



Expert Grooming Article



PICTURE: Kate Raymond

Dobermann

Originating in Germany in the late 1800's and gaining official recognition in 1900, the Dobermann is known as a faithful and loyal guardian. Their medium size and clean-cut silhouette that exudes elegance and style, can be deceptive as to their true weight, hiding a power packed dog that is all sinewy nimbleness. (read more over page..)



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The Dobermann coat is required to be presented as smooth, short, hard, thick and close-lying without the hair forming ridges at the back of the neck or along the spine. His colour range is black, brown, blue or fawn (Isabella) with rust or red markings and those markings to be sharply defined in the designated places according to the standard.

The quest when presenting this dog for conformation shows is to ensure you enhance the qualities of the dog as specified within the standard to the best of the dog's and your ability. The Dobermann coat must do all that is stated, and it must have great healthy vigour to the finish. I often see Dobermanns with scurfy, sometimes fine flaky or dander bits throughout the coat or a dull incorrect texture.

As an energetic outdoors working dog, a Dobermann is often exposed to the elements. The trick is knowing how to hydrate, moisturise and protect their coat without resorting to conventional means such as a conditioner. Conditioners will certainly flatten but they also soften and tend to make the coat fluffy and not lay smooth as required.

Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil is a Godsend to the Dobermann exhibitor as it allows you to maintain healthy vigour to coat and skin without all the negatives of conditioners. Use it to add shine, hydrate and condition to the coat. It is a truly beneficial blend of using extracts of Calendula oil, Wheat germ oil, and Evening Primrose.

Add 1 teaspoon to 2 Litres of water, then either sponge on or sluice well through the coat and LEAVE IN. DO NOT RINSE. This is quite a unique product in that it is not greasy and totally water-soluble. It gives an outstanding healthy vigour to the skin and coat. Use the oil at this dilution rate after shampooing for a show. Again leave in and do not rinse. You will get a nice healthy sheen on the coat with this routine. You will be addicted to this product once you see the amazing results it gives not only short term but more importantly, long term to your dogs coats.

Start your routine with the focus on the outcome for your shampoo selection. For the Dobermann we would recommend All Purpose Shampoo, Herbal Whitening Shampoo and Black Opal Shampoo.

The first choice for most situations and coat colours is **Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo**. We call this the 'Shine' shampoo as it features natural Henna stalk extracts that impart a beautiful gloss and shine to your dogs coat. All Purpose Shampoo is primarily derived from organic sources and also features Alpine and Lichen herbs. It is wonderful to use on normal to slightly dehydrated coats. Dilute at a ratio of 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water). Follow with the Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil.

For coats that are dehydrated and faded, you need to add back the cool tonal qualities lost in the colour pigment from sun bleaching or coat aging. Use **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo** again at 1:5. This shampoo is not a lightening shampoo but a toning shampoo adding back those cool tones lost in transition! Continue using this shampoo until either the new coat comes through, or the coat has gained enough hydration to regain its reflecting qualities. A black coat will gain more depth, and a red or brown coat will reduce its orange overtones. You will gain a depth of colour and reflection for a brownish hue rather than the faded orange tone of a dried-out coat. Follow each time with Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil.



For really dire situations with severe coat damage and fading on a black coat, use **Plush Puppy Black Opal Shampoo**. This is a black coloured shampoo for toning black coats, giving depth to faded coats and enhancing natural colour. It is not a dye but a strong stain that contains organic sources with herbal extracts and intense black tone. Apply at a diluted rate of 50/50 shampoo to water and leave on for as long as the dog will stay still. Then rinse. Follow with Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil as above.

You could stretch this to use on a brown colour but dilute much further to 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water). Note however that it is recommended only for black coats, so do be cautious. It works much the same as the Whitening Shampoo but has stronger cool tonal qualities so don't go overboard. The more you use, the stronger the tonal qualities. Keep this only onto the darker areas of the coat and not the areas of lighter markings.

With this head use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It Shampoo**. This is a hypoallergenic sulfate free low foaming shampoo designed just for faces. It's no tear formula features the highest quality Blue Cypress Extracts, Panthenol with Pro Vitamin B and SugaNate. These special ingredients clean, soothe, add moisture, aid healing and have anti-inflammatory benefits. A small golf ball sized amounts directly to the face and eye area allows you to thoroughly clean without causing irritation. It can also be used in and around the ears with the same benefits. Its low foaming design allows ease of rinsing, yet complete cleaning.

We believe it is important to the overall result and outcome, to blow dry this coat weekly. Yes, we know, most people view the short-coated breeds as easy no blow dry dogs. But, if you can discipline yourself to doing this as a regular routine, shampoo, oil and blow dry you will never go through those moth-eaten stages of coat shedding.

The coat will surely shed but never the same as before, always now shedding smoothly and without affecting the overall show presentation of the coat. Use a cool strong force type dryer to get those dead hairs out. No amount of zoom or glove grooming will ever get out what a good blast can do. For in-between shows, your job is to maintain the healthy vigour and texture to this coat. If the coat dehydrates, then the coat will start to bunch and fluff up and not stay close-lying as is required and desired.

For a deep intensive conditioning treatment use **Plush Puppy Coat Rescue**. This is a restorative coat treatment formulated with a natural blend of oils and pure plant extracts including Kaolin, Almond Oil, Cinnamon Bark, Castor Oil, Soya Protein and Seaweed Extract. These ingredients are designed to soak deep into the coat and to help repair by filling up the open areas within each hair. Coat Rescue works to restore strength and elasticity to damaged and dehydrated coats.



Mix 2 tablespoons with 250ml of water and apply liberally along the top-line and head. Leave on the coat for as long as you can. Let the dog run around outside with this on for a few hours or, if you cannot wait, then wait a minimum of 10 to 15 minutes and rinse. Do this once a week or fortnight and follow with Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil once more. Remember, we need to hydrate not soften and all these products will do just what is required.

For everyday outdoor living, apply **Plush Puppy Reviva Coat** which is a leave-in moisturiser, onto the body of the coat and legs. Apply a golf ball-sized amount to your hands and rub in. This is brilliant for instant hydration and moisturising without softening. It does not substitute for the Seabreeze Oil but is a good addition, especially if you have been tardy with your Seabreeze Oil routine.

So, show day has arrived and your Dobermann is gleaming with vitality. A square body and well-chiseled silhouette emphasised by a perfectly flat-lying coat. You have cleaned up with the thinning shears if necessary, those stray tuft bits that can sometimes sprout around the rear end and tail. For those countries where a tail is required these days, then make sure the underneath is clean and smooth and the end hairs have been clenched together with a light twist and then trimmed off as close to the end as possible. No need to have a tail any longer than necessary!

Keep on hand **Plush Puppy Wonder Wash** which is a no rinse wet instant shampoo for "those show day" last-minute emergencies as this will clean up anything, pronto. Just spray foam with the fingers and towel off. Wonder Wash is a brilliant quick self-rinsing bathing alternative solution for quick and easy cleaning without the need for a complete bath. In moments when regular shampooing is not an option, Wonder Wash will clean, whiten and brighten problem areas on all coat kinds. It contains optical brighteners, has a fresh apple fragrance, and violet tone. Always keep our handy Wonder Wash spray in your tack box.

For absolute pristine freshness whenever traveling or just to add that nice to be near overtone without being artificial or too floral, use **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher** which is a deodoriser and has a light pleasant fragrance. Judges judge with all senses, don't they?

Give the coat a light spray with **Plush Puppy Shine and Comb** to the top-line, head and rear for a fine, natural sheen that exhibits those hairs of the coat to their utmost. Spray from about 30cms above the coat and allow the mist to fall. Then run your hand over the coat to blend.

The Dobermann, an amazing breed that presents perfectly is always a contender in any lineup. No hair and glamour but that classic clean outline with the perfect looking healthy coat.