



**YKC DOG GROOMING
(GT & CTS)**



**DOG GROOMING COMPETITIONS
RULES 2026 (CRUFTS 2027)**



A: HANDLERS

1. The following two YKC Dog Grooming competitions are available for members to compete in, each with three age subcategories:



YKC Groom Through

- Handler 06-11 Years
- Handler 12-17 Years
- Handler 18-24 Years



YKC Clip, Trim & Strip

- Handler 06-11 Years
- Handler 12-17 Years
- Handler 18-24 Years

2. Only current YKC members may compete in YKC competitions.
3. Use the YKC member's age on the first day of the show to work out which age category a YKC member should enter.
4. Handlers may not be swapped after the closing date of the show.
 - i. This means no on-the-day swapping of YKC handlers at any dog grooming qualifier.
 - ii. If the entered handler is not grooming the dog, that entered dog must withdraw from the competition.

B: DOGS

1. Dogs must be at least 12 calendar months to compete in YKC Dog Grooming competitions.
2. Bitches in season will not be allowed to compete in any YKC Dog Grooming competition.
3. Dogs must be registered with the Kennel Club when entering Kennel Club licenced shows.
 - i. Dogs can either be registered on the breed register or the activity register.
4. There are no restrictions on dog breed,
 - i. it is highly recommended that Groomers bring a dog that is suitable for grooming
 - a. You may enter a Chinese crested or Xoloitzcuintli [Mexican hairless], but you will not be able to score highly in many areas of the competition.
 - b. This also includes dogs with very little hair such as Greyhounds etc
5. Food shall not be carried in the hand or given to a dog in the ring.
6. Once a dog has competed with a given YKC handler in an Dog Grooming qualifier, that dog may only compete with that handler in any future Dog Grooming qualifiers for the rest of the qualifying season.

C: YKC DOG GROOMING JUDGING CRITERIA

1. Both YKC Dog Grooming classes will be will be judged on the following criteria and scored out of ten for each section:
 - i. Coat
 - ii. Skin
 - iii. Ears
 - iv. Eyes
 - v. Teeth
 - vi. Feet
 - vii. Handling
 - viii. Scope of Work
 - a. The marks are **NOT** to be added together, as some categories may be deemed more important to the judge than others.
 - b. The marks are designed to give the judge a method recording their thoughts in order to base their final results on.
 - c. The judge will rank the competitors based who they deem the best grooming with respect to the above criteria.



YKC DOG GROOMING

2. The following rules regarding which dog grooming products may be used is in effect:

- i. No substance which alters the natural colour, texture or body of the coat may be present in the dog's coat for any purpose at any time during the show or used before the competition.
- ii. The use of block chalk is allowed in the preparation of dogs
- iii. Block chalk and talc is allowed should it be necessary prior to competition but the chalk/talc must be brushed out before exhibition.
- iv. The use of powdered chalk is NOT permitted
- v. No substance which alters the natural colour of any external part of the dog may be present on the dog for any purpose at any time during the Show or used before the competition.
- vi. Any other substance (other than water) which may be used in the preparation of a dog for exhibition must not be allowed to remain in the coat or on any other part of the dog at the time of exhibition.
- vii. Competitors may be disqualified at the judge's discretion if the dog is harmed or distressed (deliberately or accidentally) during the competition
- viii. Breaking any of the above rules will result in disqualification from the competition.



3. YKC Groom Through competitions will be judged using the following criteria:

- i. Basic trimming of feet, ears and tail for the purpose of tidying the coat
 - a. this should not be the main focus of this assessment.
- ii. No dead hair remaining.
 - a. no loose hair or dirt should remain in the dog's coat
- iii. No knots or matts in the coat
- iv. Clean ears, eyes & teeth.
 - a. cleanliness of ears, eyes, mouth and other sensitive areas
- v. Nails of a suitable length
 - a. claws should be short
- vi. The dog should be bathed prior to the competition with no sign of shampoo or conditioner remaining in the coat,
- vii. skin should be healthy



4. YKC Clip, Trim & Strip competitions will be judged using the following criteria:

- i. The handler will be judged on the ability they have shown with any grooming skills they have used to remove the coat.
 - a. The coat should be even in length for trimmed and clipped coats
- ii. Stripped coats should lie flat and give a smart appearance.
- iii. No dead hair remaining.
 - a. no loose hair or dirt should remain in the dog's coat
- iv. No knots or matts in the coat
- v. Clean ears, eyes & teeth.
 - a. cleanliness of ears, eyes, mouth and other sensitive areas
- vi. Nails of a suitable length
 - a. claws should be short
- vii. The dog should be bathed prior to the competition with no sign of shampoo or conditioner remaining in the coat,
- viii. skin should be healthy



D ■ YKC DOG GROOMING CLASSES

1. YKC “Groom Through” and “Clip, Trim and Strip” competitors will have 2½ hours to complete their tasks
 - i. Competitors are not required to use the full 2½ hours,
 - a. if a competitor completes the task before the time limit has expired, they should inform the judge by raising their hand
 - (1) the judge will complete the final assessment of their dog at this point.
 - b. After the final assessment has been completed, the judge will allow the finished competitor to pack their belongings and remove their dog & equipment from the ring.
2. There will be an optional interval during this competition to allow competitors a 10-minute break for their dog’s comfort.
 - i. During the break you may:
 - a. take your dog to an exercise area
 - b. Provide a drink for your dog
 - c. Use a restroom
 - d. Sit and relax
 - ii. During the break you may NOT:
 - a. Ask or receive advice relating to dog grooming
 - b. *(if you have accepted the break option)* have any additional grooming work completed on the entered dog by the competitor or any other 3rd party.
 - iii. The timer will be stopped for any competitors who opted to take a break.
 - a. Any competitors not utilizing the break will be expected to continue the competition, and will have no additional time added to their allotted 2½ hours grooming time.
3. Before any dog grooming commences, the judge will inspect each competitor’s dog
 - i. Competitors must not start any work before the judge says so.
4. While no official standard Kennel Club rules exist for “dog grooming” as an activity, YKC grooming competitions are still considered Kennel Club class
 - i. All standard Kennel Club rules that apply to all Kennel Club competitions are in effect, this includes, but not limited to:
 - a. Competitors Conduct
 - b. Dog welfare
 - c. Etc



E: YKC DOG GROOMING QUALIFIERS

1. By entering a YKC qualifier, the YKC member and anyone representing them (parent/guardian etc) agree to abide by the YKC's Code of Conduct
2. The qualification period for **Crufts 2027** is: **01-Nov-2025 till 31-Oct-2026**
3. YKC Dog Grooming competitions can be scheduled at Kennel Club and Non-Kennel Club events.
 - i. **All judging should be conducted in a manner that would be found within a standard Kennel Club event**
4. The YKC reserves the right to amend this qualification method if we are vastly oversubscribed for the final at Crufts **OR** if not enough spaces were filled.
 - i. The YKC will only amend qualification criteria in exceptional circumstances.
4. There will be a prize giving ceremony.
5. Members may enter YKC Dog Grooming competitions even if they have already qualified.
6. There are to be no "Not For Competition" entries
7. A YKC Member may only enter one dog into any YKC Dog Grooming qualifier e.g:
 - a. **EITHER:** 1x Dog in [Groom Through] class
 - b. **OR:** 1x Dog in the [Clip, Trim & Strip] class
 - ii. Both the [Groom Through] and [Clip, Trim & Strip] classes will take place simultaneously.
8. Members entering any YKC Grooming competition are expected to:
 - i. Bring their own grooming equipment
 - a. All required scissors
 - b. All required brushes
 - c. A Grooming table / accessories
 - ii. Members should note that no power socket/outlet will be available.
 - a. Should a member require a powered device, it must be battery powered.
9. YKC Handling qualifiers are listed on the YKC website
10. Only qualifiers listed on the website will be eligible for qualification, please ensure that you are entering a valid YKC qualifier.

F: WHO QUALIFIES FOR THE YKC DOG GROOMING FINAL?

1. **First & Second** place at any YKC Dog Grooming qualifier during this season will guarantee a space in the final.
2. The YKC reserves the right to amend this qualification method if we are vastly oversubscribed for the final at Crufts **OR** if not enough spaces were filled.
 - i. The YKC will only amend qualification criteria in exceptional circumstances.
3. The handler may NEVER be substituted.
4. The YKC will let you know which dogs you may pick from to enter each YKC Dog Grooming final.

G: HOW MANY DOGS CAN I QUALIFY FOR THE YKC DOG GROOMING FINAL?

1. You may qualify as many different dogs across both YKC dog grooming competitions for the final at Crufts **HOWEVER:**
2. **A YKC MEMBER MAY ONLY ENTER 1 QUALIFIED DOG THE YKC DOG GROOMING COMPETITION AT CRUFTS**
 - i. i.e:
 - a. **EITHER 1 x Dog in [Groom Through]**
 - b. **OR 1 x Dog in [Clip, Trim, Strip]**
 - ii. **This means a YKC member cannot enter both Groom Through and Clip, trim & strip at Crufts.**
3. YKC members may enter any dog that matches the breed that the YKC member originally qualified for as their entry for YKC Dog Grooming Finals at Crufts.



H ■ YKC DOG GROOMING FINAL AT CRUFTS

1. By entering a YKC competition, the YKC member and anyone representing them (parent/guardian etc) agree to abide by the YKC's Code of Conduct
2. The YKC Dog Grooming finals will at Crufts be held in:
 - i. The Crufts NEC Hall 3 - YKC ring
3. YKC Dog Grooming competitions at Crufts will be judged in the same manner as the qualifiers.
4. At Crufts, the YKC will calculate the which age category each competitor shall be in based on the YKC members age on the first day of Crufts.
 - i. This may be a different age category to the one the YKC member qualified in.
 - ii. Handlers who turn 25 before the first day of Crufts are not eligible to compete at Crufts in the YKC ring – any qualifications gained for the YKC will be forfeit.
5. Members entering any YKC Grooming competition are expected to:
 - i. Bring their own grooming equipment
 - a. All required scissors
 - b. All required brushes
 - ii. Bring their own grooming arm (If required)
 - iii. Bring their own grooming table.
 - a. The YKC is able, in some instances, to provide grooming tables. These will often be fairly small, and only suitable for small / medium sized dogs. These grooming tables will have no other accessories (like grooming arms / mats etc).
 - b. If you require a grooming table to be provided for you, and it is not stated on the entry form whether there will be one available, check with the YKC office.
 - (1) You may groom a dog on the floor if preferred / necessary
 - iv. Members should note that no power socket/outlet will be available.
 - a. Should a member require a powered device, it must be battery powered.

I ■ CLOTHING, SPONSORSHIP & LOGOS @ CRUFTS

1. YKC dog groomers should wear smart plain black or navy trousers with a smart plain short sleeve t-shirt/polo shirt/shirt of their choice.
2. YKC dog groomers may also additionally wear a plain apron.
3. Footwear should be functional and comfortable for completing a 2½ hour dog grooming session. Plain trainers would be ideal.
4. Some YKC members have managed to arrange personal sponsorship and branding deals. YKC members who wish to have branding on their clothing at Crufts must follow the below rules.
5. The YKC & Kennel Club also have several sponsors in both the YKC ring and the main arena at Crufts.
 - i. To comply with our sponsors, YKC members may **NOT** have branding on display from the following companies:
 - a. Dog food or treat supplier
 - b. Car manufacturer
 - c. Insurance company
 - d. Dog grooming supplies
 - ii. If a YKC member wishes to have branding from a company not on the above list on an item of clothing, that company's branding must be where a breast pocket would be and must be approximately breast pocket size.
 - a. This location could be applied to an apron if worn.
 - iii. This restriction on branding only applies in the following locations:
 - a. Crufts YKC collecting ring, Crufts YKC ring, Crufts YKC Presentation Area.
 - b. Crufts Main arena collecting ring, Crufts Main Arena, Crufts Main Arena Presentation Area.



YKC DOG GROOMING

J ■ YKC DOG GROOMING FINAL - PRESENTATION

1. The following two awards will be presented in the YKC ring for the YKC Dog Grooming Final:



YKC Groom Through

- Handler 06-11 Years
 - 1st – 5th
- Handler 12-17 Years
 - 1st – 5th
- Handler 18-24 Years
 - 1st – 5th



YKC Clip, Trim & Strip

- Handler 06-11 Years
 - 1st – 5th
- Handler 12-17 Years
 - 1st – 5th
- Handler 18-24 Years
 - 1st – 5th

YKC Dog Groomer of the Year

Overall Winner

YKC Dog Groomer of the Year

Reserve

2. All YKC competitors in the YKC Dog Grooming Final will receive a YKC Finalist Rosette.