

Newfie News



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Trimmed Toenails Lead to a Healthier Dog

Keeping your dog's nails trimmed is essential to a happy, healthy Newf, just as regular grooming and well checks at the vet. Yet many dogs are fearful of getting their nails trimmed and owners may be just as fearful of hurting their pup with an errant cut.

Stephanie Seger is passionate about trimming dog's nails and offering tips and advice to owners for a happier, healthier life with their big dog. Stephanie is mom to Mastiffs Sulley and Junior and the owner of the Big Dog Mom blog (<https://bigdogmom.com/>), whose mission is to empower, educate, and inspire one big dog owner at a time.

With over 30 years of experience with big dogs, Stephanie has first-hand experience struggling with trimming dog's nails. About 20 years ago, Stephanie's Mastiff, Maya, was deathly afraid of getting her nails cut. "My husband and I had to gently pin her down," Stephanie said. "I knew there had to be a better way." During a surgery, Maya had her nails trimmed back to their proper length, and it made quite an impression on Stephanie. "They looked so beautiful, I committed to keeping them short and overcome the nightmare of trimming nails." The journey began and Stephanie has been obsessed with dog nails ever since.

Stephanie's goal was to have Maya not just tolerate, but to sit and enjoy getting her nails trimmed, using a force and fear-free method. She started by working with Maya and watching her body language when the nail trimming tools came out and Stephanie started handling her. Through trial and error, Stephanie "learned how to communicate" with Maya and improve her relationship with her over the next six months. "Maya went from running out of the room at the sight of the clipper to laying down and giving me her paw," she said. Stephanie transformed nail trimming into an action and a response activity, rather than viewing it as the dog being good or bad.



Junior & Sulley wait for a nail trim

Learning to love a nail trim

Conditioning a dog fearful of nail trimming is similar to conditioning for fear of the vacuum.

Continued on page 4

What's Inside

Who's at TNP? Available
Dogs Update **Page 2**

Recently Adopted
Page 2

Expert Excerpts
Page 3

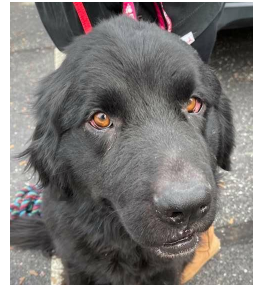
TNP Alumni
Page 3

Who's at TNP?

Samson arrived at TNP on November 2 with a few medical issues. This 7-year-old sweetheart tested positive for heartworm and has started treatment.

Sam will be neutered once his heartworm is treated. He also has a dislocated hip as a result of being hit by a car, which will be addressed after his neuter surgery.

Sam will be with TNP for at least a few months but will be feeling much better when he is ready to go to his forever home. Watch the TNP Facebook page and future newsletters for updates.



Recently Adopted



Three-year-old **Onyx** was looking for a new home due to owner relocation. He went to his new home with Rebecca this month. Onyx is enjoying his new yard and home and is settling in nicely.

Look for an update in a future newsletter.

Mabel went to her new home on November 28 after a short stay at TNP. This healthy four-year-old will likely bring much joy to her new family. Check the TNP website and future newsletters for updates.



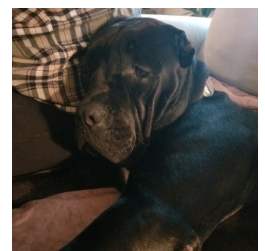
Maya the Cane Corso was adopted through Protectors of Animals in East Hartford, CT in early November. TNP assisted in the adoption.

Lee is a single gentleman who lost his best buddy to sudden illness just a few months ago, and was ready to bring another big dog into his home and life. Lee has his own home with a fully fenced yard in the country. His work schedule allows him to come home mid-day, so Maya will never be alone for more than a few hours. Lee also likes to have his best canine friend with him as much as possible, so Maya will likely be logging many miles with her new dad. Lee reports that Maya is enjoying the house and yard and is doing very well.

Cassie was found roaming a local park a couple of months ago with Maya and went to her new home on November 7.

Estimated at less than two years old, Cassie was adopted by Meredith and her family, who lost their beloved dog last month. Meredith was particularly interested in a Cane Corso as a close friend has three and Meredith was just so impressed at how wonderful they were. When Meredith saw Cassie in her rainbow tutu on the Protectors of Animals website, she was smitten.

Meredith is home all the time and her older son is taking a break from school and will also be home to shower Cassie with affection. The family spends time on Cape Cod, where they have a vacation home, where Cassie will get to know beach life. Cassie is already adored by her new family.



Expert Excerpts

*With Dr. Lauren Flanagan of
Pepperell (MA) Veterinary Hospital*

Stress in Dogs

Just like us, our four-legged family members do experience stress. We've all seen the anxious dog at get togethers – jumping, nervous, and reactive – but dogs can experience long-term stress and anxiety as well. That isn't always so easy to recognize.

Panting, yawning, and restlessness are all things that could indicate situational stress in your dog. Manifestations of more long-term stress can be changes to appetite, aggressive or destructive behaviors, repetitive (OCD) behaviors, house breaking issues, and reluctance to engage in normal, and previously considered pleasant, activities such as your afternoon walk.

As always, prevention is the best medicine. Situational stress is often easy to predict and can be avoided. For example, if your dog hates a crowd, don't bring him or her to a party (or find a safe, quiet place for the dog if you are hosting a large gathering). Some stressors can't be avoided, even if predicted, such as thunderstorms. In this situation, I would discuss situational anxiety medication, such as gabapentin or trazadone, with your veterinarian. Some people prefer to avoid medication because they don't want to drug their dog. The goal is to calm the dog, not overly sedate him or her. Imagine if you were forced to endure your worst fear with no understanding of it. I believe it is

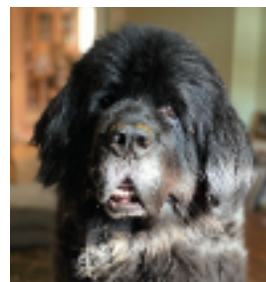
Continued on page 7

Friends of TNP

For the Case family of Long Island, NY – Julie, Joe, 19-year-old Annie, and 17-year-old Aiden – Newfoundlands have all the qualities they were looking for in a family dog: great with children, sweet temperament, and loving. They fell in love with the breed nearly 13 years ago and become a "Newf" family.

Joe always liked large breed dogs. The first family dog was 3-year-old Great Pyrenees Zeus, adopted in 2007 from a Great Pyrenees rescue. Zeus immediately had an aggressive reaction to Aiden, who was 3 at the time of adoption, nipping toward him if Aiden came close. Julie learned that Zeus had been traumatized by boys, resulting in his aggression toward them (and smokers). She tried multiple behavior methods but nothing worked. The family kept Zeus for 6 months, increasing his weight from 75 to 150 pounds, then surrendered him to Great Pyrenees rescue of NY after he bit Julie through her coat when she got between a scuffle. Zeus went to live with a woman on a farm with 5 other dogs.

After the first rescue did not work out, the family decided to get a Newfoundland puppy from a breeder so they could know more about her temperament. They brought Sasha home in January 2009 from New Jersey at 3 months old.



Sasha

Just a few months later, Sammy, a long-haired Basset Hound was added to the family. Sammy was about 2 when he was adopted.

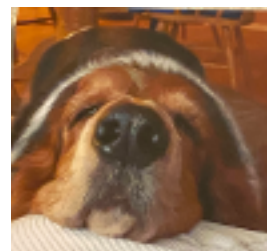
Sasha has a bit of a different personality for a Newf. "She is very independent and stoic," Julie said. "She's not a big love chop. If you pet her and she has had enough she will get up and walk away. She likes pets on demand. When she wants them she will summon you."

Sasha also turned out to be a good watch dog for Sammy. Once, when the gate was left open, Sasha positioned herself in front of it, not allowing Sammy to pass and barked to alert Julie.

Continued on page 4

Friends of TNP continued from page 3

Another Newf was added to the pack in 2012, when the family adopted 3-year-old Coco from a breeder in NY. Coco was a show dog and the breeder said she couldn't go on the long car rides to shows because she got sick. But Julie thought that Coco needed more affection than the breeder could give, having 6 Newfoundland show dogs. "Coco was really affectionate," Julie said. "She would get on our lap or had to be right next to us."



Sammy

Coco only lived to age 7, passing away from bladder cancer in 2018. Just a few weeks later the Case's also lost Sammy, to spleen cancer.



Coco

Sasha was now the only dog in the house and was doing well until she got bloat twice – once in 2019 and again in 2020. She has recovered fully, but her stomach is very sensitive and Julie feeds her home cooked meals four times a day.

Julie found TNP a few years ago at the suggestion of Coco's breeder, who is also Sasha's groomer. "It was Cathy [at TNP] who suggested home cooking for Sasha after the bloat," Julie said. Sasha just turned 13 and continues to thrive on the diet and enjoy overall good health. She is active with daily walks, and her only difficulty is getting in and out of cars, which limits her rides.

Julie is grateful for the years with Sasha and hopes for continued good health, yet the next Newf will be a rescue. "I'm looking for a senior," Julie said. "They are so sweet." And, while the family loves Sasha very much and her unique personality, they wouldn't mind another Newfie lap dog.



Sasha

Trimmed Toenails Lead to a Healthier Dog continued from page 1

It consists of many small steps to build trust. Take it slow and be mindful of the dog's body language. "If the dog is showing fear, you're going too fast," Stephanie said. "For conditioning, have the nail grinder or clippers in the room, but not right next to you. If the dog looks at it, give him a treat. If he walks past it, give him a treat. Work up to moving the tool closer, turning it on, etc. Once the dog starts showing fear, stop."

Why does nail length matter?

Dog's nails should be off the ground when they are standing on a level surface. You should not hear your dog's nails clicking when he walks.

When a dog's toenails contact the hard ground, like a sidewalk or hardwood floor, the hard surface pushes the nail back up into the nail bed. This can cause pain for the dog when he is walking. Imagine walking with your own toenails constantly pressing against your shoe or the hard ground. It would be very uncomfortable.



Proper nail length

As a result of the pain from the toenails, dogs will change their gait to avoid the discomfort. This can cause an imbalance of the weight on their feet and ultimately orthopedic issues, a significant concern especially for large and giant breed dogs, like Newfoundlands.

Continued on page 5

Additionally, nails that are too long can lead to nail bed infections and, if bad enough, can require surgery to correct.

How often should you trim your dog's nails?

How often you should be trimming your dog's nails depends on your goal for the trimming:

For training/conditioning– 3-5 times per week

For shortening nails – 2 times per week

For maintenance – at least once a week

Stephanie recommends at least weekly nail trims to keep the nails short enough because the quick - the blood and nerve supply for the nail – grows so quickly. Weekly nail trims also help with conditioning to reinforce the behaviors.

During the nail trims, Stephanie shifts her mindset from the "chore" of trimming her dog's nails to spending time with them and enjoying their company. "As I changed my frame of mind, that has only helped my dogs," she said.

What tools to use

The basic tools for nail trimming are clippers and an electric nail grinder. If using clippers, 10-15 small clips are better than trying to cut off too much of the toenail at once. Stephanie recommends using a nail grinder. "You don't run the risk of hitting the quick as much as with clippers," she said. She suggests changing the sandpaper bit quarterly (if using the nail grinder weekly).

Take emotions out of the process

Owners can be too emotionally invested in the dog's response to the clipping. If the dog walks away, accept that the nail trimming session is over for the day instead chasing the dog or getting angry. It's also important to be confident in your abilities to trim the nails. If you are fearful, your dog

will pick up on that. If you do nick the quick of the nail, it may bleed for a few minutes (styptic powder will stop the bleed quickly) and the dog may flinch, but there will not be any lasting damage. Simply remain calm and stop trimming that nail.

"Big dog owners have unique challenges when nail trimming due to the dog's size," Stephanie said. But with some patience, consistency, and treats, you can transform nail trimming into an enjoyable experience for you and your dog,

Continued on page 6

Tips on nail cutting

1. Frequency matters. Nails should be trimmed weekly for maintenance. This will keep the sessions short and manageable for your dog.
2. Force doesn't work for nails. "The only method that works is conditioning," Stephanie said. "Anything that restricts movement and freedom is force."
3. Be patient and persistent. Conditioning – or helping the dog get over their fear – does not happen quickly. But it does work.
4. Use treats liberally in response to the nail trimmer. Stephanie recommends small soft treats.
5. Start early. Trimming nails should become a routine from puppy hood, but if you adopt your dog at an older age, start as soon possible, to establish trust.
6. Make sure you are trimming enough off the nail. If you are using an electric nail grinder, like a Dremel, file right up to the quick. When you do that, the quick will start to recede.
7. Don't forget the dewclaws.



The quick of the nail is the black center (in dogs with black nails)

Trimmed Toenails Lead to a Healthier Dog continued from page 5

and put pain from toenails in the past.

If you have questions about nail trimming, reach out to Stephanie at stephanie@bigdogmom.com. She has several videos on cutting nails on her [Big Dog Mom youtube channel](https://youtube.com/c/bigdogmom) at <https://youtube.com/c/bigdogmom>.

How To Trim Large Dog Nails & 7 Keys to SUCCESS [GUARANTEED!]:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBaiZkvQ8Fo>



Junior (l) & Sulley (r)

How to Trim Dog Nails | Cut Dog Nails With ME! [10 TIPS + DEMO]:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96II1FEDXZU>



Trimming nails with clippers

Nail Clipper vs Dremel for Large [Black] Dog Nails? PRO's, CON's & How to Avoid Hitting the QUICK!:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSV-KTQmd90>

How To Tell If Your Dog's Nails Are Too Long AND Why It Matters [PLUS DEMO]:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QHqgRm4DyU>

Trimming Dog Nails | LIVE Q&A with Big Barker on Instagram:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVG-dZBmHxg>

You can also find additional resources on her Big Dog Mom blog:

Quick Starter Guide: what the dog nail QUICK is, how to avoid hitting it, and what to do if you do: <https://big-dog-mom-llc.ck.page/5cac7a748c>

other blog posts:

<https://bigdogmom.com/category/dog-training-canine-behavior/cutting-dog-nails/>

Stephanie also offers a nail cutting course called Dog Nailpro™- The proven step-by-step method for confidently trimming dog nails without force, fear, or frustration - Click here for more information and to sign up to be notified when the doors open for enrollment:

<https://bigdogmom.com/online-courses/>

photo credits: Stephanie Seger at Big Dog Mom

Keep Your Pet Safe This Holiday Season With These Precautions

Keep people food and alcohol out of the reach of your Newf. While extra rich foods such as chocolates, sweets, gravy, fatty meats, and bones are tempting for your dog, they can be hard to digest. Ask your guests to refrain from slipping your dog snacks.

Put lit candles high above where your pets can reach.

Keep holiday plants out of reach of pets: holly, mistletoe, amaryllis, lilies and poinsettias.

Secure the Christmas tree to keep it from toppling if your Newf bumps into it. Remove all breakable ornaments in a Newf's path (or path of a wagging tail). Keep wires out of sight, especially if your pet is a chewer. Don't let your pet drink the water from the tree.

If you plan on having guests, provide a safe place for your pet to escape if they become overexcited or scared such as a crate or quiet room.

Sources/More Information:

<https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/holiday-safety-tips>

<https://www.medvetforpets.com/12-dangerous-holiday-pet-hazards/>

https://www.petmd.com/dog/seasonal/evr_multi_dangerous_winter_holiday_plants

Give the Gift That Gives TWICE

Your gift giving goes twice as far when you do your shopping on Amazon through Amazon Smiles.

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2. Choose That Newfoundland Place as your charity.
3. Start shopping!



Every time you make a purchase through AmazonSmiles, a percentage goes to TNP. There is no difference in your Amazon experience. Your gifts arrive at your door and TNP receives funds for the care of the dogs.

GIVING TUESDAY *Thank you for your support*

Thanks to your generosity, TNP raised \$6,777 on Giving Tuesday. The funds will be used for expenses related to the care of surrendered dogs while preparing them for adoption, including: food, veterinary care, and spay and neuter surgery. TNP also provides assistance to families seeking to keep their dogs, and provides financial assistance to owners in extreme hardship cases.

**Thank you for your care and support of
That Newfoundland Place!**

"Expert Excerpts" Continued from page 3

kinder to give our pets something to help them through this fear.

Long term stress is a bit tougher to manage. Dogs with "stress and anxiety" have trouble adapting to their environment and changes in it. "Rules and routine" are very important for these dogs. If they know what is expected of them, they will be much happier. If the rules are constantly changing, they are not always sure how to react and that stresses them. Sometimes these dogs are so anxious it is hard to "break the cycle" so to speak – the dog can't focus on the rules because of their anxiety. These dogs often benefit from anti-anxiety medication, such as fluoxetine or clomipramine, long-term, combined with a behavior modification program. The goal is to eventually wean them off these drugs.

As always, proper diet and exercise, as well as mental stimulation, are integral to the physical well being and mental health and happiness of your dog.

Did you know that December 9 is International Day of Veterinary Medicine? Here's to all of the caring members of the veterinary field who keep our pets healthy.

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