



SAN TAN CANINE TRAINING NEWSLETTER

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The Eyes Have It!

If the eyes are the windows to the soul, shouldn't you keep them clean? Dirty eyes can mar an otherwise adorable fuzzy face with crust, tear stains, and goop. Lack of eye cleanliness isn't just unattractive; it can actually encourage infections because dirt and moisture attract bacteria that can immigrate into the eye. To prevent that from happening, just follow these five simple steps weekly. Your dog's peepers will sparkle.

1. WIPE THEM DOWN

At least once a week, but even as often as once a day gently clean your dog's under-eye area with a damp cloth. A soft washcloth will do the trick, but you can also use a gentle eye wash or pre-moistened pads available from a pet-supply store. You'll wipe away any bacteria before it gets a foothold and remove any residue before it builds up. This step alone can make a big difference in the cleanliness and appearance of your dog's eyes.

2. DRY THEM OFF

With a towel, dry off any moisture after washing your dog's eyes. When the under-eye area stays wet, it can lead to tear stains. If your dog tends to have wet eyes from excessive tearing, dry them more often.

3. REMOVE STAINS

Some dogs have tear ducts that produce more tears than the eye can drain. This moisture overflows under the eye and can cause a reddish-brown stain. Add a light-colored coat, and that stain becomes unsightly.

First be sure staining isn't due to an infection or allergies (your vet can advise you and may prescribe medication). If your dog is healthy and regular washing isn't enough, try a tear-

stain-prevention product like Angels' Eyes or a stain-removing product such as Eye Envy, available online and at pet-supply stores. Give prevention products per directions, and use care when applying any removal product so it doesn't get into your dog's eyes.

4. TRIM AROUND THEM

If your dog has bushy eyebrows, you should keep them trimmed short with blunt-tipped scissors (or ask your vet or groomer to do it) so they don't get in her eyes.

Trim back long bangs or hair that hangs in her eyes, or keep it pulled back into a topknot. Hair can irritate the delicate eye if it is always touching the eyeball, making tearing worse.

Also check your dog for entropion, an eye defect common in some breeds. The bottom lid rolls inward, causing the eyelashes to rub against the cornea. If you think your dog has this problem, talk to your veterinarian. It can be repaired with simple, though expensive, surgery.

5. KEEP THEM MOIST

Some dogs, especially those with larger eyes, like Pugs, Shit Tzu and Pekingese, tend to have dry eyes. They feel uncomfortable and can get red and irritated. Check with your vet about any signs of redness or irritation to see if it's cause by another health issue or something in your dog's eye. If your vet confirms dry eye and gives you the thumbs-up, apply human or canine-specific moisturizing eye drops as recommended. Some dogs may need these drops daily.

With regular care, your dog's eyes will stay clean, healthy, and stain-free, and that will make for a much handsomer face.

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Resource: dogfancemagazine.com