

## Brushing Teeth: A Home Care Guide for Owners



Ask your dog to sit or gently position into a seated position. Carefully lift the lips to expose the teeth. Praise the dog frequently during the procedure. Simply examine the gum line for just a minute or two for the next few days. The best time to brush is after the evening meal, when both you and your dog are relaxed. My dog has been familiar with watching me brush my teeth, so I trained him to come and sit while I'm brushing my teeth, then he gets a treat reward before and after his brushing. He learned this routine very quickly!



When your dog is comfortable with sitting and having the lips handled, rub your finger over the teeth and gums for a minute or two. This will get him used to having something in his mouth. Next, put a small amount of specially formulated pet toothpaste onto your finger and allow the pet to taste it.



Next, you may want to graduate to a finger brush or gauze square. Gently rub the gauze over the teeth and along the gum line. You only need to concentrate on the outside of the teeth. Make sure you are reaching the rear molars because this is where the majority of dental disease occurs.



Now, you both may be ready to graduate to a regular bristled toothbrush. Apply a small amount of paste onto the brush. Place the brush bristles at a 45 degree angle to the gumline. Move the brush gently in circular patterns over the teeth. Start by only brushing a few teeth for a few seconds. Don't forget to praise your dog all along the way! As the brushing sessions continue, include more teeth and build up to about 30 – 60 seconds on each side. The teeth should also be brushed in a back and forth motion. Brushing should be done every 24 – 48 hours.