



Expert Grooming Article



# German Shepherd

A breed that there are variants of “styles” shown in different countries. Now with the ability to exhibit the “long stock” coat type across many different countries also adds another level in the presentation of this wonderful breed.

The standard calls for the topcoat should be as dense as possible, straight, harsh and close lying. It should be short on the head, including the inside of the ears, the front of the legs, and on the feet and toes; it is a little longer and heavily coated on the neck. The hair lengthens on the back of the legs to the pasterns or hock joints; and on the back of the thighs it forms moderate breeching. (read more over page..)



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The long stock asks for the topcoat should be long, soft and not close fitting, with feathering on the ears and legs, bushy breeches and bushy tail forming flags below. It should be short on the head including the inside of the ears, the front side of the legs, on the feet and toes, it is longer and heavily coated on the neck, almost forming a mane. The hair lengthens on the back of the legs to the pasterns or hock joints; and on the back of the thighs it forms distinct breeching.

Now the interpretation of this can often be to have the coat slick and flat as a pancake which does not serve for a good-looking finish. Much better to have a slight lift to the coat when drying and utilise that density for a fuller finish without destroying the outline of the dog. This can work particularly well if the dog has recently shed coat or the dog's outline or silhouette needs more substance.

They must at all times give an overall impression of smooth curves rather than angles and the touch of elevation to the coat when drying can enhance this.

Starting from scratch with the bath, select which is the main objective for the coat and it will be either more coat or a shinier coat, depending at what stage of shedding or regeneration the coat is at.

For faces and the head use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It**. This is a hypoallergenic sulfate free low foaming shampoo designed for faces with a no tear formula. Its unique gentle formula will 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. Can be used in and around ears also with the same benefits. It's low foaming design allows easy of rinsing yet complete cleaning.

For more coat, use the **Plush Puppy Body Building Shampoo**. This is amazing at giving extra body to the coat thus the appearance of more. For a shinier coat, use **Plush Puppy All Purpose Shampoo** this gives shine due to the henna. Use both at a ratio of 1:5 (1 part shampoo to 5 parts water). These can be diluted further to 1:10 for general maintenance. Both coat types can use this is just a question of needing more coat or wanting more shine.

For your standard, coat texture is an issue, especially under breed specialists. For this the perfect shampoo is **Plush Puppy Texture + Shampoo**. Recommended to thoroughly yet gently cleanse and deodorise the coat of harsh or coarse coated breeds without softening or compromising texture. It's ideal for boosting body and coarseness in coats of all colours and coat types. Formulated to be pH controlled, creates/maintains texture, easy to rinse out and low irritant with a subtle apple fragrance. Use up to 1:10 or apply undiluted directly to areas requiring cleansing. Rinse thoroughly.

Never use conditioner unless you have too boofy a coat and want to really flatten and soften. So, as your coat does not require softening. However, for a long stock it may be needed as your coat is to be long and soft. For this use **Plush Puppy Silk Protein**

**Conditioner** at 1:10. Apply where needed, wait a few minutes and rinse.

The answer to both coat types is hydrating the coat and keeping the good general healthy vigour is to oil the coat. This will not soften nor change the texture but will keep it in good health especially when showing every week and bathing every week. Use **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil** which is naturally sourced and contains Evening Primrose Oil, Calendula Oil and Wheatgerm Oil. Use at a ratio of 1 tablespoon to 4 litres water and sponge on or surge bath into the coat ensuring it goes right through to the skin. Leave in and do not rinse out. This is not an oily oil and is totally water soluble and the way to get best performance is to saturate the coat to get even dispersion. Diluting the product allows you to do this.

This is probably the best thing I know of for keeping that natural look to the coat and giving lots of glamour, vigour and maintaining texture. It is also just wonderful for the health and vitality of the skin and hair.

Now some GSD's do have skin issues. It seems to follow some of the lines and is there whether we like it or not. All the products listed will be kind and gentle to these situations. For the very serious problem skins,



use the **Plush Puppy Sensitive Skin Shampoo** at a ratio of 1:3 till it starts to clear and then dilute further to as much as 1:10 for general follow-up maintenance. Follow with the **Seabreeze Oil** as discussed above as this is quite calming to distressed skin.

Now you have bathed and oiled your dog and it's time to blow dry using a force drier is best. Use the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush** and blow dry the coat against the grain of the coat all forwards towards the head. Do this till the coat is  $\frac{3}{4}$  dry and then switch to a  $\frac{1}{2}$  bristle  $\frac{1}{2}$  dialon cushion brush such as the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Anti-Static Porcupine Brush** for a professional finish. You use the pin brush when the coat is very wet so as not to remove too much undercoat out of the coat but need to finish with the other brush for that closer, smoother finish. Finish with a **Plush Puppy Professional Grooming Comb**, built for absolute ergonomic comfort in various sizes. The lightweight oval shaped spine combining fine and coarse pins made of hardened stainless steel with anodic oxide finish that reduces drag and static to the coat. Perfect for use for this breed of dog especially long stocks.

Once fully dry, the dog can have a good shake and the coat will fall very nicely back into that curved silhouette that is desired but has many advantages over drying with the grain of the coat. Firstly, it allows you to really get into all the underneath areas and get all the dead coat out thoroughly without any of that felting one often sees with a dense, double coat. It also aerates the skin and allows you to check for any skin allergies, ticks and fleas - heaven forbid! By the time you get to the show and the dog has squashed most of the "do" it will be just perfect for the show.

To bodify a spare coat that has recently shed, you can use some **Plush Puppy Volumising Cream** when drying. Mix 1-2 tablespoons into 500ml water and apply the whole of this mix. Also available in a ready to use formula **Plush Puppy Volumising Spray**. Simply spray where required, brush in and dry.

You can also spray with **Plush Puppy Ruffy Tuffy Coat Spray** if you want a firmer texture spray lightly and dry and keep applying till the level of harshness has been achieved yet keeps a natural feel.

Another quick trick is a very light dust of **Plush Puppy Powder Puff Terrier** onto those softer areas. Leave in and use a light hand when applying as this stuff REALLY works to harden a coat texture fast. Can also use for a quick clean too on muddy or accidents areas! Dust and brush and instant clean - with a harsh finish.

At times due to various reasons including the weather static electricity can create flyaways. If this occurs use **Plush Puppy Anti-Static Coat Control**. This is a lightweight spray is infused with organic extracts that offers a UV filter to stop sun damage and protect against heat strength for the perfect finished look of the coat.

Show day is a matter a quick brush up the main body of the coat using **Plush Puppy O.M.G.** one of the best overall grooming sprays available. Use at anywhere from 1:25 to 1:40. This will separate each hair and give you a wonderful finish.

Lastly a quick spray with **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher**. It literally munches the odour and works well for smelly problems such as emergencies in transit etc. Leaves a light fragrance - certainly not too much and definitely not too little.

Your breed is a fantastic dog. He is arresting in the ring when presented well and not only should capture attention when he moves out on that long leash around the ring, he should look a million dollars as well and he can and he will! A well represented GSD is breath taking.

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