

## Hedgehog Grooming Basics

**Check out these tips on hedgehog grooming.**

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### Hedgehog Grooming Facts

1. Hedgehogs are fastidious groomers and regularly “anoint” their quills with saliva.
2. Hedgehogs groom themselves, but sometimes need baths if they develop a strong odor or become dirty.
3. Hedgehogs shouldn't be bathed more than a couple of times a year.
4. Hedgehogs should be fed a hard commercial food to help keep their teeth and gums healthy.

### Baths

Bathe your hedgehog in lukewarm water in a small sink using baby shampoo for humans and a toothbrush. Fill the sink with a few inches of water and test to make sure it's not too hot or cold. Pour some of the water over your hedgehog using a cup, and try not to get water in its eyes or ears. Lather the shampoo by rubbing your hands together and then spread the lather all over your hedgehog except on its face. Scrub in between its quills with the toothbrush. Rinse the hedgehog thoroughly with clean water using the cup until all the soap is gone. Dry the hedgehog off with a towel and keep it out of drafts until it's dry.

### Nail Trims

Your hedgehog's nails also needing trimming about once a month because they grow continuously. Use a pair of nail clippers designed for cats or human babies. Hold your hedgehog securely on your lap with its feet facing forward. If it struggles, you may need someone to hold it for you while you do the cutting. You or your helper may want to wear gloves or wrap your hedgehog in a towel to avoid getting stuck with quills.

Put one of your hedgehog's paws in between your thumb and forefinger and squeeze gently to expose the nails. Trim off just the tip of the nail, being careful not to cut into the quick (the vein that runs through the thickest part of the nail). If you cut into the quick by accident, the nail will bleed. Stop the bleeding by applying a little styptic powder or cornstarch.

If you are worried about trimming your hedgehog's nails, ask your veterinarian to do it for you.