Pet Shampoos: How They're Formulated

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Over the many years of working with pet owners, we have seen them use many pet shampoos, and we have seen that some of them can do more harm than good. We've seen irritated skin and dull hair coats as the result of using less than quality shampoos. When choosing a shampoo for your pet, we suggest you consider a number of factors.

1. What is the pH of the shampoo?

pH is a measure of acidity. The pH of dog skin is more neutral than that of human skin. Shampoos for dogs should be designed accordingly, and a good dog shampoo will have a more neutral pH than shampoos for humans. Drs. Foster and Smith Shampoos were specifically formulated to have a more neutral pH.

2. Is the shampoo soap-based or detergent-based?

Soap-based shampoos, especially in harder water, can leave a dulling film. Our shampoos contain mild detergents instead of soaps. All detergents are not made equal either. For instance, in our puppy shampoo we chose the less irritating sodium laureth sulfate instead of sodium lauryl sulfate.

3. Has the shampoo been designed to rinse easily?

Even the residue left from a mild shampoo can eventually be irritating. So to leave the best shine on the coat and to assure no irritation, choose a shampoo that rinses out easily. That said, with any shampoo, we recommend that you rinse thoroughly. To do a great job of bathing your dog, you will spend more time rinsing than working in the shampoo.

4. Are there conditioners present?

Look for ingredients such as glycol and glycerin in the shampoo. Conditioners will help the skin and coat retain their health and shine.

5. Do you need the shampoo to do something special?

Most of the time, you simply want a shampoo that will do a good job of cleaning, while leaving the coat soft and shiny. We have many shampoos with different

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fragrances and ingredients that will do a great job. But sometimes you will need more from a shampoo.

For instance, if your dog:

- Is a puppy, choose a milder shampoo like our Puppy Shampoo.
- Has a mild skin irritation, select Septi-Soothe Shampoo.
- Has an itchy skin problem, opt for Itch Stop Shampoo.
- Often rolls in less-than-fragrant treasures, choose our Deodorizing Shampoo.
- Will be bathed often, consider our Oatmeal Shampoo and Conditioner.

You want your dog to look good, have healthy skin, and smell great. You and your dog will both be happy if you select a shampoo that was formulated by veterinarians with all of these in mind.

Click on a shampoo to learn more about it!

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