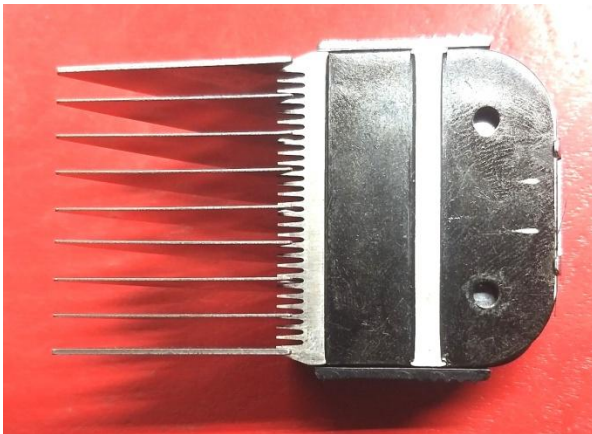


Problems and Issues Using Comb Attachments

Almost every groomer these days uses comb attachments everyday, most don't have any problems or issues, and again others have many issues and problems. The most common problems are jamming, skimming, choppy cuts, ect. , so they blame the blade or the sharpening. But there are other reasons these issues happen, its not always the blade or the sharpening.

There is no blade manufacturer out there that is going to warranty a 30 blade to work on a comb attachment, they will manufacture a blade for the height you want to cut. Groomers use combs as a shortcut because they don't want to spend the money on a blade of the appropriate size because it can be expensive, and a comb is much easier. They are taught this in most grooming schools that I've been to.

Example: Lets take a 1" blade. The teeth are spread apart just perfect to guide coat into the cutting area, and it feeds perfect because of this tooth space. No jamming, no skimming (unless the coat isn't tall enough), and the coat is stood up perfectly for cutting because of the space between the teeth. The long narrow teeth of the blade help feed it into the single cutting teeth of the cutter.



Now lets look at the 30 blade on a comb. The teeth on the comb are spread apart too wide which doesn't guide the coat properly. This can make the coat flop around and bend over on the way to the cutting surfaces. And, the 30 blade doesn't offer space between the teeth wide enough for proper feeding of the coat. This is why they get skims, choppy cuts, ect. Also, the chemicals in the coat at the time along with how dry the coat is makes a difference on the feeding into the 30 blade. A vac system may

help stand the coat up and hold it as the blade is pushed through the coat. Those that have vac systems don't seem to have the issues as those that don't have them.

As you can see by the picture above, a 30 blade on a comb could have problems waiting to happen. When a problem does happen, the groomer blames the blade, the sharpening, and Ive seen them send a new blade back because it didn't cut on a comb. What I suggest to anyone is to test a new or sharpened blade on the body, then put the comb on. If it cuts without a comb, and doesn't with the comb, its not the blade.

The 30 blade, whether is regular or wide, is suppose to leave the coat 1/16th to 1/8th inch in length, that's all. It wasn't made to cut high in the coat because it doesn't feed properly that way. Its made to cut coat low where the hair follicles are thick and stiff and it can feed properly. Cutting high in the coat where the hair is thin and can flop around is what causes issues. The people who make the combs are telling you to use a 30 blade, and they usually endorse the brand of 30 blade of the same name brand as the comb set. Blades will never say OK to use on a comb.

Most grooming schools don't teach much more about grooming tools than how to use them. There is a lot more to their tools they should know, and that's the mechanics of the tools themselves, this is how they work. And because of not knowing the mechanics, groomers don't understand things that can happen and how to figure things out and what to look for, they just call the sharpener. But if they knew the simple mechanics and how to look for things that can affect how the system works, they might be able to fix simple problems and get back to work.

"When you use a blade for a reason it wasn't meant to be used for, you can have issues. If your going to use a blade on a comb, test it on the body someplace the first time to make sure it cuts (like skim on the belly). If it cuts without a comb on, but doesn't cut with a comb on, its not the blade. Its something else completely."

Now I will say this from over 35 years experience beating my head against the wall over this same issue in my own grooming shop, the blade may play a small part in the issues. When a blade gets sharpened, or is new, or has been in service a while, or is not taken care of well, that blade can have a different tension to it. When a blade is sharpened, its adjust to 2 ½ to 3.0 pounds side pressure. Sharpeners have a gauge, but that's a wide spec, and the difference within that spec could make a big difference in how that 30 blade cuts on a comb. The 30 blade will cut great by its self, but with a comb, the difference in tension may not let it cut well in that coat with a comb attached to it. Suggestion: Change 30 blades until you find one that cuts in that particular coat on a comb. Remember, your using a 30 blade for something it wasn't designed to be used for, so there are no rules on how its suppose to cut. Hopefully, it cut before you put that comb on it.

Here are some other reasons that could influence a 30 blade not cutting on a comb. These happened to me using plastic combs years ago.

- Clipper issues. Worn out blade drives or levers, loose hinge screws, wrong speed.
- Thick curley or fluffy coats. Remember the comb teeth are too wide to direct coat
- No Vac system. The vac system can stand fluffy or curley coats straight up more.
- Damp coats. If there is any moisture in the coat, some coats won't feed right.
- Chemicals. Mat busting stuff, combination conditioners can make the coat slick
- Pushing too hard can make the coat skim or jam. Coat has nowhere to go!.
- You can go to another blade if you still have issues. A #9 blade, and a # 8 ½ will fit the comb, try these. They have larger space between the teeth and can help feed