

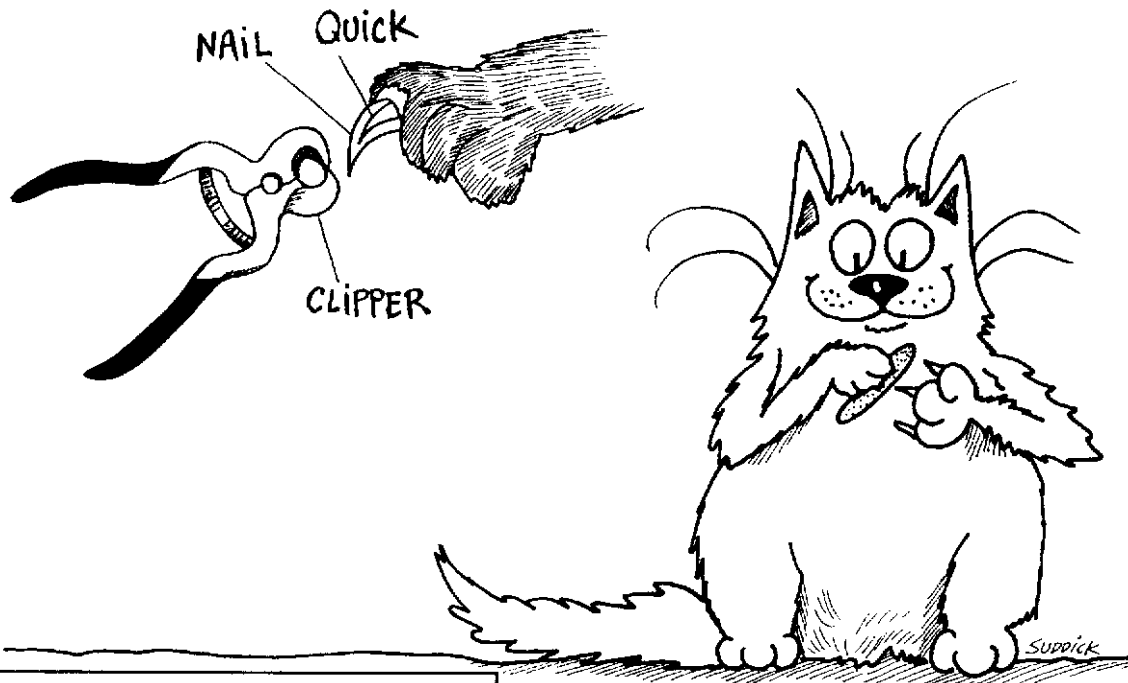
Perfect Nails

Just like us, pets need regular nail trims. This grooming ritual also helps you, your floors, and furniture from being unintentionally scratched and your clothes from being snagged. In dogs, long nails can even become painful and interfere with their ability to walk.

Cutting nails is easier than it sounds. Since cats have retractable nails, you'll need to gently squeeze the toe to push the nail out. Using pet nail clippers (available from any pet supply store), snip off the tip of the nail. Be careful not to clip the pinkish part, called the quick, which is a blood vessel and very sensitive (this is not visible in black nails!).

Before you even cut the first nail, however, you'll need to get your pets used to being held and having their paws handled. Begin by speaking softly as you massage each paw, gently separating the toes. Your pets may instinctively pull away. Repeat whatever it was they did not like, but do it more slowly and gently until they begin to accept it. When you think they're ready, cut one or two nails.

When they're accustomed to the snipping and sound, they'll begin to relax, and nail clipping will become just another routine to them—especially if they get a special treat or playtime afterwards. But if you're uncomfortable with this procedure, let your veterinarian show you how, especially on animals with black nails, as you can't see the quick.



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