

Published on *Webvet* (<http://www.webvet.com/main>)

[Home](#) > [smell](#) > 6 Tips For Deskunking Your Pet > 6 Tips For Deskunking Your Pet

6 Tips For Deskunking Your Pet

[blog](#) [outdoor](#) [smell](#)



Be prepared. If you've seen skunks near where you live, heard stories about friends' pets getting skunked, or caught the unmistakable waft of skunk on a warm breeze, you should probably stock up on [deskunking tools](#) now, rather than get caught empty-handed. (Or, more accurately, with your hands *full* – of skunky pet. Boo.)

Robin Maurillo of the Auburn (NY) Citizen recommends a go bag with the following: Dawn dishwashing liquid, or another grease-fighting formulation (skunk spray is "very oily"); 3-percent hydrogen peroxide; baking soda; pet shampoo; rubber or latex gloves; old clothes. If you've seen a lot of skunks around or had pets get sprayed frequently in the past, consider putting together a "go bucket" near your back door so you can grab the deskunking kit in a hurry.

The best defense is...a good defense. Keep trash containers tightly sealed; remove extra or fallen fruit and seeds from trees and birdfeeders regularly; scatter mothballs at the edges of your property to deter skunks from approaching (or smelling something they want to eat); and keep a close eye on pets in the evenings.

And the most important weapon in your arsenal: keep your pets' vaccines updated, particularly the one for rabies, which is fatal.

Enlist a deskunking "buddy." Bathing many pets, especially cats who are already angry, is a two-person job; things will go more smoothly with an extra set of hands.

Check eyes and fur. If your pet got close enough to get tagged, she may also have gotten bitten or scratched. Before commencing the bath cycle, check your pet for bites or other wounds. Also make sure she didn't get sprayed directly in the face; you can rinse a pet's eyes yourself, but if they're very red or discharging, see a vet as soon as possible.

Act fast. If Toby or Tigger is physically okay, get him sudsed up pronto. Bathing a skunked pet is a hassle for everyone involved, but the longer you wait to lather up, the harder it is to get the smell out. Leaving your pet outside to "air out" overnight just postpones the inevitable.

Use the rule of threes. Maurillo recommends a three-step bathing process:

- 1) Start with Dawn or another de-greasing soap to break up the oils and cut the stench a bit.
- 2) Mix an antidote – one quart peroxide, ¼ cup baking soda, 1 tsp Dawn – and rub it into your pet's fur, down to the skin. Use a hand towel to wash your pet's face, avoiding his eyes. (If the eyes need washing, use cool water, and rinse from the inner corner outwards.) Let mixture stand 5-15 minutes; rinse with fresh water. Note: do not pre-mix the antidote; storing it in a covered container COULD lead to it blowing up, so wait until you need it. Rinse your pet off promptly so he doesn't get blond highlights by mistake.
- 3) Wash again with pet shampoo.

Tomato juice is the most famous method, but many owners report that it doesn't zap the odor so much as make the hound smell like a skunk Bloody Mary. That's because tomato juice *masks* the smell; the oxidation process actually fights it. You can also try a vinegar-and-water dilution, but according to "Mythbusters," the most effective anti-skunk-tail is the peroxide mixture above. Whatever you use, finish up with pet shampoo to re-balance your pet's coat's pH.

Stay warm. Now that your furball is cleaned up, make sure he's dry, too. Towel-dry him thoroughly, and blow-dry him on

medium (if he'll tolerate it, that is; if not, turn him loose in a toasty room with lots of towels and let him dry himself).

Check out more great stuff from [Yahoo! Shine Pets](#):

[A day out with a New York dog-walker](#)

[Animal Nation: Pet first aid and your medicine cabinet](#)

[Justin Bieber...snake harmer?](#)

Source URL (retrieved on 05/28/2013 - 12:07): <http://www.webvet.com/main/2012/03/24/6-tips-deskunking-your-pet>