

Clipper Common Complaints:

If you are experiencing problems using your clipper, here are some of the more common causes.

The following notes are only intended as general advice. There is no substitute for following the manufacturers instructions and obtaining regular maintenance.

Problem	Reason	Solution
Clipper fails to cut or jams in the coat	Worn or badly sharpened blades.	Get your blades re-sharpened by a company that uses the lapping process and not grinding.
	Incorrect tension	Tension the blades (ready oiled) according to the clipper instruction booklet & never over tighten. If you have lost the instructions, we can advise on the procedure for different models.
	Insufficient or incorrect lubricant	Clippers require regular lubrication or they become hot. Oil needs to be applied so that it gets between the blades and also onto the rotating crank mechanism. Typically apply oil at 5-10 min intervals. Oil should NEVER get inside the motor which will cause damage. WD40 is NOT correct.
	General wear or damage to the clipper head including comb pegs, blade guides, the drive block, bearings & springs.	Get the machine serviced by a clipper specialist

	Use of incorrect type or amount of lubricant	NEVER use WD40 which sticks blades together and can cause damage. Do use the light oil recommended by the manufacturer. We sell a pure light oil meeting BP WM2 specification. Its nice to your skin & never causes problems.
	Dirt, hair, or rust between blades.	Remove blades & clean. Store blades in dry conditions with light oil applied to prevent rust.
	Animals coat dirty or damp.	You must have a clean dry animal. Dirty horses blunt blades very quickly.
Clipper noisy & cutting badly	Crank roller or block missing. Comb pegs damaged or missing	Get missing component fitted to avoid (further) damage.
Lines showing in coat	Uneven pressure	Adjust hold. Leading edge of blade needs to be evenly in contact.
	Missing teeth. Corners of bottom blade too sharp causing scratching which gives impression of a line.	You need to replace your blades.
	Play in the clipper mechanism	You need your clipper servicing
	Insufficient overlap between one run and the next	Overlap runs by 50%
	Insufficient cutter movement - the blade teeth are not overlapping sufficiently.	This can occur in both rotary and oscillatory clippers. Service and repair is required.

	Blades are too coarse or lower blade design allows it to ride over the coat.	You clipper manufacturer or Clippers Ltd will advise the correct blades.
	Clipper not being used directly against the lie of the coat.	Clip with firm pressure against the lie of the coat keeping the tips of the blades against the skin.
Animal cut or bleeding	Loose skin area or broken blades. Use the greatest care to protect the animal.	Don't clip folds or wrinkles. Replace blades with damaged teeth or sharp edges, which might cause injury. Stretch loose skin.
	Sharp edges on blades or damaged blades.	Replace blades. Removal of sharp edges may be possible.
Horse looks moth eaten	Uneven pressure or contact, uneven/short strokes, blunt blades or not cutting against the lie of the coat	Use long, even, overlapping strokes against the lie of the coat.
	Blades becoming blunt or incorrect sharpening	Get them properly sharpened by a firm that use the lapping process.
	Animal dirty or damp	Grit is the best known technique for blunting blades.
	Attempting to clip the animal too short. A grey is more likely to look moth eaten with a very short coat.	

The Right Conditions

1. Clip horses before the coat grows thick and clip frequently to maintain an even length. If legs are clipped use standard blades, whereas the body may be clipped with either standard or fine blades. However if you are considering using fine blades think whether a fine clip will suit the horse and if the weather is suitable. Cattle require coarse tooth blades.
2. It is considered generally cruel to clip foals.
3. Choose a well-lit area with a non-slip floor. You must avoid situations where you are trapped by the horse and/or building.
4. If your horse is nervous, ask your veterinarian for advice beforehand. It may be helpful to hold the running clipper against the horse before starting work or to accustom the horse to the sound of the machine at a distance.
5. Remove all objects that you or your horse may stumble upon e.g. water buckets. It is especially important keep the clipping machine flex out of the way. The flex can be trodden on by the horse and may trip you up. Some horses are frightened of the snake like flex. An ideal arrangement would be to lead the flex away over head using a sprung support.
6. Make sure you have a helper on hand while clipping for safety and practical reasons.
7. It is best to clip when you and the horse are calm. Avoid feed times and turning out time.
8. Choose a mild day and try and choose a quiet time on the yard.
9. The horse (or other animal) **must** be clean and dry and you must have suitable rugs ready. The horse will certainly feel colder once clipped. There are times when clipping is simply not an option.
10. You will need to prepare the various equipment required beforehand including the clipper and possibly a trimmer for difficult areas, the essential safety trip, saddle soap or tailor's chalk for marking out the clip, clipper oil and spare blades. The clipper manufacturers leaflet provides instructions for operation, blade fitting and adjustment. You will need to have planned the particular type of clip from full clip to bib beforehand and this depends upon the type of horse and its activities.
11. It is helpful to apply a tail bandage and to plait the mane to keep hair out of the way while clipping.
12. Clip with firm pressure against the lie of the coat keeping the tips of blades evenly against the skin. Go steadily and overlap each run by 50% for a neat finish. The animals skin needs to be flat in order to clip so get a helper to hold forelegs forward to

stretch the skin or stretch the skin flat with your hand. Do not clip over wrinkles/folds to avoid cutting the horse.

13. Stop clipping at intervals to brush hair off the machine, apply oil and give yourself a rest.

14. Wear loose fitting clothing, overalls are convenient for protecting your clothes, nylon is not recommended as it causes static and wool is not ideal as the hair sticks to it. A hard hat is a sensible precaution.

Clipper Care & Maintenance

1. However good your clippers are, they will only remain effective if properly cared for. You need to have your clipper regularly serviced and tested by an electrician familiar with clippers who will also advise how often this is necessary. Be sure to tell your electrician what type of use the clipper gets.

2. Always check the clipper body, cable support, flex and plug (with recommended fuse) for damage before use and always use a safety trip. Check that the cable is properly clamped at either end.

3. Read the clipper manufacturer's instruction book before you start to clip.

4. Make sure your blade tension is correct and that you have plenty of lubricating clipper oil and a spare pair of blades.

5. Remember to oil the blades about every 5-10 minutes, while clipping, wiping off excess oil before returning to the horse. DO NOT let oil enter the motor, for example through the filters. Keeping the blades well-oiled helps to reduce the noise of the clippers. It is best to use a simple oil rather than combination products and in particular never use WD40.

6. If whilst clipping the machine gets uncomfortably hot, stop and make sure the filters are not blocked.

7. Clipping machines are frequently fitted with an overload trip to prevent motor damage. The trip switches off the machine when it is taking too much current. If the trip operates more than once you should stop using the clipper and get it serviced.

8. Each time you clip, give the clippers a general clean up once finished.

· Clean the air filters, the manufacturers instruction book will explain how to do this. Clipper filters become blocked with hair and are frequently blocked with dried oil and dirt causing the motor to overheat and sustain severe and expensive damage. Filters, which

are blocked, can be effectively cleaned by immersing them in hot, dishwasher detergent solution for an hour, followed by rinsing.

- Remove the blades, clean and check for any missing teeth
 - Store the blades, smeared with oil or in an oiled cloth and remember to keep them in pairs as they are manufactured as a pair and wear to match
 - Store your clippers in a safe dry place. The cold damp tack room is not an ideal place for your clippers. Clipper motors suffer corrosion in wet conditions.
 - About once or twice a year remove the head (see makers instructions) and apply the makers recommended grease to the drive gear. It is also important to oil the crank bearing on a regular basis. DO NOT under any circumstances use graphite or Moly slip type grease which is electrically conductive.
9. Clipper blades should provide between 5-10 clips between sharpening
10. Ensure that your blade-sharpening agent uses a lapping machine for the blades and not a grinder. Always use a clipping blade specialist to sharpen the blades.