



Expert Grooming Article



PHOTO: AIDEN - NICKY RENWOOD

Shetland Sheepdog

The remote Shetland Islands lay between the northern most tip of Scotland and Norway and were settled by the Norse (Vikings) in 920 AD. These settlers brought with them cattle, sheep and dogs; archaeological remains of the dogs indicate they were of typical Spitz decent resembling what we now know as Buhund and related breeds. It is thought, that with the importation of some sheep to increase the vigour of the flocks, in 1760, a dog(s) was also introduced being, of what then was called The Scottish Shepherd Dog, which is the ancestor in part of both the Rough Collie and the modern day Border Collie. This was the development of the modern-day Shetland Sheepdog. (read more over page...)



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His coat is a good one for those that love to put in the work and discipline yet relatively basic enough to not daunt the novice. Calling for a double coat with long straight harsh outer coat this dog has to be pictured amongst the rugged coastline and rocks of the windswept islands of the Shetlands. Requiring a dense undercoat for environmental protection, the coat will have a standoff appearance. The coat should never appear wavy or smooth coated. His mane and frill is abundant.

The overall appearance for your breed is for the coat to appear full around the front with the rump and pants laying somewhat flat. You have two issues needing to be addressed and two techniques required.

You can just about sculpture your Shetland Sheepdog using 3 shampoos, all in separate areas for different outcomes. Start with the **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo** for toning and use diluted 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water) on all white areas. Then use **Plush Puppy Body Building Shampoo** diluted 1:3 for extra oomph around the front and neck where you want fullness and Plush Puppy **All Purpose Shampoo** for shine without altering texture diluted 1:5 for the rump and pants. It instantly gives you the basic shape by using this method.



For extra whitening 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. This is perfect for the legs.

The perfect shampoo for retaining or adding texture is **Plush Puppy Texture + Shampoo**. This shampoo thoroughly yet gently cleanses and deodorises the coat without softening or compromising texture. It's ideal for boosting body and coarseness in coats of all colours and coat types. Formulated to be pH controlled, it can create or maintain texture, is low irritant with a subtle apple fragrance and is easy to rinse out. It is full of beneficial and powerful extracts from the Gentian Root, Juniper Fruit, St John's Wart Leaf, Hay Flower, Lemon Balm Leaf and Arnica Flower that combine to nourish and vitalise the skin. Use diluted up to 1:10 or apply undiluted directly to areas requiring intensive cleansing. Rinse thoroughly.

As with other double coated breeds generally don't use a conditioner as it flattens and softens, the very things you don't want with this breed. 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. Use 2 litres of this mix and 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. It will maintain the texture and moisture in the coat and help protect from the elements. 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

Having said that, you do need to get that rump and pants to sit flatter on a Shetland Sheepdog and you should mix in with the 2Lt remainder of the Seabreeze Oil/water mix, 1 tablespoon **Plush Puppy Silk Protein Conditioner** and apply to the areas you want to hang and lay flatter. Leave in and don't rinse. It should be diluted enough not to need rinsing. Thus, you have one method of moisturising on the front of the dog and another on the rear!

Now you are ready for some blow drying. Never short circuit this part of the grooming for a Shetland Sheepdog. It is by far one of the most important. It is an arduous task if you are impatient unless you can drift off and enjoy the repetition of just using your hands. To save valuable time give the dog a spray with **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 that hydrate a dry or old coat making it look perfect. It also protects the coat from damage from sun and heat. FAST is amazing on short coats for a brilliant shine. A light spray to a wet or damp coat, then brush through before drying.

Dry using a force drier to start and using the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush** this brush allows minimum coat breakage and easily works through the coat. Once ¾ dry switch to the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush**. This puts a wonderful finish to the coat. Both brushes are exclusively made for Plush Puppy using the very best of materials and built to last.

Finish with a **Plush Puppy Professional Grooming Comb** built for absolute ergonomic comfort in various sizes. The lightweight oval shaped spine combining fine and coarse pins made of hardened stainless steel with anodic oxide finish that reduces drag and static to the coat. Perfect for use for this breed of dog.

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 using the latest technology is infused with organic extracts of Witch Hazel Leaf, Linden Flower, Birch Bark and Nettle. It also adds to the protection, include a UV filter to stop sun damage and protect against heat strength for the perfect finished look of the coat. This amazing product is idea for this breed and a must for your tack box.

For maximum lift on an out of coat dog, use the **Plush Puppy Puffy Dog** strong hold mousse. Apply liberally with both hands to all those areas requiring lift especially the mane and frill. For a more coated look you can use **Plush Puppy Volumising Cream** at 1 tablespoon to 250ml of water and sprayed liberally over the coat. The Volumising Cream coats each hair giving an appearance of more coat without lift or stickiness. A good spray and then dry. This is also available in a **ready to use formula**.

If your coat is such that you need to harden the texture use some **Plush Puppy Ruffy Tuffy Coat Spray**. Spray lightly and dry a bit and then keep spraying till the degree of harshness is achieved.

For showday, brush up the coat with a little more **Volumising Spray** on the main body of the coat but not the rump as you don't want this looking fuller but laying flat.

For brushing the pants and general overall brushing and to reduce static, use **Plush Puppy OMG Concentrate** diluted 1:30 (1 part OMG to 30 parts water). The OMG Concentrate 500ml bottle will make 15 litres at a 1:30 dilution, though you only dilute what you need each time. This is also available in a ready to use formula **'OMG Ready to use Grooming Spray'**.

For those wishing to add a hold factor to the coat around the neck and mane use **Plush Puppy HOLD**. This is a totally water-soluble aerosol hairspray. The lightest of spray will achieve incredible results.

To chalk or not to chalk? Well, I do use the **Plush Puppy Coverup Cream** on the short haired areas of the whites onto a barely damp sponge and layer it on. That is, apply lightly and wait a minute and then apply another layer till well covered. Add **Plush Puppy Fairy Frost** over the top and let dry. This is a white finishing powder. You can add some with your regular chalk if you wish. Apply using the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Powder Application Brush**, this is the perfect brush to get the powder exactly where you need it. Now brush or blow the loose powder/chalk off. You can use a block chalk on the **Coverup Cream** on the face so as not to get loose chalk into the eyes.

For final touches, add a light flick of **Plush Puppy Powder Puff Terrier** if you need to, to get that nice harsh texture so desired for a herding dog, dusting it onto your **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush**. Just a smidgeon, and don't go overboard but it is wonderful for fabulous finish especially where you have had to add some conditioner to the rear area which does soften the texture. This fixes it perfectly.

The difficult area is the topline rump of the Shetland Sheepdog, many the coat want to be too full and sit up hence taking away from the classic silhouette. Many use a damp towel just prior to showing, this works for a very short period of time as the dampness actually puffs up the area due to it adding humidity to the coat and lifts it up. Best to use **Plush Puppy Blow Dry Cream** mixed 2 tablespoons to 250mls of water (mix well) and then put into a spray bottle. A good spray to the topline and rump and then dry using your **Plush Puppy Anti-Static Brush**. Blow dry cream is designed to flatten and soften the coat. Dry using a zig zag pattern method will flatten the coat and product a flat topline and rump. Perfect for the sheltie.

Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush for general brushing of the pants and add a light dab here and there, especially to the white areas of the bib and the rear, of **Plush Puppy Pixie Dust** for subtle shimmer. A light dusting onto the topline too. This will just pick up glints of light in the sun or spotlight. Not too much! If you can see it when you put it on you have used too much. Show day a mist with Plush Puppy Odour Muncher will leave a fresh smell.

Mid-week to protect the coat use **Plush Puppy Reviva Coat**. Apply a golf ball sized amount to your hands and working into the coat, great on pee feathers and anywhere the coat needs added hydration.

The beautifully balanced herding working Shetland Sheepdog is something out of the box. His symmetry and proportions make him a great contender in the show line up. He is always a breed to be considered and a good hard competitor in any show. Get the grooming right and a handler who understands the pace and poise of this little sheepdog and he'll give us all a run for our money.

