

Why Do I need To Clean My Blades

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Keeping your blades clean is very important to the life of your blade. Blades that are left full of hair and other gunk are a breeding ground for bacteria and also will start to rust and/or pit the cutting edge of the blade.

Let's first look at how a blade actually cuts. There are two surfaces that actually make up the cutting edge—the inside factory edge that can not be sharpened and then the flatter parts that rub together that is actually sharpened. These two edges need to make a crisp corner in order for the blade to actually cut. As the blade is used this edge starts to wear and will eventually "round" over and then the blade will not cut and needs to be resharpened. If you leave the build up of hair and gunk in the teeth it will speed up this process of "rounding" the edge because this build up is acting like a piece of sandpaper and wears away the edge. This is a basic idea of how a blade cuts and dulls.

The inside factory edge are the sides of the each tooth. These need to be clean and smooth so hair can flow easily through the teeth to make an even, smooth cut. This edge is formed during the original manufacturing process and has to last the lifetime of the blade. Manufacturers are using various coatings on the blades to help them last longer and hold up against the various cleaning and disinfecting products on the market. If this inside edge gets pitted then the hair will "snag" as it goes in the teeth and this will affect how the groom looks (choppy or have several long hairs left). If the teeth have a buildup of hair, dander, and other gunk in them this will hold moisture and other body fluids, which will start the rusting and pitting of the cutting edge and then a blade will never cut like new. There are a few things sharpeners might try to get the smoothes back, but it will never be the same as the original factory inside edge.

Disinfecting of blades and other tools. Many grooming corporations mandate that grooming tools be disinfected between animals. To do this properly you have to follow the instructions on the particular disinfectant you are using as to how long a tool has to be "wet" with the disinfectant before it is disinfected. All of the cans I have read say to clean the blade before using the disinfectant. This means any hair, dander, etc. needs to be gone in order for the disinfectant to work properly. Many spray disinfectants take 10-20 minutes, which means you may have to spray the tool a couple of times.

The shipping regulations are getting tougher and soon you will not be able to send blades out for sharpening that are dirty (which why would you want your blade person to see your blades like that anyway) to help prevent the spread of anything across the country.

Think about this, if you went into a restaurant and saw that they were not washing the dishes between each customer or even scraping off the plate before giving it you, what would you think of this place? Cleanliness of your equipment is just one of the things your customer sees when they come into your shop and we all know how first impressions can make or break a relationship.