

BORN TO BE *Boujee* — SCHOOL —



STUDENT HANDBOOK



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A MODERN VOCATIONAL TRAINING HANDBOOK
FOR PROFESSIONAL DOG GROOMING STUDENTS.

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Student Responsibility

By signing the acknowledgement page, each student confirms that they received this handbook, understands the school rules, and agrees to follow all policies during enrollment.

1. Welcome, Mission, and School Culture

Welcome to NJ Dog Grooming School. We are excited that you have chosen to begin your grooming education with us. Professional dog grooming is a hands-on trade that requires technical skill, patience, creativity, compassion, safety awareness, and strong customer service. Our goal is to help students build a foundation they can take into a real salon environment.

NJ Dog Grooming School is designed for students who want practical training, not just classroom theory. Students learn through demonstration, guided practice, repetition, instructor feedback, and real grooming preparation. Every student is expected to approach the program with the attitude of a future professional.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to prepare students for entry-level success in the dog grooming industry by providing structured instruction, supervised hands-on training, professional salon expectations, and education in safe animal handling, sanitation, customer service, and grooming fundamentals.

Our School Culture

- Respect for animals comes first at all times.
- Students are expected to be professional, dependable, and coachable.
- Instructors provide guidance, correction, and support so students can grow.
- The school environment should feel organized, safe, clean, and career-focused.
- Students should treat training like a job and prepare for real workplace expectations.

Director Message

As Directors, Eric Stephenson and Jessica Danley are committed to maintaining a learning environment where students are challenged, supported, and held to high standards. The grooming field can be rewarding, but it requires discipline. Students who attend consistently, practice with care, and accept feedback will get the most value from the program.

Important Note

Enrollment in the program does not guarantee graduation, certification, or employment. Success depends on attendance, participation, conduct, skill development, and completion of all program requirements.

2. Program Description and Learning Outcomes

NJ Dog Grooming School provides vocational training for students pursuing careers in dog grooming and related pet care services. The program introduces students to grooming tools, coat preparation, bathing, drying, brushing, de-matting, clipping, scissoring, breed pattern concepts, salon workflow, and client communication.

The program is organized so students develop from basic handling and preparation skills into more complete grooming services. Students should understand that grooming ability improves through repeated practice. The school provides the foundation, but graduates must continue learning after completion.

Program Objectives

- Teach safe, humane, and professional dog handling.
- Introduce grooming equipment and proper maintenance procedures.
- Develop bathing, drying, brushing, de-matting, nail, and ear care skills.
- Build clipper, guard comb, blade, scissoring, and finishing techniques.
- Prepare students to perform common pet trims and understand breed pattern basics.
- Teach salon workflow, client communication, check-in procedures, and professional habits.
- Help students understand career expectations and prepare for employment interviews.

Expected Student Outcomes

Upon successful completion, students should be able to safely prepare dogs for grooming, identify and use common grooming tools, complete basic grooming services, follow sanitation procedures, communicate professionally, and demonstrate the personal conduct expected in a grooming workplace.

Career Opportunities

Graduates may pursue entry-level opportunities in grooming salons, mobile grooming businesses, pet care facilities, veterinary offices, kennels, daycare facilities, or independent grooming businesses. Job placement is not guaranteed, but the school may provide career guidance and industry readiness support when available.

Professional Growth

A Certificate of Completion represents successful completion of school requirements. It is not the end of learning. Groomers continue improving through practice, mentorship, seminars, competitions, continuing education, and daily salon experience.

3. Curriculum Overview

The curriculum is divided into four progressive modules. Each module builds upon the previous one. Students must show safe handling, effort, and developing competency before moving into more advanced grooming tasks. Instructors may adjust the pace of training based on student progress, safety, and available dogs.

Training Format

- Instructor demonstrations and explanations.
- Hands-on practice with supervision.
- Tool and equipment orientation.
- Salon-style procedures and daily routines.
- Practical evaluations and instructor feedback.
- Progress reviews to discuss strengths and areas for improvement.

Curriculum Map

Module	Primary Focus	Examples of Skills
1	Foundations	Safety, handling, bathing, drying, brushing, de-matting, nails, ears
2	Techniques	Clipper work, guard combs, face trims, feet, tails, body trimming
3	Breed Styling	Poodles, bichons, terriers, spaniels, pattern setting, consultations
4	Advanced Finish	Scissoring, blending, detail work, speed with control, final presentation

Skill Development Standards

Students are evaluated on safety, preparation, tool control, cleanliness, coat condition, ability to follow instructions, professionalism, and improvement over time. Students are not expected to be perfect immediately, but they are expected to take feedback seriously and practice consistently.

Hands-On Learning

Because dog grooming is physical and skill-based, the most important learning happens through participation. Students who miss demonstrations, grooming appointments, or live practice may fall behind. Written review can help, but it cannot fully replace hands-on instruction.

4. Module 1: Grooming Foundations

Module 1 introduces students to the grooming environment and the preparation work that supports every quality groom. A dog that is not properly bathed, dried, brushed, and handled cannot be finished correctly. For that reason, foundations are treated as essential professional skills, not beginner chores.

Topics Covered

- Grooming salon safety and sanitation.
- Dog behavior, body language, stress signals, and restraint basics.
- Canine anatomy, coat types, and basic skin and coat awareness.
- Bathing products, shampoo selection, rinsing, and drying methods.
- Brushing, combing, de-matting, undercoat removal, and coat preparation.
- Nail trimming, nail filing, ear cleaning, paw pads, sanitary trims, and basic clipper introduction.

Foundation Expectations

Students must learn to work calmly and safely. They are expected to ask for help with difficult dogs, avoid rushing, keep tools organized, and protect the animal from unnecessary stress. Instructors will correct unsafe habits immediately.

5. Module 2: Grooming Techniques

Module 2 connects preparation work to complete grooming services. Students begin developing routines that help them work efficiently while maintaining safety and quality.

Skills Introduced

- Clipper control, blade handling, and guard comb use.
- Body clipping with coat direction and pressure awareness.
- Face, feet, tail, and sanitary detail work.
- Blending lines and creating balanced pet trims.
- Scissoring basics, including control, hand position, and shaping.
- Quality checks before returning a dog to the client.

Instructor Approval Required

Students may not use advanced tools, perform new techniques, or handle difficult dogs without instructor approval. Safety and supervision are required throughout training.

6. Module 3: Breed Styling and Client Communication

Module 3 introduces breed styling concepts and professional client interaction. Students learn that grooming is not only about cutting hair; it is also about understanding the client request, assessing the dog, explaining options, and setting realistic expectations.

Breed and Pattern Instruction

- Poodle-inspired trims and clean feet or face concepts when appropriate.
- Bichon and round-style shaping principles.
- Terrier outline and coat-shape awareness.
- Spaniel-style trims and feathering concepts.
- Modified pet trims based on coat condition, lifestyle, and client preference.

Client Communication

- Ask clear questions during check-in.
- Confirm length, style, matting, coat condition, and special concerns.
- Record instructions carefully.
- Explain when coat condition limits what can be done safely.
- Remain polite and professional, even during difficult conversations.

7. Module 4: Advanced Grooming and Finishing

Module 4 focuses on refinement, consistency, and final presentation. Students practice combining preparation, clipper work, scissoring, blending, and client instructions into a finished groom.

Advanced Focus Areas

- Cleaner transitions and more balanced outlines.
- Improved scissoring technique and detail work.
- Finishing sprays, comb-out, final checks, and presentation.
- Time management without sacrificing safety.
- Developing confidence and independence while still following instructor direction.

Graduation Readiness

Before graduation, students must show that they can work safely, follow instructions, complete required assessments, and demonstrate progress in the skills taught throughout the program.

8. Safety, Sanitation, and Animal Handling

Animal safety is the highest priority at NJ Dog Grooming School. Grooming involves sharp tools, moving dogs, water, electrical dryers, grooming tables, loops, blades, shears, and products that must be used correctly. A safe groom is more important than a fast groom.

General Safety Rules

- Never leave a dog unattended on a grooming table or in a tub.
- Use grooming loops and restraints correctly and humanely.
- Keep shears, blades, cords, dryers, and tools in safe positions.
- Report bites, scratches, cuts, burns, equipment problems, or unsafe behavior immediately.
- Stop and ask for help if a dog becomes overly stressed, aggressive, ill, or difficult to control.
- Do not use products, blades, tools, or techniques unless instructed.

Sanitation Standards

- Clean tubs, tables, kennels, floors, and work areas as instructed.
- Disinfect tools and surfaces according to school procedures.
- Remove hair, water, and debris promptly to reduce slips and contamination.
- Wash hands when appropriate and maintain good hygiene.
- Keep personal items away from grooming areas.

Incident Reporting

All injuries or incidents must be reported to an instructor immediately, even if they appear minor. Students must never hide a grooming mistake, injury, or safety concern. Honest reporting protects the dog, the student, the client, and the school.

Animal Welfare Standard

Rough handling, yelling at dogs, unsafe restraint, careless tool use, or ignoring signs of distress is not acceptable. Students who cannot follow safe handling expectations may be removed from hands-on training or withdrawn from the program.

9. Attendance, Tardiness, and Daily Procedures

Attendance is essential because grooming is learned through live demonstration and hands-on practice. Missed classes may cause a student to miss techniques, dogs, demonstrations, discussions, or assessments that cannot be fully duplicated later.

Attendance Expectations

- Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes.
- Students must arrive on time and be ready to begin at the scheduled start.
- Students must notify the instructor as soon as possible if they will be absent or late.
- A maximum of three absences may be permitted during the program unless otherwise approved.
- Excessive absences may result in withdrawal or delayed completion.

Daily Sign-In Procedure

- Students must sign in with the correct date and arrival time.
- Students must sign out and back in for lunch breaks.
- Students are expected to return promptly from lunch.
- Attendance records may be used to determine eligibility for graduation.

Class Schedule

Location	Class Days / Times
Hamilton Location	Sundays 11:00 AM - 7:00 PM; Mondays 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Additional Hamilton Location	Schedule provided upon enrollment or as assigned by school administration

Cancellations and Schedule Changes

If class is canceled because of weather, instructor illness, emergency, or another reason, the school will communicate schedule adjustments. Missed sessions may resume where instruction left off, and the schedule may be extended only when necessary.

10. Admissions, Trial Enrollment, Tuition, and Refunds

Admission Requirements

Applicants must be at least 18 years old and able to safely participate in a physical grooming program. The school may require a personal interview before admission. Applicants must be able to stand for extended periods, understand instruction, safely use grooming tools, and handle dogs of various sizes and temperaments.

- Minimum age: 18 years old.
- Ability to safely handle grooming tools and equipment.
- Ability to work around dogs of different sizes, breeds, and temperaments.
- Ability to stand, bend, lift within reasonable limits, and perform repetitive grooming movements.
- Ability to understand, retain, and apply instruction.

Trial Enrollment Period

The first two weeks of the program are considered a trial enrollment period. During this time, students may decide whether the program is the right fit. The school also evaluates whether the student can safely learn the basic requirements of grooming.

The school may withdraw a student during or after the trial period for unsafe conduct, inability to understand or perform basic grooming fundamentals, inappropriate behavior, excessive absences, or failure to meet program expectations.

Tuition and Payment Expectations

A non-refundable deposit may be required to reserve enrollment. Remaining tuition must be paid according to the student enrollment agreement. Equipment, books, tools, uniforms, or supplies may be separate costs unless otherwise stated in writing.

Payment Plans

Students approved for a payment plan must follow the written payment schedule. A valid card may be required to remain on file. Late or missed payments may result in suspension, withdrawal, or the full remaining balance becoming due according to the enrollment agreement.

Withdrawal and Refunds

Withdrawal requests must be submitted in writing to the Director and should include the student name, withdrawal date, and reason for withdrawal. Refunds, when applicable, are processed according to the school refund policy and enrollment agreement. Payment plan balances may remain due even if a student withdraws after the program begins.

11. Professional Conduct, Dress Code, and Cell Phones

Students represent NJ Dog Grooming School while enrolled. Professional behavior is required in class, during grooming appointments, when interacting with clients, and when working around classmates and instructors.

Professional Conduct Standards

- Speak respectfully to instructors, classmates, clients, and staff.
- Follow instructions the first time they are given.
- Accept feedback without arguing or disrupting class.
- Do not use offensive, threatening, harassing, or discriminatory language.
- Protect client information and avoid gossip.
- Do not bring outside drama into the school environment.
- Maintain a clean and safe workstation.

Dress Code

- Grooming smock, scrub top, grooming pants, leggings, scrub pants, or similar professional attire.
- Closed-toe, slip-resistant footwear is required.
- Open-toe shoes, sandals, heels, and unsafe footwear are not permitted.
- Loose jewelry or accessories that may catch on dogs or equipment should not be worn.
- Students should dress in a way that is clean, practical, and appropriate for a working grooming environment.

Cell Phone and Technology Policy

Cell phones may be used only for educational purposes, such as taking approved photos of grooming work for learning and progress documentation. Personal calls, texting, social media, videos, and unrelated phone use are not permitted during grooming or instruction.

Repeated violation of the phone policy may result in phone restrictions during class or other disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Action

The school may respond to policy violations with verbal warnings, written warnings, loss of privileges, suspension from hands-on work, withdrawal from the program, or other action depending on the seriousness of the conduct.

12. Progress Reviews, Graduation, Certificates, and Career Readiness

Student progress is monitored throughout the program. Grooming is a skill-based trade, so progress is measured by effort, safety, improvement, consistency, attendance, and the ability to apply instruction.

Progress Reviews

- Students may receive progress feedback during the program.
- Reviews may address technical skills, safety, attitude, attendance, and professionalism.
- Students who are struggling may be given specific areas to improve.
- Progress feedback is intended to help students succeed and prepare for real salon expectations.

Assessments

- Practical grooming performance.
- Safe handling and tool use.
- Preparation work including bathing, drying, brushing, nails, and ears.
- Clipper and scissoring development.
- Ability to follow instructions and complete assigned tasks.
- Professional behavior and client communication readiness.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate, students must maintain satisfactory attendance, demonstrate safe grooming practices, complete required assignments or assessments, show consistent progress, follow school policies, and meet the standards established by instructors and administration.

Certificate of Completion

Students who successfully complete all program requirements will receive a Certificate of Completion from NJ Dog Grooming School. Dog grooming is not formally licensed in the same way in every state; the certificate recognizes completion of this vocational training program and the requirements set by the school.

Career Readiness Support

The school may provide guidance on resumes, interviews, salon expectations, professionalism, grooming portfolios, and job readiness. Employment is not guaranteed, but students are encouraged to use the skills and habits developed in the program to pursue grooming opportunities.

13. Equal Opportunity, ADA Disclosure, and Student Acknowledgement

Equal Opportunity Statement

NJ Dog Grooming School provides educational opportunities without discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or any other legally protected status. The school expects all students and staff to contribute to a respectful and inclusive learning environment.

ADA and Essential Requirements Disclosure

Students requesting accommodations should contact the Directors before enrollment or as soon as the need is known. Reasonable accommodations may be considered when appropriate. Because grooming is a physical, hands-on trade involving live animals and sharp tools, every student must be able to safely perform the essential functions of the program.

Essential requirements may include standing for extended periods, safely handling dogs, understanding and retaining instructions, using grooming tools appropriately, responding to safety directions, and maintaining control in a salon environment. If a student cannot safely meet the essential requirements, enrollment or continued participation may not be possible.

Student Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the NJ Dog Grooming School Student Handbook. I understand that I am responsible for following the policies, procedures, and expectations described in this handbook. I understand that enrollment does not guarantee graduation, certification, or employment.

Student Name (Print):	
Signature:	
Date:	
Director/Witness:	

Final Reminder
Students should keep a copy of this handbook and ask questions if any policy is unclear. The school may update procedures when necessary to protect safety, improve training, or comply with applicable requirements.

Born to Be Boujee Grooming School

Student Liability Waiver & Release

By signing below, I acknowledge that participation in dog grooming training involves inherent risks, including working with live animals, sharp tools, electrical equipment, water, and grooming products. I agree to follow all safety instructions and use reasonable care at all times.

I voluntarily assume these ordinary risks and release Born to Be Boujee Grooming School, its owners, instructors, employees, and agents from claims arising from ordinary participation, except where prohibited by law or involving gross negligence or willful misconduct.

I authorize emergency medical treatment if necessary and accept responsibility for any related expenses. I also acknowledge that photographs or videos taken during training may be used for educational or promotional purposes unless I opt out in writing.

I have read and understand this waiver and sign it voluntarily.

Student Name (Print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____