look closely you can see the lighter coloured hairs that still need pulling. If the dog (or you ) are getting tired, this is a good time to stop and come back to it at another time



8. Here the block is being used as a type of 'sandpaper'. It is being gently rubbed down the back in the direction of the hair growth. Doing this takes some of the untidy short wispy hairs out that are a little more difficult to pull and it is a good way to finish a grooming session just to tidy the coat up a little more

<http://youtu.be/OPvz3tC7HKA>

This video shows how to use the block on the coat and it shows the loose top coat coming out.

9. When you have taken all the wispy and longer hairs from the body then you need to do the legs. The legs should not be as short as the body. Use the same combing process as with the body and pull the longer hairs out from the front, the sides and the back. It is better to take too little than too much



10. As you can see here as the longer hairs come out the shorter darker hairs can be seen underneath. If the dog fidgets hold the leg by the elbow as can be seen here. Be gentle but firm.

[http://youtu.be/\\_wT66WPcz9o](http://youtu.be/_wT66WPcz9o)

11. When you have pulled the hair out evenly all over the body you can scissor the belly. You need to use the thinning scissors that were illustrated at the top of this article. They need to be single sided and the teeth should be as fine as possible. To trim the belly you need to stand the dog in a four square position. If it is a show dog you need to get it as close to a stack position as possible. Comb the belly hair down and then using the thinning scissors trim the hair just below the chest. The Griffon should not have a lot of fringe and you would only leave hair there if the chest is shallow. The coat and chest should be just above the level





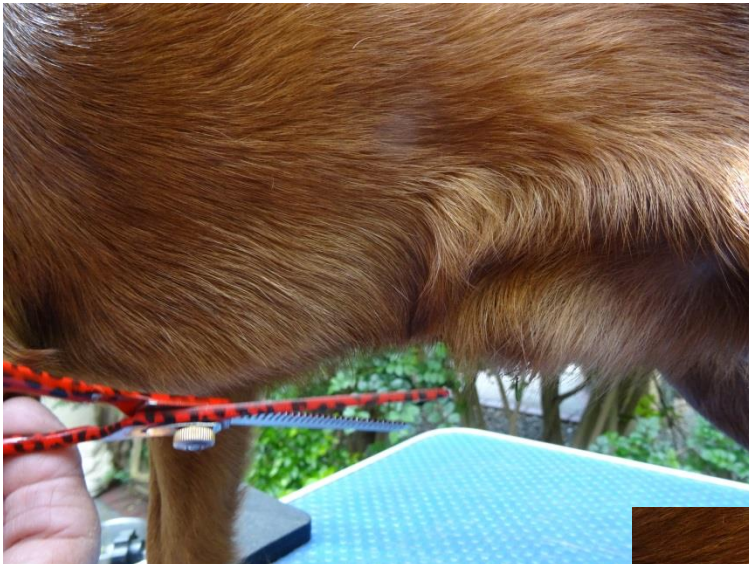
of the elbow. Trim the hair up in an angle with the deepest part behind the elbows and the line of hair going up towards the thighs. Trim one side first and then trim the other side, combing the hair down well between each trim. If trimming a male be very careful not to cut the penis sheath but you should cut any straggly hairs off that may be on the penis sheath. The video link below shows how to scissor the belly area

<http://youtu.be/N58cNhxJg3A>



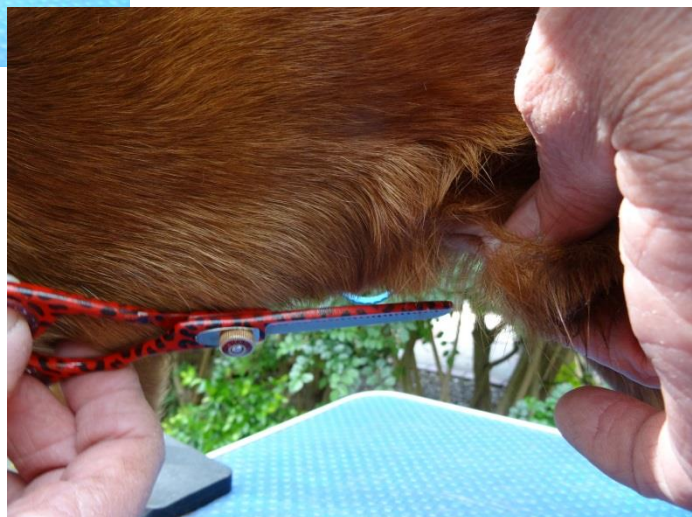
12. When trimming the male around the penis sheath you need to be eye level with the belly line. The hair in front of the penis on the belly needs to be trimmed so that it is very short and cannot be urinated on.

13. When trimming you need to hold the penis sheath out of the way so that it does not



get cut. When trimming the ends you have to hold it very still and trim any extra hairs off for hygiene and tidiness.

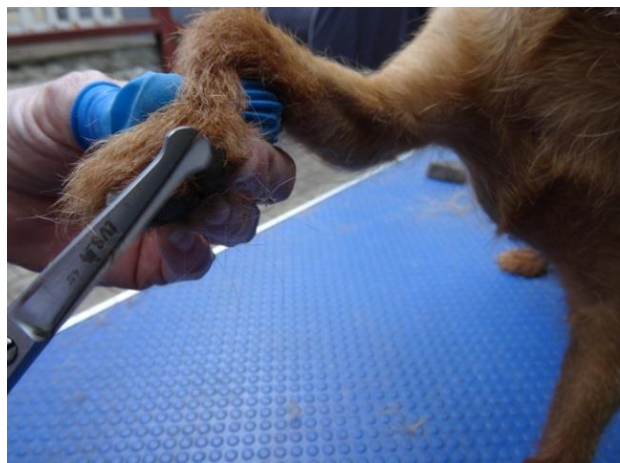
14. After the belly has been trimmed you need to trim the bottom and tail. See Article Two for details on this trimming.





15. Your next trim is the feet. The feet should look small and round so there should be no long hairs. For the feet you need sharp plain bladed scissors- not thinning scissors. The ones pictured here are blunt tipped which means they can also be used for the nose area. The two photos below show the foot being trimmed around the edge to tidy it up.

16. When you have trimmed around the edges of the foot you then need to trim underneath the foot to cut any long hair that is growing between the pads. The hair should be cut back level with the pads. This is not only more comfortable for the dog but it stops the dog picking up burrs or grit or sand between the toes and also makes it less likely to walk in mud or wet feet





17. The final touch is to tidy up the beard. Once again comb the hair down. The idea is for the Griffon head to look round so if the beard is too long in the middle or if it is straggly or scruffy then it can be lightly trimmed with thinning scissors to tidy it up. It is important not to over trim the beard, it should still look natural. The purpose of the trimming is just to tidy it and even it out



### THE FINAL RESULT



**BEFORE**

18. The final result. From this hairy little gremlin

to

This tidy and neat Griffon girl

**AFTER**

Thank you to our beautiful Griffon model, Bling, who posed for most the photos and to Diablo who posed for male belly trim photos.

