

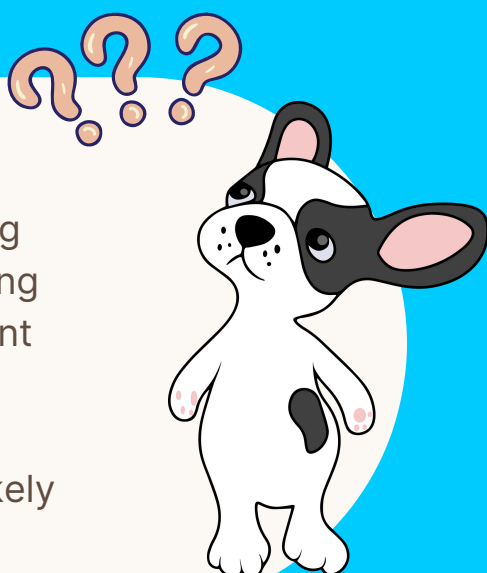
Relaxing Massage

Technique 1 - Effleurage

Effleurage = a French word meaning 'to skim' or 'to touch lightly on'

What is it?

A smooth and soothing stroking movement used at the beginning and end of a massage treatment (and in-between!). It allows a gentle connection and is a technique which your dog is likely familiar with.



Technique

Using flat hands stroke in the direction the hair lies. Rest one hand gently on your dog while the other massages. Or go two-handed but aim to always retain contact with one hand..



Speed

Slow it down, then slow it down again! Get into a steady rhythm of one stroke per second.

Using a slow rhythm is relaxing. A quick stroke is more energising.



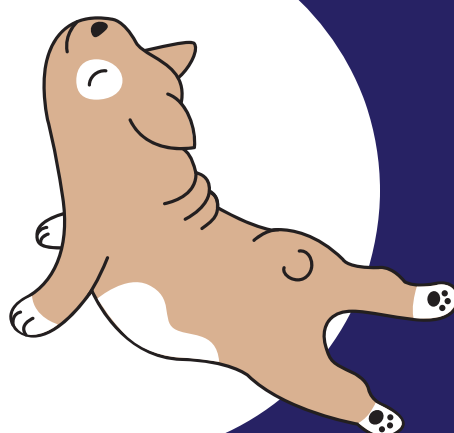
How much pressure?

Use a confident, firm but gentle touch. Always begin with a light pressure, which may be worked progressively to a heavier pressure if appropriate. For elderly or frail dogs keep to a light pressure.



Where?

Effleurage can be done on the entire body; down their back and limbs is a great place to start! Your dog will show you what's out of bounds - simply focus anywhere your dog enjoys!



Relaxing Massage

Technique 2 - Petrissage

Petrissage = a French word meaning 'to knead'. Petrissage is the foundation of massage - and comprises of kneading, compression, muscle-squeezing, wringing-up and skin-rolling.

Kneading

Tissues are lifted, rolled and squeezed. Use your thumbs and three fingers (index, major and ring finger.) Think about kneading bread and you've got the idea! Movement should be slow and rhythmic.



Compression

Pressure is placed on the muscle, and held momentarily. Use your thumb, palms of your hands, or the heel of your hands, - whatever is most comfortable for the muscle being treated.

Muscle-squeezing

Wrap your hands around the dog's lower limb and give a gentle squeeze. Relax your grip and move your way up each leg, repeating the motion.



Wringing-up

Place hands on your dog side by side. . With hands affixed to the muscles move one hand up and the other down at the same time. Move your hands back and forth. Rhythm should be smooth - one stroke per second or less.

Skin-rolling

Skin-rolling is a gentle gliding motion of the tissues above the muscle - which includes skin, fat, and fascia. With thumbs on one side and fingers on the other grasp and lift the tissue. Work your way up and down by 'rolling' the tissue. Avoid areas where the skin is not loose.

