

# Matted Pets

**The client certifies that he or she has read and understands the following:**

## Definition

*Matting* refers to dense clumps of tightly tangled hair that develop in the coats of long-haired pets. Mats present a risk to the pets' safety and health. Mats can prevent airflow to the skin and interfere with blood circulation to the area beneath.

As new hair continues to grow under and incorporate with old mats, skin can become entangled in the fur. This makes it difficult to tell where skin ends and hair begins. The skin and hair collect dirt, oils, and debris. This promotes the growth of bacteria and fungus on the skin.

Even in mild cases, matting can cause bruising and severe discomfort to a pet without any obvious indication to the owner. In severe cases, open sores may develop beneath heavy mats, which can host fly larvae and maggots. Some pets, due to extreme matting or dangerous behavior during mat removal, may need to be referred to a veterinarian for their own safety.

**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Ethics

De-matting is a controversial issue among animal professionals. There is no truly pain-free way to de-mat a dog; while some small, loose mats may brush out with relative ease.

The process involves pulling live, still-attached hairs from the root along with the dead ones. Even with the most advanced techniques, products, and equipment, the process is often painful. De-matting commonly results in broken hairs with frayed ends that mat even more easily than they did before.

If a pet cannot be de-matted in a reasonable amount of time using safe professional techniques without causing significant irritation to the skin, the coat will be shaved to maintain the safety and comfort of the pet.

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## Risks

- Even shaving, as the safest and most humane way to remove matting from a dog, must be done delicately and carries risks. Clippers may catch thin skin that has loosened with the weight of heavy matting, or that has grown into the mats with the hair. Close shaving may result in irritation, itching, and hematomas due to the combination of freshly exposed skin and the return of blood circulation to an area, which may appear during or after the grooming process. Hair may fail to regrow properly. These risks are inherent to matting and mat removal. The client will not hold The Beauty Pawlor responsible for these minor risks in cases of matting.

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## Causes and Prevention

Heavy matting develops over a long period of neglecting to properly care for the coat. Consistent brushing is the only way to keep a coat healthy and mat-free, and, paired with regular grooming, will keep your pet looking and feeling his best year-round. As grooming needs vary from dog to dog, your groomer will make personalized care recommendations as part of your grooming service.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgement

*I acknowledge that I have read and understand the definition, risks, causes, and prevention of matting, as well as The Beauty Pawlor's official stance on de-matting. I agree that maintaining my pet's coat is a long-term commitment for which I am responsible, and that The Beauty Pawlor will not assume culpability for any complications that may result from the presence or removal of mats on my pet.*

Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_