FREE PRINTABLE

# Is It Safe for My Dog? The DIY Grooming Ingredient Cheat Sheet

Before you mix up a homemade shampoo or spray, check it here. One chart to stick inside the bathroom cabinet.

**Safe to use**
Gentle basics for coat, paws and balms

**Use with care**
Fine when diluted and used the right way

**Never use**
Essential oils, xylitol, peroxide and more

- The one-page ingredient safety chart
- The 24-hour patch test, step by step
- 5 essential-oil-free starter recipes
- When to skip the DIY and call the vet

PRINT ME · STICK ME IN THE BATHROOM CABINET

# Is it safe for my dog?

## Safe to use

**Oatmeal**
Plain oats or colloidal oatmeal. Baths, shampoo, dry shampoo.

**Coconut oil**
Balms, brushing. Small amounts (high fat).

**Shea butter**
Unscented. Paw and nose balms.

**Beeswax**
Firms up balms.

**Olive oil**
A gentle base oil for balms.

**Cornstarch / arrowroot**
Dry shampoo. Brush it all out.

**Distilled or boiled water**
Base for sprays, wipes and rinses.

**Plain canned pumpkin**
100% pumpkin for lick mats. Not pie filling.

## Use with care

**Chamomile tea**
Weak and cooled, on the outside only. Skip for ragweed allergy.

**Aloe vera gel**
Pure inner-leaf gel only: no alcohol or lidocaine.

**Castile soap**
Unscented, diluted about 1:8, rinsed out fully.

**Apple cider vinegar**
Diluted 1:4. Never on broken skin or in ears.

**Baking soda**
External only, away from eyes. Don't let dogs eat it.

**White vinegar**
For cleaning. Never mix with bleach.

**Decaf green tea**
Cooled coat rinse. Decaf only.

**Peanut butter & yogurt**
Plain, and only with no xylitol.

## Never use on your dog

**Essential oils**
Tea tree, pennyroyal, wintergreen, pine, cinnamon, clove, peppermint, citrus, ylang ylang, eucalyptus, lavender oil.

**Human toothpaste**
Xylitol and fluoride. Use a dog toothpaste.

**Xylitol (birch sugar)**
Tiny amounts can be deadly.

**Zinc oxide creams**
Diaper cream, some sunscreens.

**Hydrogen peroxide on wounds**
Rinse with water, call the vet.

**Rubbing alcohol**
Stings and is toxic if licked.

**Garlic & onion**
Even as "natural flea control".

**Whole aloe leaf**
The yellow sap causes vomiting.

**Human pain creams**
Lidocaine, ibuprofen, aspirin.

**Licked or ate something toxic?**
Call right away, even if your dog seems fine.

ASPCA Poison Control
**(888) 426-4435**

Pet Poison Helpline
**(855) 764-7661**

**Patch test first**
24 hours on the inner thigh before any new recipe.

**Dilute, then rinse**
Soap and vinegar always diluted, rinsed out well.

**Not near the face**
Keep everything out of eyes, ears and wounds.

**Fresh & out of reach**
Small batches, labeled, stored away from pets.

BEFORE EVERY NEW RECIPE

# The 24-hour patch test

Even gentle ingredients can bother some dogs. This quick test takes 30 seconds of work and one day of waiting.

1. **Pick a spot.** A small patch of thin-haired skin: the inside of the thigh or the belly.
2. **Apply a little.** A coin-sized dab of the recipe (for sprays and rinses, a damp cotton pad).
3. **Wait 24 hours.** Distract your dog with a chew or a walk so they don't lick it straight off.
4. **Check.** All clear? Go ahead. Redness, bumps, itching, swelling or hair loss? Rinse with plain water and don't use that recipe.

**Skip the test?**
Never for leave-on products like sprays, wipes and balms.

**Sensitive dog?**
Test one new ingredient at a time, a few days apart.

**Cats at home?**
Keep all DIY products away from them too.

| Date | Recipe | Spot | After 24 hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

STARTER RECIPE 1 · BATH

Every 4 to 6 weeks

## Gentle Oatmeal Shampoo

YOU NEED

- ☐ 1 cup (240 ml) lukewarm boiled-and-cooled water
- ☐ 2 tbsp (30 ml) unscented liquid castile soap
- ☐ 2 tbsp (15 g) oats blended to a fine powder
- ☐ 1 tbsp (15 ml) pure inner-leaf aloe vera gel

METHOD

1. Stir the oat powder into the water until milky, then swirl in the soap and aloe.
2. Wet your dog to the skin and massage it in, away from the eyes and ears.
3. Rinse until the water runs clear and the coat isn't slippery. Make it fresh each bath.

**Tip:** Small dog? Halve the recipe. Giant or double-coated dog? Double it and allow extra rinsing time.

**Safety:** Castile soap is alkaline, so keep it well diluted and rinse it out completely.

STARTER RECIPE 2 · BATH

Between baths

## Oat & Cornstarch Dry Shampoo

YOU NEED

- ☐ 1/2 cup (60 g) cornstarch or arrowroot
- ☐ 1/2 cup (45 g) oats blended to a fine powder

METHOD

1. Mix in a shaker jar.
2. Outdoors, rub a little into the coat down to the skin with your hand.
3. Wait 5 minutes, then brush out every bit of powder.

**Tip:** Arrowroot shows less on dark coats than cornstarch.

**Safety:** Keep powders away from the eyes, nose and mouth. Never puff it at your dog.

STARTER RECIPE 3 · ODOR

Every few days

## Chamomile & Aloe Freshening Mist

**YOU NEED**

- ☐ 1/2 cup (120 ml) cooled chamomile tea
- ☐ 1/2 cup (120 ml) distilled water
- ☐ 1 tsp (5 ml) pure inner-leaf aloe vera gel

**METHOD**

1. Mix well and pour into a fine-mist spray bottle.
2. Shake, then mist the back and sides from 8 inches (20 cm). Never the face.
3. Brush through. Keep it in the fridge and use within 1 week.

**Tip:** Spray onto a brush instead of the dog if yours dislikes the hiss of a spray bottle.

**Safety:** The essential-oil-free swap for "dog perfume". A strong smell that won't go away needs a vet check.

STARTER RECIPE 4 · WIPES

Anytime

## Gentle Paw & Body Wipes

**YOU NEED**

- ☐ 1 cup (240 ml) cooled chamomile tea or distilled water
- ☐ 1 tbsp (15 ml) pure inner-leaf aloe vera gel
- ☐ 20 thick paper towel sheets or cloth squares

**METHOD**

1. Whisk the tea and aloe together.
2. Pack the towels into a lidded container and pour the liquid over until damp, not dripping.
3. Wipe paws, legs and belly, then towel dry.

**Tip:** Cloth squares can be washed and reused. Keep a few in a zip bag in the car.

**Safety:** No preservatives: keep in the fridge and use within 1 week. Not for eyes or inside ears.

STARTER RECIPE 5 · PAWS

2 to 3 times a week

# Classic Shea & Beeswax Paw Balm

**YOU NEED**

- ☐ 1 oz (28 g) beeswax pellets
- ☐ 2 oz (56 g) unscented shea butter
- ☐ 2 oz (56 g) olive oil or coconut oil

**METHOD**

1. Melt the beeswax in a bowl over simmering water.
2. Off the heat, stir in the shea and oil. Pour into tins and let set 2 hours.
3. Rub a thin layer into clean, dry pads. Give a chew while it soaks in.

**Tip:** Hot pavement test: press the back of your hand on it for 7 seconds. Too hot for you means too hot for paws. No balm protects against burns.

**Safety:** For dry pads only. Cuts, bleeding cracks or limping need a vet. Hot wax burns: never leave it on the heat.

## When to skip the DIY and call the vet

**Skin & coat**
Itching that won't stop, red or raw patches, hot spots, sores, hair loss.

**Ears**
Redness, discharge, a bad smell, head shaking or pain. Nothing homemade goes in the ear canal.

**Paws**
Limping, swelling, bleeding cracks or constant licking of one paw.

**Mouth**
Very bad breath, red or bleeding gums, broken teeth.

**Wounds**
Rinse with clean water only and call. No peroxide, alcohol or creams.

**Fleas & ticks**
A vet-approved preventive is the real protection. No DIY spray replaces it.

READY FOR MORE?

# The Natural Dog Care Book

This cheat sheet tells you what's safe. The book turns it into a complete routine: **40 DIY grooming and wellness recipes and routines**, every one essential-oil-free, lick-safe and checked against this chart.

## 40 recipes, one gentle routine

Bath & coat, paws & nose, ears, teeth, fresh home, comfort & calm, and outdoor care.

- ✓ **Shampoos, rinses, paw balms, nose balm and wipes**
- ✓ **Vet-approved ear care and a 7-day toothbrush plan**
- ✓ **Fragrance-free bedding, carpet and accident clean-up**
- ✓ **Snuffle mat, lick mat spreads, tick checks and a grooming schedule**

**Get the book for $12 →**

payhip.com/b/EF8V6

This printable shares general information on home grooming for healthy dogs. It is not veterinary advice and does not diagnose, treat or prevent any disease. Patch test new recipes and ask your veterinarian about your dog's individual needs. © 2026 Smart Dog Learning.