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



POSTER 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.

How to Trim Your Bird's Nails - Page 1 of 2

Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of Foster & Smith, Inc. is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.