



Expert Grooming Article



Pyrenean Mountain Dog

Incredibly, this dog can trace his history back to the Bronze Age. Originally thought to be a Central Asian/Siberian dog he again turns up not only in the Pyrenean mountains but in evidence in 15th century Carcassone (France) and then curried favour with the French nobility and royalty in the 17th century. A flock guardian who became the darling of the aristocrats but also the helpmate of the peasants of the mountains, this dog was often called a Pyrenean Bear Dog and even a "mat dog" for his penchant to flop outside the doorway of the peasant homes. His job to protect and guard was due to his invulnerability to wolves and bears and his long heavy coat also provided defense from enemies. (read more over page...)



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Now, this is a seriously big dog to groom and have correct presentation. There is just such a lot of dog to do! Nonetheless, it is worth the work and once into a routine, the coat becomes easy. These weather-resistant double coats should have texture. The outer guard hair should never be soft so therein lies the conundrum to be able to prevent matting yet retain a harsh outer coat texture. I hate to see a felted and matted Pyrenean. This is a stunning dog whose descriptions state that he should have an "impression of elegance". As a show dog, he can have it all.

Let's start with the head and eye area. For this use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It**. 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.

As he is predominantly white, like a brown bear in silhouette, but white.... your choices for shampoo should be something that will not soften the coat but give that nice pearly sheen. You have choices - truly! If you only shampoo every other week, then use **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo**. Dilute 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water) for heavy cleansing and 1:10 for lighter cleansing.

Herbal Whitening Shampoo gives that crisp white finish without bleaching or lightening but instead toning with optical brighteners.

For stained white areas such as elbows and hocks use **Plush Puppy Wonder Blok**. It helps to maintain a white stain free coat. It is not a bleach and contains no harmful chemicals but high amounts of naturally sourced vegetable surfactants and glycerin. This product is designed to remove gently unwanted warm or red tones to the coat. Best used on a damp or wet coat. Gently rub into the areas required allowing 5-10 minutes and rinse. For maximum effects repeat or allow a longer time for this amazing product to work. As with all products take care around eyes.

For dogs out of coat use the **Plush Puppy Natural Body Building Shampoo** diluted 1:5. This shampoo gives a much thicker and denser look to the coat. This shampoo does have a bodifying effect to the coat without an artificial feel plus it is wonderful for the coat as it is infused with beneficial plant extracts.

Dilute shampoos when working on heavy coats or large areas to enable easier penetration and coverage of the product.

Now do not condition the coat of a Pyrenean Mountain Dog. Remember, conditioner softens and flattens and we want a harsh outer coat. So you do need to retain moisture and elasticity that normally natural oils would do - BUT - this is a show dog so we do bath and blow dry and we then use other means to help nature along.

Use **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil** 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 tablespoon to 4 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.

Having said no conditioner, there are times when a conditioner is useful. For instance, sometimes the tail can get tangled and brittle as can the featherings on the back of the front legs. In this case we recommend **Plush Puppy Silk Protein Conditioner**. Dilute 1:10 (1 part conditioner to 10 parts water) to a watery slurry and slosh onto those areas only, massage through then rinse out. Do this before applying the Seabreeze Oil. Silk Protein Conditioner features an intensive formulation boosted with Silk Amino acids and plant extracts that bind keratin in the coat, strengthening whilst protecting against moisture loss.

Now you blow-dry. Use a strong force type dryer and start from the rear drying forwards towards the head for lift until about 7/8 dry. Then dry with the growth of the coat on the topline area. It is important to get the root area dry. I see many who dry the top layers and not the underneath. This drying process is important. It serves to remove all dead undercoat encouraging new coat and allowing you to "roll" the coat so minimising those massive coat drops. It serves to give you the chance to check all the skin area and any skin damage or irritations. It gives you a wonderful finish and professional look to the end coat result. Plus, drying it forwards gives lift to the coat which is even more critical when not in full coat.

An amazing product that not only speeds up drying time but protects the coat is **Plush Puppy FAST Blow Dry Spray**. FAST dramatically reduces drying time, adds moisture and conditions while protecting the coat. It contains Australian Native Flame Tree extracts known for hydration. It also protects the coat from damage from sun and heat. A brilliant blow drying spray that halves the drying time.

For the legs and ruff of the Pyrenean Mountain Dog, I like to use a bit of **Plush Puppy Puffy Dog+** which is a firm hold styling mousse but is totally water-soluble and doesn't build up or get sticky in humidity. Apply at the root areas for more glamour and substance. Work into the root area and then dry against the growth for maximum lift.

For extra lift of the body of the coat I use Plush Puppy Volumising Spray. Apply liberally making sure this penetrates through all layers of the coat. The lift happens from underneath not the top! The Volumising Spray gives a 'more coat' look without a sticky harsh feel to the coat. Puffy Dog+ has more lift and hold hence not as desirable on the body of the coat but wonderful for the legs and ruff.

The coat also must never be curly so if necessary we can smooth it. Dilute 1 tablespoon of **Plush Puppy Blow Dry Cream** in 1 cup of water and apply this mix onto the curly areas. Blow dry against the growth using a **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush** to smooth and lightly stretch to straighten.

Show days requires some tweaking to the coat. Using the **Plush Puppy OMG Grooming Spray** for the longer lengths of the coat. This is also an amazing product for regular brushing as it hydrates the coat reducing stress and coat loss. Its active ingredients smooth the cuticle and protect the coat. OMG never builds up and never goes stringy.

If desired, use **Plush Puppy Reviva Coat** for the topline and shorter lengths. Dilute one golfball amount into 1 cup of water, spray onto the coat and brush in. Reviva Coat is great for reducing knots and disentangling. Use for regular moisturising and rehydration.

For the brushing use either the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush**, a great brush that is just so right for these double coats, against the growth of the coat once again. Or the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Slicker Brush**. This brush allows the coat to be totally tangle and knot free and letting you have a well finished coat to shape.

Degrees of finish and drying are up to the individual; however you must always allow the coat to be correct finish, shape, and texture. Keep spritzing with the spray mixes as you work and finish with a light go through with the blow dryer if you can. Alternatively, allow to dry before brushing or placing back down into growth direction shape.

Finish with a **Plush Puppy Professional Grooming Comb** with a comfortable lightweight oval shaped spine combining fine and coarse pins made of hardened stainless steel that reduce drag and static to the coat.

At times due to various reasons including the weather static electricity can create flyaways. If this occurs use **Plush Puppy Anti-Static Coat Control**. This is a lightweight spray infused with organic extracts that also includes a UV filter to stop sun and heat damage.

On show day apply **Plush Puppy Cover Up Cream** on elbows or any reddened or stained areas. When you really need to cover stains your whites or intensify white areas, Cover Up Cream will do the trick. Apply with a barely damp sponge using a small amount. Build up coverage as required layer by layer. Then hit the area with a dusting of loose chalk and leave till prior to ring time and then brush or blow out. The chalk helps to dry the cover cream in damp weather and sets the coverage. The secret is applying a thin layer upon layer and never in a thick application.

I don't mind also a light application of **Plush Puppy Powder Puff Regular** dusted through the areas that are too soft. Apply this when the coat has been dried. It is an instant cleaner and deodoriser but also lends a light amount of texture! Secrets! Ah yes, this is how it is done. For a quick clean up on dirty feet, or nether regions or when they pee and miss, use **Plush Puppy Wonder Wash**. This will clean up anything, pronto. Just spray foam with the fingers and towel off. It will clean, whiten and brighten problem areas on all coat kinds. It contains optical brighteners, has a fresh apple fragrance, and violet tone.

I do however prefer using a dry clean powder such as **Powder Puff Regular** for areas I have spent ages drying rather than applying something wet and having to re-dry!

You can sneak in a tiny amount of **Plush Puppy Pixie Dust**. I do say a tiny amount. Just a pinch sifted onto the topline or flicked through off the side of a brush. This will pick up glints of light especially in the sun, but you don't overdo it. It's meant to be subtle.

Lastly a quick spray with **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher**. It literally munches the odour and works well for smelly problems such as emergencies in transit.

The Pyrenean Mountain Dog is such a majestic elegant dog with his beautiful coat to go with his loyal and patient personality. His strength and independence show through with his wonderful conformation accentuated by his fabulous grooming and you and he know there is no-one better to protect and maintain the integrity of his long history than he himself.