



GIVING YOUR BIRMAN A SHOW BATH -- Greg Beach

Supplies needed: Metal comb; spray hose attached to your bath tub or kitchen sink; Goop Hand Cleaner; electric tooth brush; Dawn dishwashing detergent, (*original*); shampoo of your choice, Johnson's baby shampoo; large plastic cup, white vinegar; Mrs. Stewart's Liquid Bluing, (*found near fabric softeners*); large metal/plastic bowl or pitcher; two towels; Daily Care Leave-In-Detangler by Joico (*formerly Integrity*); blow dryer; Diamateous Earth, white groomers chalk.

The bath:

- ✓ **Step 1:** Gather your supplies. You will want everything within reach when you need it.
- ✓ **Step 2:** Trim your cat's nails.
- ✓ **Step 3:** Comb your cat well using a metal comb. This removes loose/dead hair, preventing it from later becoming tangled up in wet hair.
- ✓ **Step 4:** If your cat is very oily begin by deeply massaging Goop Hand Cleaner into the oily areas of the dry coat. (*Typically, behind the ears, under the arms, the hair above the hock on the back of the leg, the tail.*) Never apply Goop to the cat's face. Allow the Goop to set a few minutes before rinsing out. Not all cats require this step.
- ✓ **Step 5:** Apply Dawn to the entire coat, but never to the face. Massage into the coat deeply. Next use the electric tooth brush on the front and back sides of all white feet, the front and rear legs, and behind the ears. Rinse.
- ✓ **Step 6:** Repeat step 5 once more if your cat is very oily. Not all cats require this step.
- ✓ **Step 7:** Apply the shampoo of your choice to the cat's coat and massage in deeply. Again, use the tooth brush in the areas mentioned in Step 5. Rinse.
- ✓ **Step 8:** Repeat step 7, but don't use the tooth brush, then rinse.
- ✓ **Step 9:** Apply a small amount of the Johnson's baby shampoo to the face, gently. Massage gently with your finger. Don't use much product, and when it comes time to rinse it out do so by filling the plastic cup with warm water and gently pouring it over the cat's face. This works better than trying to use the spray hose on the cat's face.
- ✓ **Step 10:** Rinse the entire cat, and then rinse more.
- ✓ **Step 11:** Mix some white vinegar with some water in the plastic cup – usually about one part vinegar to about 9 parts water, but it is okay to guess. Pour over the cat's body, avoiding the face. This step helps remove any lingering soap.
- ✓ **Step 12:** Rinse the entire cat.
- ✓ **Step 13:** Fill the metal/plastic bowl or pitcher with warm water and add a drop or two of Mrs. Stewart's Liquid Bluing. Your goal is to make the water sky blue in color, and no deeper in color than pale/sky blue. Dip your cat's white feet into this and then pour it over your cat's body. This will help remove yellow, and make white sparkle. Do not rinse this out.

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- ✓ **Step 14:** Wrap your cat in a dry towel to absorb excess water. Then use the 2nd towel to lightly massage your cat's body to remove even more water until the hair is damp.
- ✓ **Step 15:** Lightly spray in the Leave-In-Detangler, and then gently comb your cat.
- ✓ **Step 16:** Blow dry your cat. Alternate between drying and combing. The combing breaks up the hair and helps it to separate and become fluffy. Use the comb gently, through, and comb in all directions. Make sure your cat is totally dry everywhere before you stop drying. A damp cat can result in a wavy and limp looking coat the following day.
- ✓ **Step 17:** Sprinkle the Diamateous Earth into areas your cat might be oily and massage in. Let it set for a few minutes, then gently comb. Use sparingly. I like to mix mine into a large salt shaker so I can better control how much I put on my cat.
- ✓ **Step 18:** Always make sure a freshly groomed cat has a newly cleaned litter box. After giving a show bath I confine my cat to a cage until we leave for the show. If your cat has a long ruff that gets into food don't be afraid to use a bib – I've never had a Birman object to it.

On the day of the show:

- ✓ Lightly spray the coat with the Leave-In-Detangler, and gently comb until dry. This helps remove static. Another tip in the winter is you can lightly steam your cat by turning on the hot water in the shower and shutting the bathroom door. Put the cat in its carrier and allow to sit in the steam filled bathroom a few minutes, but not too long.
- ✓ If you see any oily areas sparingly sprinkle in any Diamateous Earth, and gently comb out.
- ✓ Lightly/sparingly apply white groomers chalk to the white feet.

For non-show baths:

- ✓ Follow steps 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15 and 16.