

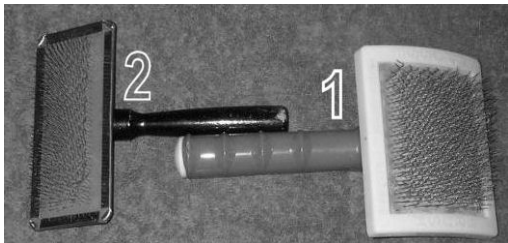
# BRUSHING AND COMBING YOUR BEDLINGTON TERRIER

By Sandy Miles

They say you are never too old to learn, to always keep an open mind, and always be willing to try different grooming techniques! This article is written from my personal experiences and from what I have learned over the past 40 plus years in my grooming career. Having Bedlingtons for 32 of those years, I have had a great deal of experience with this breed. But for now, I will focus on brushing out the Bedlington.

Of course it's ideal to never let your dog get matted. But this is not a perfect world, and it happens. Without going into reasons why dogs get matted or need brushing ... just remember this is my perspective on brushing a Bedlington; others I am sure could, and hopefully will, share their brushing tips. So re-read the first sentence!

There are many types of brushes available to brush your Bedlington or similar-coated breeds (Poodles, Bichons). For serious brushing I like the large curved **Universal Slicker Brush** (brush #1) or similar brand that



gets down into the coat easier. I have found that I can brush faster, more thoroughly, and with less hair loss with the Universal type brush. You may want to do some pre-clipping on the face, ears, tummy, tail and pads of the feet to save having to brush out those areas. Once the coat is bathed,

blown dry and brushed out with the Universal Slicker, you can do further brushing with a gentle slicker such as **#1 All Systems** (brush #2).

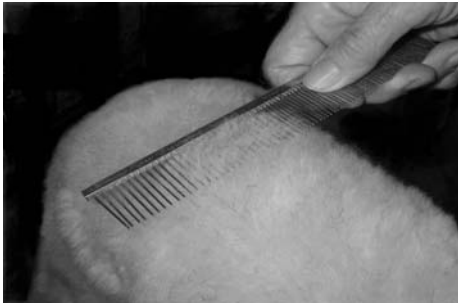
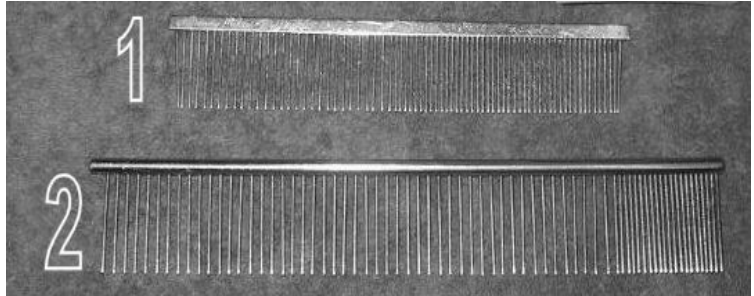
Now, for my technique: I use very short pat/pull strokes with the slicker brush. With the handle of the brush pointing upward, I “pat” my brush straight into the coat, keeping the brush flat and brushing with the middle bristles of the brush, not just the first few rows. Then I “pull” the brush out and through the coat with a very slight upward motion, again, keeping the brush flat and the wrist stiff.



If you choose to brush in a downward stroke, point the handle of the brush down and use the same pat/pull motion in and out of the coat with the brush. This works for a sideways stroke, too. Use the pat/pull strokes repeatedly as you slowly inch your way through the coat. I usually start brushing the lower part of the legs working my way upward, then over the body, and finally the head. Be sure to get the brush clear down to the skin, being careful not to scrape the skin.

Never drag your brush through the coat. Should you come to a mat, keep your brush flat and lightly pat/pull repeatedly until you work the mat out. Do not use a comb if you want to save coat. Once you have completely brushed out the coat, you can go over the dog again taking longer strokes. I have found that if I brush a little slower, giving the hair time to go through the brush, I will save more of the coat and not lose a great deal of time.

Always follow up brushing the coat with a complete comb-out using a Greyhound-type comb (comb #1). I also like using the long "Poodle" combs (comb #2) that are now available. Pet Edge ([www.petedge.com](http://www.petedge.com)) has a good reasonably priced aluminum "Fluffing and Finishing" comb by Master Grooming Tools that is 10 inches long and has longer teeth. Be sure to comb between the toes of each foot, an area that is often overlooked.



When combing, hold the comb with the side of the comb horizontal to the body of the dog. Put the comb into the dog's coat teeth first and pull straight out from the dog's body toward you, being careful not to twist the comb. This will make the hair stand out from the body

If you have a matted dog and do not want to clip it down, try using Davis "Coat Gloss" ([www.davismfg.com](http://www.davismfg.com)) to help with de-matting and brushing. I really like this product. It feels like a light oil, however it does not make the coat oily. I pour about a quarter size amount in the palm of my hand and rub my palms together and then rub my palms over the dog's legs first, then upward all over the dog, working the oil into the coat. Use more Coat Gloss as needed. It will take several palm rubbings to cover the dog. Brush out with the pat/pull strokes and be patient; it does take time to de-mat a dog. You will be amazed how well this Coat Gloss works on mats. If you are de-matting a customer's dog, keep track of your time and charge accordingly.

If the dog is not matted, I will not brush out the dog's coat before bathing. It is better to brush out a clean dry coat than a dirty dry coat.

Finally after brushing, bathe the dog using your favorite shampoo. Blow dry with a high-powered forced-air dryer. Brush and comb out the dog again. When blow-drying, don't whip the nozzle around back and forth; move it slowly, giving the hair time to dry and straighten out. When drying the head, which most dogs hate, put your hand under the chin and hold the nozzle 12 – 15 inches away from the head, again moving slowly and never blowing directly into the eyes, ears, or nose.

Now it's time to clip and scissor to a beautiful finish...

