

How to Trim Your Bird's Nails

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



NAIL trimming tips

Like us, birds must have their nails trimmed as part of a regular grooming program. Overgrown nails make perching difficult, as well as increase the chance of catching a nail on carpet or sweaters. A general rule is that the nails are too long if the toe is elevated off the ground when the feet are placed on a flat surface. Even short nails may need to be blunted to remove sharp points.

Tools to help you trim your bird's nails

Use a clipper or scissors designed especially for birds. Which one you use depends on your bird's size. For example, our [Nail Trimmer Kit](#) is made especially for medium or large birds. Make sure you have a supply of styptic powder on hand (such as Stay or [Kwik Stop](#)) in case a nail is clipped too close and bleeds.

How to trim your bird's nails

With the bird restrained, trim the tip off the nail. More can always be removed, so start with small amounts with each clip. Some owners will trim only 1-2 nails a day and take a week to trim them all. This works well because you are done before the bird realizes you trimmed his nails.

Self-trimming

Either in conjunction with your trimming or on its own, you can choose to purchase rough surface perches so your bird "trims his own" nails. These should be used in conjunction with regular [wooden perches](#). [Conditioning Perches](#) and Conditioning Perch Swings work well. Your bird will stay happier and healthier if his beak and nails are regularly trimmed. And when he perches on your arm, you'll be happier too!

WE RECOMMEND



**DOCTORS
FOSTER & SMITH
[Nail Trimmer Kit](#)**
Super sharp blade
makes cutting nails
easy.



[Kwik Stop Styptic Powder](#)
Instantly stops bleeding
from clipping nails or
feathers too short.



[Safety Pumice Perch](#)
Smart bird perch design
features real pumice on the
sides to trim claws and
condition beaks.



[Manzanita Perches](#)
Uneven surfaces mimic
your bird's natural
environment.

