



FACTSHEET: OWNERS

CLIPPING YOUR DONKEY

Think carefully before clipping your donkey. If you decide your donkey does need clipping, this factsheet gives guidance to make the job easier and safer.

When should I clip my donkey?

Never clip your donkey just for the sake of it:

- Donkeys need their natural coat for many reasons. It helps control their body temperature and gives protection from the weather and flies.
- Donkeys are most likely to need clipping during late spring and through the summer months.
- Do not fully clip your donkey unless they are in heavy work or being prepared for the show-ring.
- Elderly donkeys with a long coat due to hormonal imbalance are the exception. Your vet may advise clipping in summer and winter if this is the case. *See factsheet Endocrine disorders in donkeys for more information.*

YOU MAY NEED TO PARTIALLY CLIP YOUR DONKEY IF THEY:

- grow an unusually heavy or thick coat through the winter and are slow to moult during the spring
- have long hair on their belly, which can become matted and uncomfortable
- suffer from skin conditions (such as a lice infestation)
- have a wound that you need to keep clean and free from hair or other debris
- have not shed their winter coat through particularly hot summer months, causing them to sweat.



Ask your vet for advice if your donkey has lice or a wound and you think clipping is necessary.

How do I get my donkey used to clipping?

If your donkey has never been clipped before, make them comfortable with the sound and feel of the clippers. Take your time with each step and do not move on unless your donkey is calm and relaxed.

- Stand away from your donkey and switch on the clippers. Watch your donkey's reaction.
- If your donkey does not seem bothered by the noise, approach towards the shoulder area.
- Gently place the clippers onto the palm of your hand. Put the back of your hand onto your donkey's shoulder. This will introduce your donkey to the vibration of the clippers.
- Take your hand away and put the clippers directly onto your donkey's shoulder. Run them backwards down the coat so that your donkey can feel the vibration without you cutting any hair.
- If your donkey stays calm and relaxed, you can start clipping.

How do I prepare for clipping?

- Check all your equipment is in good working order.
- Gather everything you will need, including:
 - clippers
 - two or three sets of blades
 - clipper oil
 - a small brush (to clear the clipper head and vent during clipping)
 - an extension cable
 - paper towel or rags (for cleaning the clippers and blades).
- Check the tension screw on your clippers is set correctly. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions.
- It is generally best to use A2 (medium) blades. If you have an older donkey, try A6 or A7 blades. These are coarser and will leave more hair on your donkey.
- Make sure the area you are working in is well-lit, dry, quiet, and clear of obstacles.
- Avoid cables lying on the ground. Tie extension leads up on a beam if possible.
- Use a circuit breaker for safety.
- Wear suitable clothing (such as steel toecaps and overalls). Tie long hair back.
- Make sure you have enough rugs to prevent your donkey getting cold, especially if you are doing a full clip.
- Have an assistant ready to help.
- Allow yourself plenty of time.
- Make sure your donkey is dry and well-groomed. A well-groomed coat will make the clipper blades last longer and will take less time to clip.
- Cut-off clumps of matted hair with round-ended scissors.
- Check your donkey's skin for any cuts or lumps that the blades could catch.
- Speak to your vet if your donkey is nervous or difficult. Your donkey may need sedating.



How do I clip my donkey?

- Keep the clipper cable over your shoulder while clipping. Do not let your donkey stand on it.
- Only clip what is necessary. You may only need to clip the undersides of the belly and neck.
- If your donkey is nervous, ask your assistant to hold them. Or your assistant can try distracting your donkey with treats. *See factsheet Donkey treats for more information on suitable treats.*
- Your donkey may need to have its companion in sight, as bonded donkeys can become stressed when separated.
- Stop clipping if your donkey becomes distressed. Release your donkey and continue another day. You may need to restart the process of getting them used to the clippers, or speak to your vet about sedation.
- Always clip against the natural direction of the hair. Whenever the lie of the hair changes, adjust the direction of the clippers.
- Keep the clipper blade surface flat against the skin with just enough pressure to keep the blades flat on your donkey.
- Be careful when clipping areas with loose skin (such as the chest and stifle). Use your free hand to gently stretch the skin flat. Have your assistant lift the front leg up and forwards to make it easier to clip your donkey's 'armpits'.
- On the front leg, start the clip just below the elbow and clip up to where the front of the leg joins the chest.
- On the hind leg, start about a hand's breadth above the hock and clip up to the stifle.
- Clipping a slanting line at the top of your donkey's legs will trim around the elbow and make it easier to keep the area between the hind legs clean. Clipping at an angle will also stop your donkey looking like they are wearing leg warmers.
- Do not clip your donkey's legs unless advised to do so by your vet.
- If you need to clip your donkey's head, ask your assistant to hold the head up so you can clip under the jaw.
- Never undo the headcollar noseband with your donkey tied up. If your donkey pulls back, the headcollar may pull tight around their throat. Instead, undo the lead rope and have an assistant help you.
- Be very careful clipping around eyes. Always put your hand over the eye to avoid injury.
- Do not clip your donkey's whiskers. These are important for feel, especially for blind or partially-sighted donkeys.



Blanket

For donkeys in hard work, prone to sweating, not moulting, or with skin conditions (vet's advice).

Full clip

For donkeys in hard work, prone to matting, or with skin conditions (vet's advice).

Bib and belly

Useful on long coats prone to matted belly and neck.

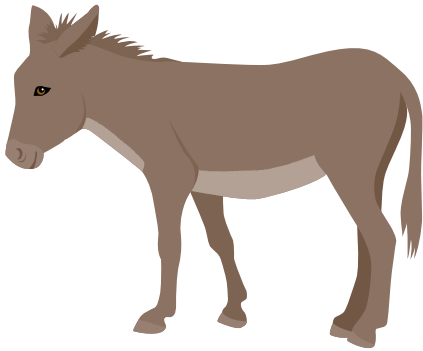
Chaser

Can be higher. For donkeys prone to matted elbows.

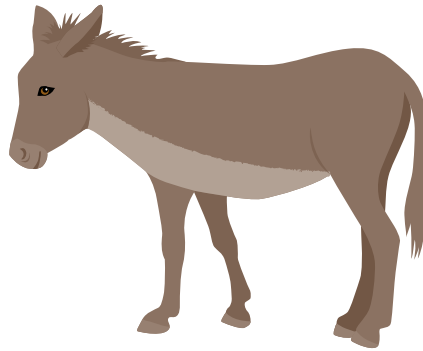
Trace

For donkeys in work or prone to matting between hindlegs.

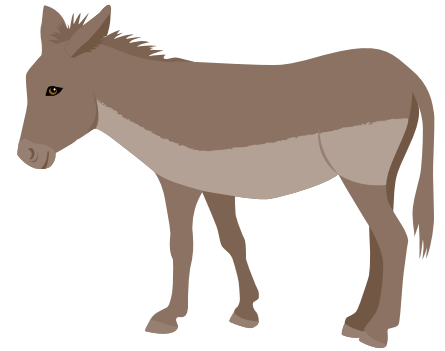
CLIPPING YOUR DONKEY



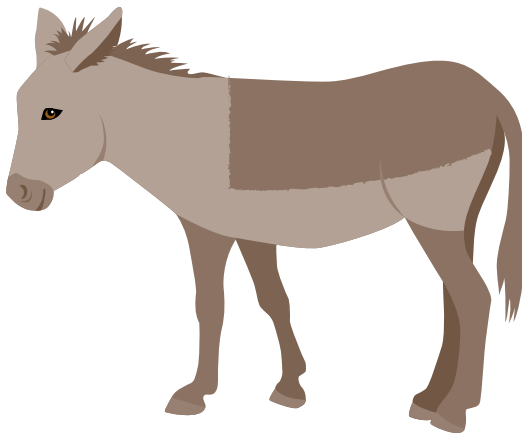
BIB AND BELLY Useful on very long coats prone to matted bellies and neck



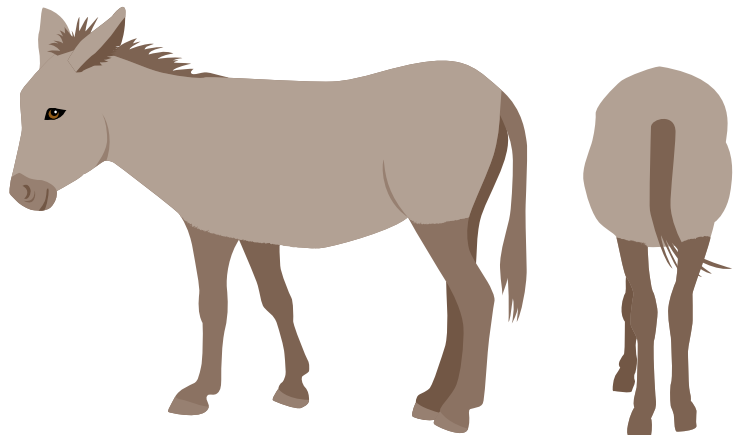
CHASER Can be higher. For donkeys prone to matted elbows



TRACE For donkeys in work or prone to matting between hind legs



BLANKET For those in hard work, prone to sweating, not moulting or skin conditions (vet's advice)



FULL CLIP For donkeys that are in work, prone to lots of matting or with skin conditions (vet's advice)

- Hold the edges of your donkey's ear gently together. Trim along the edges from top to bottom using a pair of round-ended scissors. It is rarely necessary to clip the whole ear.
- If you are doing a full clip, put a rug over your donkey's back while you clip the rest of their body. Clip an upside down "V" at the top of the tail.
- Depending on your donkey's needs, you can vary the clip (such as trimming the jaw line, taking the chaser clip up to between the ears).
- When you have finished clipping your donkey, use a body brush to remove loose hair.
- If necessary, cover your donkey with an appropriate weight rug for the weather.
- Protect your donkey from the sun and flies. Some donkeys, particularly those with pale skin, may be more sensitive once clipped. See *factsheet Insect protection for donkeys for more information*.
- Remove clipped hair so your donkey cannot eat it. Avoid putting hair on your muckheap as it takes a long time to break down.

How do I care for my clippers and blades?

- When clipping, regularly brush loose hair from the clipper head and vent. This will help stop the clippers and blades getting hot and burning the donkey.
- Use your hand to check if the blades are hot. There are several reasons why this can happen.
- If necessary, spray a small amount of oil into the oil hole on top of the clipper head. With the clippers running, lightly spray a small amount in the sides and cutting edges of the blades.
- Always use clipper oil. Other oils:
 - are the wrong consistency
 - may make your clippers overheat
 - may make your clippers less efficient
 - increase the risk of your clippers breaking down
 - do not contain antibacterial ingredients to reduce the risk of disease spread.
- Avoid letting oil run onto the tension screw as this can cause the screw to loosen.
- Take the blades off and thoroughly clean your clippers after use.
- Use a small paint brush (0.6 cm or ¼" is best) to remove loose hair from the outside and inside of the clipper head and vent.
- Wipe with a clean rag or paper towel to remove any small pieces of hair, dirt, or excess oil.
- Brush the blades off and wipe with a clean rag or paper towel. If you will not be using them for a while, spray lightly with oil, wrap in paper (newspaper is ideal) and store in the container provided.
- Never split a pair of blades. The blades grind together and 'bed in' to each other. If sets are mixed, the blades will not work together properly.
- Do not wash blades in water, this will make them rust.
- Remove blades when they will no longer cut the coat. Clean them with paper towel and send them for sharpening.



CLIPPING YOUR DONKEY

- Get your clippers serviced and checked for electrical safety annually. Do this well before you need them. Pay attention to the:
 - on/off switch (may be on side)
 - oil hole
 - tension screw
 - vent (may be on top).

Troubleshooting:

PROBLEM	POSSIBLE CAUSE	ACTION REQUIRED
Clippers excessively noisy	Blades rattling	Make sure (correct) blades fitted onto lugs
	Tension screw too loose	Tighten screw clockwise until noise drops slightly
	Vent blocked	Brush vent, remove and blow out loose hair
	Clipper motor dirty and blocked	Clean clippers thoroughly - if still noisy, send for servicing
	Spacing bar on clipper head worn	Send for repair
Blades not clipping	Blunt blades, test by clipping less dense area of coat	Fit new blades Clean blunt blades and send for sharpening
	Tension screw too loose	Tighten screw clockwise until noise drops slightly
	Tension screw too tight	Loosen screw until noise increases slightly
	Blades clogged with hair or oil	Remove blades, clean blades and head
	Clipper oil needed	Spray very lightly with clipper oil
	Donkey's coat damp, dirty, or matted	Wait until donkey dry Groom thoroughly Trim matted hair with scissors
Clippers or blades running hot	New blades with protective grease on them	Remove blades, wipe with paper towel
	Too much oil on blades and inside clipper head	Remove blades, wipe with paper towel Wipe out clipper head
	Tension screw too tight	Loosen screw until noise increases slightly
	Vent blocked	Remove loose hair Remove blades, brush loose hair off, clean head
	Clipper motor worn or dirty	Send for repair
	Spacing bar on clipper head worn	Send for repair