

Keeping your pet's ears clean is not only a matter of hygiene but also an essential preventive measure against infections and other ear-related issues.

Ears are prone to accumulating wax, debris, and even parasites, which can lead to infections, discomfort, and hearing issues. Regular cleaning helps maintain the ear's health, prevents the buildup of unwanted material, and allows you to check for any signs of problems that may require veterinary attention. Below is a simple step-by-step guide to ear cleaning. Otherwise, you can visit <https://www.bayvetclinic.com/informational-videos.html> to check out our video on cleaning ears.

How to Clean Your Pet's Ears: A Step-by-Step Guide

1. **Gather Your Supplies:** You will need a vet-recommended ear cleaning solution, cotton, and treats to reward your pet for their cooperation. We can provide you with everything you will need, even treats if you wish.
2. **Preparation:** Position your pet in a comfortable spot where they feel secure. This might mean having them sit between your legs or having another person assist by gently holding them. At the clinic we like to use a corner to help act as another person, so the pet is unable to back away.
3. **Examine:** Before cleaning, check your pet's ears for signs of infection or irritation, such as redness, an unusual odor, or discharge. If any of these signs are present, please postpone the cleaning and contact us for an appointment.
4. **Apply the Ear Cleaner:** Fill your pet's ear canal with the cleaning solution. Be careful not to insert the tip of the bottle into the ear canal, since this may cause debris to enter the bottle nozzle and bacteria to grow. Massage the ear gently in a circular motion, from the base of the jaw upwards to help break up any debris within the canal.
5. **Wipe Clean:** Accordion strips of cotton down into your pet's ear canal and then massage again to help the debris collect on the cotton strip. Slowly and gently pull out the cotton strip. If you believe any cotton has broken off in your pet's ear canal, they will shake it out.
6. **Repeat if Necessary:** If the ears are particularly dirty, you may need to repeat the cleaning process multiple times until your cotton strip comes out clean.
7. **Reward:** Don't forget to reward your pet with a treat and some affection for their patience.

Dos and Don'ts

- Do consult with us about the best type of cleaning solution for your pet.
- Don't use cotton swabs in the ear canal; this can push debris further in and cause injury. We recommend only using cotton swabs for the nooks and crannies of your pet's ear.
- Go slow. Take your time and try to make it an enjoyable experience for your pet. If your pet is too worked up, try to end on a "good note", where you can touch their ear for a few seconds, and they do not react. Reward their good behavior immediately.
- Do clean your pet's ears regularly, 1-2 times per week for maintenance, or as directed by your veterinarian. Over-cleaning can irritate the ear canal. If you see a pink tinge on your cotton strip, discontinue the ear cleaning and resume the following day as directed.
- Don't ignore bad odors or signs of discomfort; these could indicate an infection.

If you notice any redness, swelling, discharge, or if your pet shows signs of pain during ear checks, it's essential to get professional help. These could be symptoms of an ear infection or another condition that requires treatment. Ear cleaning, when done correctly and regularly, is a simple practice that can greatly contribute to your pet's overall health and comfort. If you have any questions about ear cleaning techniques, suitable products, or if you suspect an issue with your pet's ears, please do not hesitate to reach out.