

# Australian Labradoodle Grooming

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## Australian Labradoodle Background:

The true Australian Labradoodle is much more than a Lab x Poodle mix. First developed as hypo-allergenic guide and therapy dogs in Australia over 40 years ago, the originators of the breed were unhappy with the inconsistencies in the hybrid mixes and used infusion breeds to set the characteristics they were looking for. These infusions included English and American Cocker Spaniels, Soft-coated Wheaten and Irish Water Spaniels. Today's Australian Labradoodles are generally multi-generation Australian to Australian breedings.

## General Grooming:

When groomed correctly, Australian Labradoodles have their own look. They are not Poodles, Cocker Spaniels, Schnauzers, Wheatons or Bedlingtons!



Their trim is like a forever floppy puppy cut, and they should never look overly groomed. Even when the body is clipped shorter, the head and tail should remain full.

## More Specific Grooming Instructions:

- Trim to an even length on entire back, neck, chest, underbelly and legs—torso should be smooth, but not overly rounded. No skirts. About  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch for a cool summer cut, up to 2-3 inches in cooler weather.
- Trim legs to an even length with a smooth transition from the torso.

- Hair on feet should be brushed downward and then clipped to create a rounded, fluffy appearance. Do not clip short to the foot. Trim foot pad hair with a #10 or #15 blade. Clip nails.

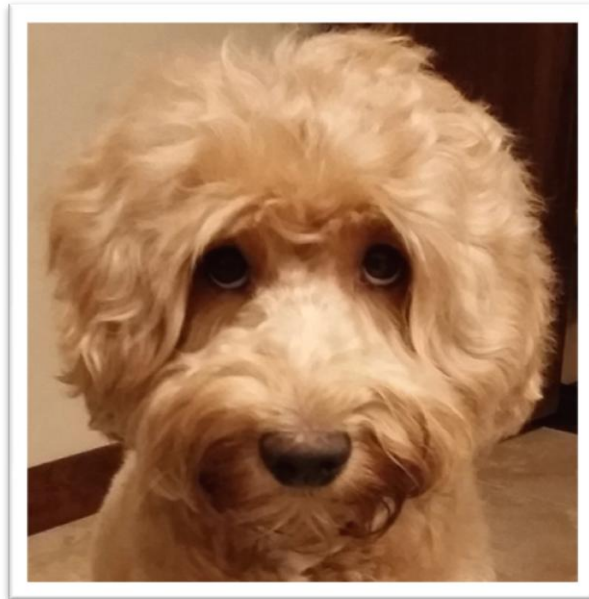
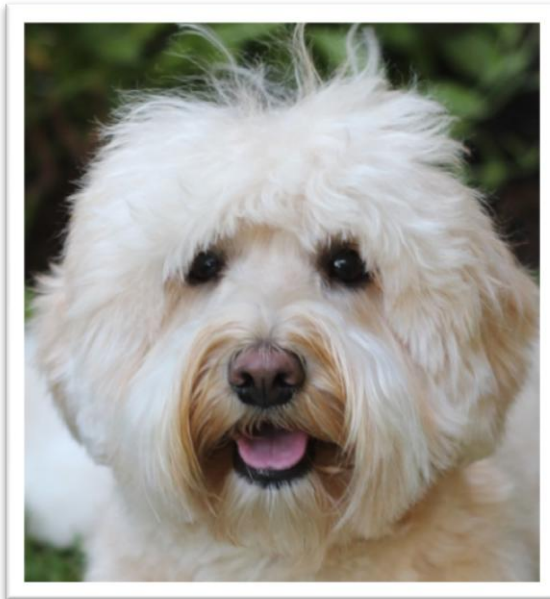


- Tail should have a long wavy appearance. Base of tail may be slightly shorter and thinned with a smooth transition from the body.
- The sanitary area should be clipped shorter to keep clean, but not overly trimmed so as to draw attention to it. Light colored doodles can be trimmed closer, but dark colored doodles should avoid short, close trims to prevent light skin from showing through.
- The hair on ears should be layered slightly and trimmed only a bit to avoid an overly groomed appearance. The ear should be kept fairly short in length (about ½ to 1 inch below ear leather), and follow the outline of the ear leather. Leave front of ear longer, blending into bang length. Trim hair under the ears shorter (where the ears lay) to allow for air flow. Avoid plucking inside ear unless ear hair is excessively thick. Trim the hair out of ear canal with each grooming.



- The head should be kept full and round. When the dog is viewed full in the face, it should look like a circle. Top of head should be left long enough to slightly part in the middle and gradually blend into the length of the ear. Diagonally cut above eyes, leaving the eyelashes long. Blend bang line into ear length with a smooth transition. Do not use clippers anywhere on head.

- Use thinning shears to trim the brow without a distinct line. **DO NOT CUT BANGS TOO SHORT.** Bangs should extend over brow. To open up field of vision more, do not trim off bangs, instead, clip hair shorter just across the bridge of the nose between the eyes and sharpen the diagonal line extending from the corner of the eye to the base of the ear.



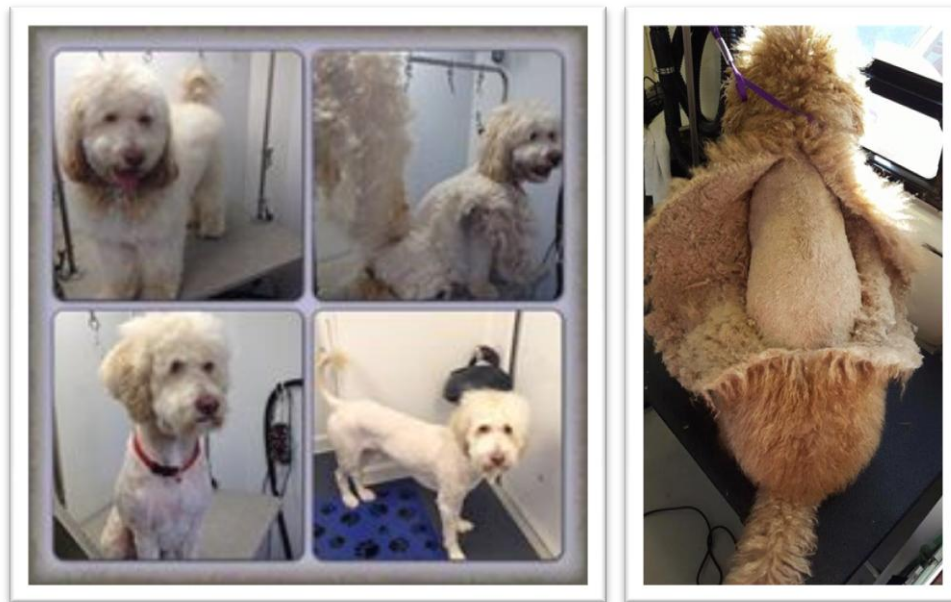
- The beard should not be overly long. The hair under the chin can be shorter to keep it dry and clean. Use thinning shears to transition into the neck--there should not be a distinct line.





## In Between Grooming Appointments:

- Prevent matting by regularly (at least weekly) combing out your doodle. This will make the groomer's job much easier. It is a good time to bond with your dog and also helps your doodle learn to enjoy being groomed. The longer the coat, the more frequent and diligent you must be in combing it.
- Bathe after combing out. Wash dog twice—first wash loosens dirt and opens hair to the skin, second wash cleans deeply all the way to the skin. Finish with a cream rinse to soften coat and minimize tangles. Blow dry—air drying can set tight curls and/or tangles.
- Using blunt tip scissors or thinning shears, you may want to trim between the eyes along the bridge of the nose if the hair starts to impair visibility or irritate eyes.
- When your puppy transitions to its adult coat—generally around 8-12 months of age—you may choose to clip the coat short (3/4 inch) to lighten your combing schedule and minimize matting.
- **Groom your doodle to the skin**—comb out any mats that form right next to the skin. Below is the haircut you will get if you don't! Mats will accumulate next to the skin and are painful for your dog. When thick mats form, your doodle will need to have his matted blanket coat cut off all the way down to the skin. So sad....



The Australian Labradoodle Association of America has created a video demonstrating the basic technique to groom an Australian Labradoodle:

[www.alaa-labradoodles.com](http://www.alaa-labradoodles.com)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=bWkJcGe8dUo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=bWkJcGe8dUo)

