

4 Ways To Clipping Perfection

Kirk Stierwalt provides tips for maintaining your clippers.

by **Brittney Mitchell**, for the Andis Co.



PHOTO COURTESY ANDIS CO.

Whether you're showing for the first time or have been grooming cattle for years, you need reliable tools that get the job done right.

How can you easily keep your clippers, trimmers and grooming tools working great all year round? Renowned Andis grooming educator Kirk Stierwalt says maintenance is key.

"I travel all around the country helping people of all ages acquire skills they need to put the 'competitive edge' on their side," says Stierwalt. "I consistently find people don't properly care for one of their everyday investments — clippers."

Stierwalt shares a few of the maintenance tips and tricks he stands by to make sure his clippers and grooming tools are working perfectly whether he's on the go, in the barn or getting ready for show season.

1. Be proactive

Taking the time and making a habit of maintaining your blades will save you time and money by not having to repair or replace your clipper blades.

As a national grooming educator for Andis

Co., Stierwalt is a huge proponent for clipper maintenance because it also ensures the grooming and trimming experience will be the most comfortable and efficient for your cattle and you.

"I think of maintaining my tools like I think of maintaining my truck — I would never drive my truck for long periods of time without getting an oil change, rotating the tires or checking the filters. Your clippers are no different."

2. Oil your blades

The No. 1 rule for keeping your clippers running smoothly is well-oiled blades.

You should oil your clipper blade every 30 minutes while in use. Start the cleaning process by removing excess hair from the blade using a soft brush. Then, apply clipper oil on each side of the blade. Wipe the blade clean with a cloth or towel and you will be ready to get back to work.

3. Care for your cords

Did you know that the cord is one of the most important parts on the clipper?

When you're using a corded clipper, it's important to use proper positioning to prevent tangles.

Tangles that are bad enough can lead to shorts in the cord, which means wasted time, and nobody wants that, Stierwalt says.

According to Stierwalt, you should never wrap your cord around your clipper. That can weaken the electrical connection in the tool and cause long-term performance issues.

His preference? Drop the cord over the back of your shoulder so the excess cord isn't touching or dragging across your steer or heifer.

4. Disinfect after every groom

Don't forget to disinfect.

After every groom, spray Andis Blade Care Plus to disinfect, clean, cool and lubricate the blades, he advises. The 7-in-1 solution is enriched with vitamin E — and prevents rust all at once.

"If you're working in the heat or doing a large volume of cutting that results in your blade getting warm to the touch, I would recommend Andis Cool Care Plus," says Stierwalt. "A hefty spray of Andis Cool Care will bring that blade temperature back to a comfortable level that won't cause irritation for your animal."

Great cattle grooming is only achieved with practice and great tools, making maintenance key to your success. You'll be well on your way if you can remember these four things: be proactive, oil-oil-oil, care for cords, and disinfect.

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Author's Note: Kirk Stierwalt lives in Leedey, Okla., where he and his family own and operate Stierwalt Show Cattle. Stierwalt also runs Stierwalt Show Cattle Clinics for people of all ages to acquire the skills needed to put the "competitive edge" on their side. He has judged numerous cattle shows and showmanship contests throughout the United States and has been an Andis educator for 10 years. The company offers many clipper and clipper maintenance supplies.

Editor's Note: This article is adapted from an article provided by Ideas That Evoke on behalf of its client the Andis Co.



