



Expert Grooming Article



Old English Sheepdog

This wonderful west country of England drover's dog is a great example of how a seemingly no-nonsense breed can be a lesson in how to present in the show ring. For those that figure this breed is easy on the grooming as there isn't any trimming except for the feet and rear, you could be mistaken! Oh there is so much you can do! You can sculpt this dog with a blow dryer, your hands and backcombing. Your quest is to retain the silhouette and yet present all the grand lines and features of a balanced dog and you do have the profuseness of coat to do it. Who needs a pair of scissors? Best to start at the beginning. (read more over page...)



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For faces and heads use **Plush Puppy Let's Face It**. It's a hypoallergenic sulphate-free low foaming shampoo designed specifically for faces. It's no tear formula contains 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 amount 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. Its low foaming design allows easy rinsing yet complete cleaning.

This is a breed where texture is everything, so use **Plush Puppy Texture + Shampoo**. It thoroughly yet gently cleanses and deodorises 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, it is low irritant with a subtle apple fragrance and easy to rinse out. Use at 1:10 (1 part shampoo to 10 parts water) or apply undiluted directly to areas requiring deeper cleansing then rinse thoroughly. This can be used in conjunction with another shampoo if required, depending on your coat requirements.



Plush Puppy Body Building Shampoo is also excellent for heads and rumps. Its special formula gives bulk and volume to the coat. Use diluted at 1:3 (1 part shampoo to 3 parts water).

Use the **Plush Puppy Herbal Whitening Shampoo** diluted 1:3 for the white areas. This has great tonal effect for reducing unwanted warm tones and helps reduce those reddish brown coat tones in transitioning coats from puppy to adult coats.

For difficult stubborn stained white areas also use **Plush Puppy Wonder Blok** which helps to maintain a white stain free coat. It is not a bleach and contains no harmful chemicals but high amounts of naturally sourced vegetable surfactants and glycerin. This product is designed to remove unwanted warm or red tones to the coat. Use on a damp or wet coat. Gently rub into the areas requiring cleaning and allow it to sit for 5-10 minutes to work its magic before rinsing. For maximum effects repeat or allow a longer time for this amazing product to work. As with all products take care around eyes.

Never use conditioner on this breed as they are acid rinses which will flatten and soften, the very thing you do not want on an Old English. However you do need to hydrate the coat and keep the elasticity in the hair shaft. **Plush Puppy Seabreeze Oil** is excellent for maintaining a healthy vigour to the skin and coat and is all plant sourced from Evening Primrose and Calendula Oils. It is non greasy and totally water soluble making it easy to apply without any worry of build-up. Dilute 1 tablespoon in 4 Litres of water and work well through the coat with a large sponge. LEAVE IN. DO NOT RINSE. It gives incredible sheen and finish to the hair. Perfect for mid-week coat protection.

For added texture use **Plush Puppy Powder Puff Terrier** on the butt and headpiece. Just sprinkle through and lightly work in with hands and brush or blow dry to remove excess. The outcome is texture, texture, texture!

I like this next part - it is where you get to shape and sculpt your dog without violating your rules of standard. I adore **Plush Puppy Puffy Dog** mousse. This gives you hold and texture and is totally water soluble, so you don't get build-up on the coat causing brittleness. Brittle coat is the greatest enemy you have when grooming. People tend to rip out the undercoat when grooming and even worse, do not bath for fear of softening and then the coat gets dry and brittle and breaks anyway. If you bath and oil the coat as outlined above you will have fabulous coats on your dogs.

Now plan where you want to put the Puffy Dog. You cannot possibly blow dry the whole of the dog in one hit and by the time you get to the other end the mousse will have dried too before you have shaped the hair. For ease of usage as you have a large dog, make a spray out of the Puffy Dog. Mix 3 golf ball amounts of Puffy Dog to 2 cups or 500mls of water and allow to dissolve by lightly rocking (not shaking) in a **spray bottle**. Spray the hocks well and blow dry to shape. Use this same mix for the head blow drying forwards with the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush**.

You now need to keep that drop over the withers. Have a mix of 1 teaspoon of **Plush Puppy Swishy Coat** and 1 teaspoon of **Plush Puppy Blow Dry Cream** added to 1 cup or 250mls water ready in a **spray bottle**. Liberally apply to the withers and base of neck so as to show that drop to maximum effect. I see too many people using wet towels to create this same effect only to have added humidity to the coat making the situation even worse.

Dry the coat thoroughly including legs and face. Brush through using either the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Pin Brush**, either regular pins or long pins. This is a cushion based brush and gets into the coat without ripping at it. Alternatively you can use the **Plush Puppy Ultimate Slicker Brush**. It is perfect for legs. This allows the coat to be totally tangle and knot free and gives you a well finished coat to shape.

Degrees of finish and drying are up to the individual; however you must always allow the coat to be correctly finished and shaped while ensuring the correct coat texture at the same time.

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 stainless steel pins reduce drag and static to the coat. Perfect for use for this breed of dog.

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 that includes a UV filter to stop sun damage and protects against heat. This amazing product is idea for this breed and a must for your tack box.

The same mix of **Swishy Coat** and **Blow Dry Cream** made earlier can also be used under throat and chest area to keep the hair down and not lose the outline. Remember, there is no trimming in these areas!

If you work on each area at a time, you will get the symmetry and balance you are seeking. It is a big dog and there are a lot of parts you can single out to tweak the overall appearance. You have enough hair also to do it with. The Poodle is sculpted with scissors and clippers; yours is shaped with hands and dryer.

You can use **Plush Puppy Powder Puff Regular** which will cleanse and deodorise and best of all give light texture to the feet, legs and hocks. Just dust through, rub in lightly and then brush out or blow dry out to remove excess.

Now the head piece. This is such an important part of the overall picture for the OES. Stand in front of your dogs head and brush back, away from the front, section by section starting at the back. Next, activate a small amount of **Plush Puppy Sit N Stay** worked between the hands until warmed, turning from wet sticky to a drier sticky feel. Still standing in front of the head, use your hands to section horizontally from the front first and work through with the hands, wiping the Sit N Stay on section by section from root to almost the ends.

For those requiring extra shape for heads and rumps use **Plush Puppy HOLD**. This is a strong sculpting spray scientifically formulated for shaping all types of coats on dogs. The quick drying formulation won't become sticky and will not build-up. Allow to dry for two or three minutes. Then, still standing in front of the dog's head, with the head down and starting from the front area of the head, section horizontally and lightly back comb methodically and slowly, section by section from the roots to the ends, joining each section to the section before it. You want to create that forwards fullness that follows the arch of the neck. This headpiece sculpture should not move - what hairspray?

Don't forget to make him smell good too with **Plush Puppy Odour Muncher** as I believe judges do use all their senses when judging.

Lastly, who would not be tempted to add some glints of glamour with **Plush Puppy Pixie Dust**. This looks brilliant, just don't overdo it. Simply add a very light dusting onto your **Plush Puppy Ultimate Powder Application Brush**, give it a light tap to tip of the excess and apply with light strokes. Applied with a gentle touch, it should be subtle with just enough to catch the light for enhancement.

If you have done this grooming routine properly and taken the time to focus on the various sections of the dog, you will have achieved an overall picture of balance and grace. Your breed may be an outdoors type and he may have come from country stock that was very no nonsense but, he is a masterful competitor when presented with intelligent presentation and attention to detail. His shuffling bear gait and his lovable eyes peering from beneath and through the fringes of his beautifully coiffed headpiece make him a stunning dog in a working man's group.

