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How We Tape Our Pugs' Ears

There are two types of pug ears, the rose and the button. The button type frames the face of the pug the best to show off the beautiful round head. Most show pugs have button ears, but that doesn't mean that their ears always looked that way.

When a puppy goes through the long process of acquiring its adult teeth, all calcium stores in the body will go toward the production of these teeth. This often causes the soft cartilage of an ear to "crash". This is show breeder jargon to describe an ear that suddenly begins to fold in on itself, hence, becoming the less desired rose variety.

While our pug's cartilage is hardening (9 weeks to 9 months), we often have to tape its ears so that they will lie in the proper button style.

In the photo on the next page, the puppy has both a button ear (on the left) and a rose ear (on the right). The rose ear on the right needs taping.



The ear on the right needs to be taped.

We use 3M Transpore Clear Plastic Tape, 1 X 10 Yards. Here are our steps:

STEP 1:

We start off by tearing off two 4-5 inch long sections of the tape.

STEP 2:

We place the torn off tape on the edge of a table.

STEP 3:

We sit in a chair with the dog lying down on our lap facing away from us next to the table so that we can easily reach the sections of tape. We take hold of the ear with one hand and gently hold the pug's head down with the other hand.



Step 3

STEP 4:

We grasp the ear with our fingers and fold it in half until the edges of the ear line up with each other. (As if we are making the ear into a taco shell.) We put our index finger into the fold to keep the ear level to make the fold straighter.



Step 4

STEP 5:

We remove our index finger from the fold and pinch hold the ear in the folded position at the base of the skull.



Step 5

STEP 6:

We continue to hold the ear folded at the base of the skull with one hand. With our other hand, we take one piece of the tape off of the table and place one end of it on one side of the ear, about ¼ inch away from the bell part of the ear.



Step 6

STEP 7:

Firmly but gently, we fold the tape over the ear, pressing down with the fingers of one hand while holding the ear straight with the other hand to make sure that the ear does not wrinkle under the tape.



Step 7

STEP 8:

We continue to fold the tape over the ear in this manner until all of the tape is completely on the ear.



Step 8

STEP 9:

We fold the ear tip into the bell of the ear, and smooth out the base of the ear.



Step 9

STEP 10:

Then we repeat this process on the other ear.



Step 10

We leave the tape on until the next bathing. We replace the tape when it gets loose or dirty. We repeat this procedure for several months until the ear stays in the desired button position. We avoid leaving the tape off for longer than one or two days.

Red skin lesions or sores are likely to develop on the ear if the tape gets dirty or wet. If this happens, we allow the ears to rest without tape for 1-2 days MAXIMUM, and then re-tape. We also put a dab of Triple Antibiotic Ointment on the sores, but we have to completely remove it in order to get the tape to stick.

We discourage our pugs from scratching at the tape by correcting him with "NAH-NAH" when he does it, and by praising him for being good when he leaves the tapes alone. The tape may annoy our pug but we consider it as necessary as braces on a human children's teeth. Keeping the pug's ears in tape while the ears are forming will avoid the need for the adult dog to wear tapes later on, and will provide a lifetime of health and aesthetic benefits.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions about the process.