



Expert Grooming Article



Border Collie

A Shepherd's Choice - wonderfully smart, eager to work and a handsome fellow as well. The Border Collie is not only a willing and able worker, he cuts a fabulous figure in the show ring too. The envy of those of us who have obstinate and willful breeds, the Border Collie always appears to be easy to work with and almost an extension of his handler. Not only man's best friend, this valuable assistant to the flock is a great all round dog for obedience, agility, the conformation ring and more. (read more over page..)



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PHOTO: Ruby - Courtney Spencer

The trick to it all is to be able to separate the duties and needs for this breed and ensure that the necessary approach is taken to his presentation for all events. The standard calls for a weather resistant, double coated breed with an abundant coat to form a mane, breeches and brush. The AKC standard allows some trimming on the feet, hocks and pasterns and mentions the short and rough coated varieties.

The texture is medium topcoat with a soft undercoat and the Border Collie has various stages with his coat due to seasonal shedding and care must be exercised to ascertain at which stage the coat is in order to manage the best outcome.

For the head and face use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It**. This is a hypoallergenic sulfate free low foaming shampoo designed just for faces. It's no tear formula features the highest quality Blue Cypress Extracts, Panthenol with Pro Vitamin B and SugaNate. These special ingredients clean, soothe, add moisture, aid healing and have anti-inflammatory benefits. A small golf ball sized amounts directly to the face and eye area allows you to thoroughly clean without causing irritation. It can also be used in and around the ears with the same benefits. Its low foaming design allows ease of rinsing, yet complete cleaning.

Starting with the full coat stage, the main aim is for shine, condition and prevention of sunburn and dehydration. I recommend **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo with Ginseng** diluted 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water). Herbal Whitening Shampoo is primarily derived from organic sources with Ginseng extracts, protein, and violet tone combined in a rich formula. It works brilliantly to whiten whites and intensify darker colours. It DOES NOT lighten or bleach but instead tones with optical brighteners. It reduces yellowing or warm tones in white coats or white areas of the coat and will negate unwanted tones from sun fading or reddening in the coat. Similarly for darker colours, it will reduce any warm tones to intensify the depth of colour by revitalising any lost cool tones.

Down the skull and topline we recommend using **Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo**. The reason for this is that the henna base of this shampoo gives a wonderful shine to the coat.



Only use a conditioner if the coat is too full and needs some flattening. I prefer to lightly oil this coat with **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil**. It is a truly beneficial blend of using extracts of Calendula oil, Wheat germ oil, and Evening Primrose. Add 1 teaspoon to 2 Litres of water, then either sponge on or sluice well through the coat and LEAVE IN. DO NOT RINSE. This is quite a unique product in that it is not greasy and totally water-soluble. It gives an outstanding healthy vigour to the skin and coat. It will maintain the texture and moisture in the coat and help protect from the harsh outdoors where this dog is required to work. Use the oil at this dilution rate after shampooing for a show. Again leave in

and do not rinse. This gives extra sheen and keeps the coat from getting brittle. It also helps to keep the featherings from tangling, this is after all, an outdoors dog who is a busy fellow.

When the coat is starting to get the look that tells you it is thinking about shedding, switch to **Plush Puppy Natural Conditioning Shampoo** used also at 1:5. This is a nourishing shampoo, helping to increase hydration while slightly softening your dog's coat. Derived from organic sources with a strong emphasis on Evening Primrose extracts to boost skin and hair regeneration.

When out of coat and you need more oomph, use the **Plush Puppy Body Building Shampoo** at 1:5. This shampoo gives lift and a bodifying effect to the coat without an artificial feel plus it is wonderful for the coat as it is infused with beneficial plant extracts.

You can use some **Plush Puppy Silk Protein Conditioner** when the coat is about to shed as the coat sometimes can appear boofy and bulky at this point. Natural Silk Protein conditioner leaves the coat with a wonderful finish, reducing static electricity and fluffiness in "fly-away" coats. It features an intensive formulation boosted with Silk Amino acids and plant extracts that bind keratin in the coat, strengthening whilst protecting against moisture loss. Still continue to use the Seabreeze oil.

Reduce staining and any warm or red toned areas with **Plush Puppy Wonder Blok**, a safe all naturally sourced pure soap. It is not a bleach and contains no harmful chemicals but high amounts of naturally sourced vegetable surfactants and glycerin. Apply to a wet coat, rinse and use repeatedly. Stains are always difficult to shift but short of bleaching, which is not an option for most, this is a nice gentle way to lessen the impact of nasty stains. The key to this product is allowing time for its natural ingredients to work. We suggest where possible apply to the areas the day before bathing for maximum effect.

For show day grooming, this dog ought to be blow dried using a force dryer as this removes any loose hairs from the coat and keeps the coat rolling over and in good shape for a nice outline. When drying use the innovative **Plush Puppy FAST Blow Dry Spray** that combines clever ingredients to dramatically reduce drying time. It adds moisture and conditions while protecting the coat. It contains Australian Native Flame Tree extracts known for their hydrating properties that help make a dry or old coat feel and look perfect. It also protects the coat from damage from sun and heat. It contains a slight hold ingredient for better coat management and a special active ingredient that eliminates static electricity and stops the fly-away's. A brilliant blow drying spray that halves the drying time.

There are various things one can do at this point to ensure a great coat presentation. If the coat is too sparse, use **Plush Puppy Volumising Cream** at a mix of 1 tablespoon to 1 cup of water. Saturate this through the coat with a decent sized sponge and leave in DO NOT RINSE. Then blow dry against the growth of the coat for maximum lift. You can also use **Plush Puppy Volumising Spray**, a ready to use and is simply sprayed where needed, brush in and then dry.

To reduce bulk in areas and to soften and flatten if needed use **Plush Puppy Blow Dry Cream**. Mix 1 tablespoon into 250ml of water and spray or sponge on to the specific part of the dog, especially when the coat is old and dry.

For the featherings, furnishings and wavy areas that may look better smoother, use **Plush Puppy Swishy Coat** varying your mix according to the texture of the coat as this can vary. A good starting base is 1 tablespoon in 1 Litre of water. Work well through the areas that are to be smoothed and if on the topline, blow dry against the growth with **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush** until $\frac{3}{4}$ dry and then switch to the oval $\frac{1}{2}$ bristle $\frac{1}{2}$ dialon **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush**, this will smooth and straighten. For the featherings, use the Pin brush again till $\frac{3}{4}$ dry and switch to the Anti-Stat Brush until smooth and dry. Now you have the basic shape ready for final titivating and brushing on show day.

To give depth to the whites and cosmetically diminish any stains, use **Plush Puppy Cover-up Cream** dabbed lightly onto a barely damp or dry piece of sponge. Lightly rub through the areas needed, adding more layers till desired effect is achieved and add a brush full of **Plush Puppy Fairy Frost Regular** which will also help to dry the cream faster. Fairy Frost Regular gives the crispest and whitest white ever and clings well to the coat all day. Leave-in and brush through.

For legs apply **Plush Puppy Chalkestral** evenly to areas before chalking. Either put a small amount into your hands and rub together to "warm up" and then rub into the area. Or swipe a small amount into a damp sponge and evenly rub or wipe into the area. Apply chalk or white powder with brush immediately. Chalkestral is a unique product that conditions the coat to minimise chalk dry out while adhering chalk to coat. A totally water soluble product.

For grooming at either the show or at home use **Plush Puppy O.M.G.**, a revolutionary grooming spray that lives up to its name. A light spray of OMG and brushing in allows this product to refresh the coat leaving it feeling wonderful. Using at an approximate mixture of 1-part OMG to 30-40 parts water using this break down form for the OMG concentrate. The stronger the mix the stronger the effects, for this type of double coated breed a lighter concentration works best.

Using OMG can be a one off at shows or during the drying process after bathing. An amazing product for regular brushing also. The perfect product to allow all the benefits of putting a moisturising product into the coat without over softening. OMG never builds-up and never goes stringy. A true necessity for every tool kit.



Show day give the coat a light blow dry if power access is possible, and you should have by now a great shape happening.

If needed to clean dirty feet use **Plush Puppy Wonder Wash**, simply spray it on the dirty area, work in and towel off. This no-rinse cleanser is efficient and highly effective.

You can also use a light dusting of **Plush Puppy Pixie Dust** onto the oval cushion Anti-Stat Brush and fluff through the bib, pants and topline for a subtle sparkle and a hint of glamour. Just work against the growth of the coat to allow the powder to settle below the surface and leave the shimmer on top. Great on blacks too!

Finish with a spritz of **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher** for that wonderful fragrance to the coat and a light all over spray of **Plush Puppy Shine and Comb** for a final glam finish.

To keep your Borders coat in top condition, try a mixture of Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil and **Plush Puppy Coat Rescue** as a treatment rinse and left in. This helps protect and hydrate the coat. Mix in equal parts 1 tablespoon of each into 1 Litre of warm water, apply all over, do not rinse and then dry.

This breed requires lots of attention to his coat but frankly, on the other hand, you do get it easy with a dog that is easy to train. Nothing worthwhile is easy and I just love the beautiful outline this dog has when he moves with his stealth like gait and looks a million dollars! It just takes a bit of effort and knowledge and once you have that, you can do anything. Go for it!