

Preparation of a Model Dog

THE YARN MODEL DOG

By Kathy Rose

The Yarn Model Dog is quite unique and techniques used to brush and style the yarn or "coat" are vastly different than working on a live dog. However, with proper tools and practice the results are incredible. The model dog is constructed of a plastic frame with synthetic yarn cords imbedded in variously spaced tiny holes and secured with glue. The feet are bare of yarn, as well as the tail band. The basic construction under the yarn is that of a Poodle.

Your yarn dog will arrive encased in a plastic bag inside of a box. The first step is to remove the yarn dog and inspect it for any manufacturing defects, i.e., cracked or broken limbs, large areas of missing coat or inadequate coat.

After you remove the yarn dog, turn it upside down and give it a gentle shake to loosen and help separate the cords of yarn. Then laying the model on its side, begin line brushing from the feet upward. Use gentle strokes and work slowly brushing only a small area at a time. You must be careful not to brush too hard as the cords can be pulled from the frame leaving a bald spot. A soft pin brush or a very soft long pinned slicker is the best tool to accomplish this. Don't be alarmed that a lot of yarn will come out while you are brushing. You will have a pile of yarn three times the size of the model when you are finished brushing.

Try to determine what breed you are going to create before you begin the brush out process. Breeds with full feet, long tails, long beards and drop coats will take extra care while brushing in those areas so as to leave as much coat as possible.

To create a short legged breed such as a Westie, you may trim off the plastic feet. There is a light wooden dowel which goes down the leg but it does not reach all the way to bottom of the plastic foot. A heavy set of garden snips works well.

The creation of perk ears, i.e. a Schnauzer, is most easily created by trimming the braided ear in the shape desired and then using push pins to secure it into place.

To create a longer tail, create small wigs from some of the brushed out yarn and attach with latex bands, pins or glue.

To create a Poodle face, you can either pull the cords out of the plastic frame using hemostats or then fill with putty and chalk. Or you can scissor the yarn very close to the frame.

There are a variety of methods to add color. It is probably wisest to use color sparingly as it is time consuming and if not done well can ruin the overall outcome. Colored hairsprays are the easiest to apply and can be applied using stencils to get the desired areas. Chalks are also easy to apply and once dampened tend to be more permanent when they dry.

Hair sprays can be used to secure the finished style, but it is better to finish all scissoring before applying sprays or color.

HOW DO I BRUSH A MODEL DOG?

Instructions from European winner of Model Dog competitions, Ilse Frank - Kleton

General: Wear a mask during brushing. Many dust and hair particles will come loose and some people can get allergic reactions. It is recommended to wear a mask during the competition itself. Take your time for the preparation, at least two hours, because it is a lot of work. On some dogs the hair is glued into the skin. Other dogs it is just put into the holes.

After unpacking the Model dog, grab it by the legs and shake the coat loose. For brushing, I use a Doggyman brush or similar. Start with the lower part of the dog. The area between the legs is difficult, but after that it becomes easier. Carefully brush string after string to get the best result.

Comb through the coat, but do it carefully. If you comb too hard, the hair will loosen from the holes in the skin. You can try to push it back into the holes. Brush the Model Dog layer by layer to get the best final result.

Be careful with the tail and ears because they are made different, a kind of knitting. Hold these parts steady and brush them layer by layer. After brushing, the dog looks a little flat, but with a comb it will become competition ready.

Note: during brushing, a lot of hair will come out of the coat so don't be alarmed.

The Model Dog is the best as a Poodle because the plastic mold is produced as a Poodle, but you can make it also as a Bichon, Kerry etc.

If you make a Poodle, scissor the nose short. A clipper will not work good on this coat. Scissor the dog first in a rough model and then start finishing it. It is better to scissor it layer by layer than to scissor it to the required length in one cut. This will leave you with an ugly coat.

The hair between the legs is the most difficult, so start here. With a Bichon, watch out with the length of the hair on the belly. With a Kerry, you can make a steel wire in the ears to put the ears in the correct position. Watch out with a Kerry or Terrier; leave the hair on the nose as long as possible, otherwise the head will become much too short. While making an American Cocker Spaniel, pull the hair out of the knitted ear on the upper side, because a clipper will not work.

Never use your best scissors for a Model Dog because it is not real hair and if you cut too much your scissors will need sharpening.

I wish everybody lots of success with the preparations and the competition.



Winning Models of
Ilse Frank-Kleton



Properly Brushed Model
Ready for Styling



Finished Schnauzer Model
By Kathy Rose