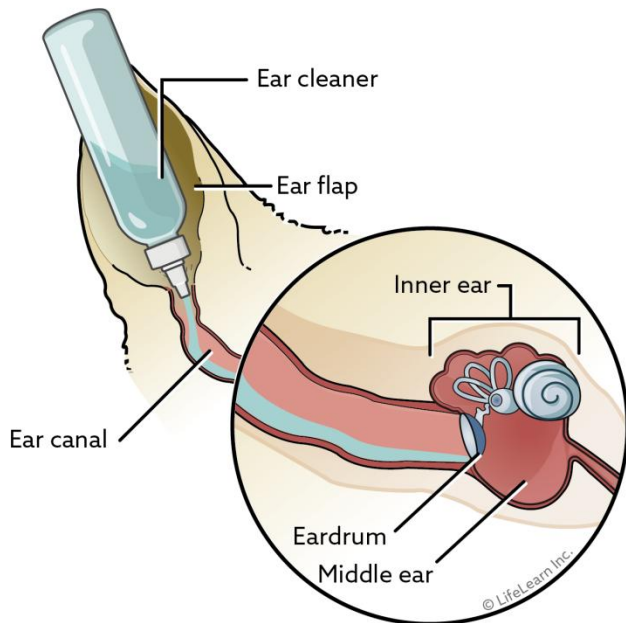


Instructions for Ear Cleaning

Why is ear cleaning important?



Ear cleaning is an important part of your dog's grooming needs. Some dogs need more frequent ear cleaning than others. Dogs that are prone to ear infections often benefit from more frequent ear cleanings.

Most cats are fine without it, but for those that are prone to wax build-up or ear infections, ear cleaning can be an important part of your cat's hygiene needs.

The structure of your pet's ear canal makes it difficult for material trapped deep within the horizontal canal to be expelled without the assistance of cleanings. This material can lead to itchiness and ear infections if not removed.

Do I need to use an ear cleaner?

It is highly recommended to use a good-quality ear cleaner. Cleaners with hydrogen peroxide or alcohol can cause irritation in the ear canal, especially if the canal is inflamed or ulcerated. Some ear cleaners have antibacterial or antifungal ingredients to help prevent ear infections. Certain cleaners are also better at removing wax build-up. Your veterinarian can help you decide which ear-cleaning solution is best for your pet.

What do I need to clean my dog's ears?

You do not need any special equipment to clean your dog's ears. All you need is a good-quality ear cleaning solution, some cotton balls or gauze, and some treats to reward your dog. Do not use cotton-tipped applicators

(Q-tips®), due to the risk of puncturing the ear drum or causing trauma to the ear canal. In addition, cotton-tipped applicators can push debris further into the ear canal.

Do all dogs need to have their ears cleaned?

No, not all dogs need their ears cleaned. While it is important to clean your dog's ears when needed, over-cleaning may cause irritation in the ear canal, which can lead to infection. Some dogs that have healthy, clean ears may never need to have their ears cleaned. However, it is recommended to clean your dog's ears if you notice discharge or an odor when examining the ear. Your veterinarian can help you decide how often your dog's ears should be cleaned. If your dog's ears are red, inflamed, or painful, consult with your veterinarian prior to cleaning. Your dog may have an ear infection or a ruptured ear drum.

Do all cats need to have their ears cleaned?

No, not all cats need their ears cleaned. While it is important to clean your cat's ears when needed, over-cleaning may cause irritation in the ear canal, which can lead to infection. Most cats have healthy, clean ears and never need to have their ears cleaned. However, it is recommended to clean your cat's ears if you notice discharge or an odor when examining the ear. Your veterinarian can help you decide how often your cat's ears should be cleaned. If your cat's ears are red, inflamed, or painful, consult with your veterinarian prior to cleaning. Your cat may have an ear infection or a ruptured ear drum.

How do I clean my dog's ears?

1. Get into position.

- **For a large dog:** Have your dog sit with his rear end in the corner of a room, with one side against the wall. Stand on his other side.
- **For a medium-sized dog:** Sit on the floor and have your dog sit in front of you, with his rear end between your legs.
- **For a small dog:** Sit the dog on your lap.
- **For a cat:** Sit in a comfortable position and hold your cat in your lap, facing away from you. If she needs help keeping still, try wrapping her in a towel, leaving only her head exposed. It can help to have another person hold the cat.

2. Hold the ear cleaning solution in your dominant hand.

3. With your other hand, gently but firmly grasp the tip of the ear and pull the ear flap straight up to expose the ear and straighten the ear canal.

4. Squeeze some ear cleaning solution into your dog's ear. Use enough cleaner to completely fill the ear canal. It is fine if some of the cleaner spills out of the ear canal. Do not put the tip of the bottle into the ear. If the tip of the bottle touches your dog's ear, wipe the tip with a clean cotton ball soaked in alcohol to prevent the spread of bacteria or yeast.

5. Continue to hold the ear flap straight up with one hand and gently massage the base of the ear below the ear opening for about 30 seconds with the other hand. You should hear a “squishing” sound as the cleaning solution moves around and breaks up debris in the horizontal part of the ear canal.
6. While still holding up the ear flap, wipe away debris from the inner part of the ear flap and the upper ear canal using a cotton ball or gauze.
7. Allow your dog to shake his head. Shaking allows the remaining ear cleaning solution and debris to move out of the ear canal to the outer opening of the ear.
8. Once again, hold the ear flap up and remove the loosened debris and cleaning solution from the outer opening of the ear canal using a cotton ball or gauze.
9. Remove any debris and remaining cleaning solution from inside the ear canal with a cotton ball or gauze – only go into the ear canal as far as your finger will reach. **Never use a cotton-tipped applicator (Q-tip®) to remove the solution from the ear canal.** Doing so can damage the ear canal and/or ear drum or push debris further into the ear canal.
10. Praise your dog and provide treats.
11. Repeat the same process with the other ear. If your dog appears to be in pain during the cleaning process, stop and consult your veterinarian.
12. Repeat the cleaning procedure as often as is recommended by your veterinarian.

If your dog has an ear infection and requires medication to be applied to the ears, clean the ears first and then apply the medication. Ask your veterinarian if there should be a delay between cleaning the ears and applying the medication, as some cleansers may deactivate or weaken the medication.