

Cleaning The Wahl 5-N-1 Trimmer Blade

by Northern Tails Sharpening, Inc – www.northerntails.com

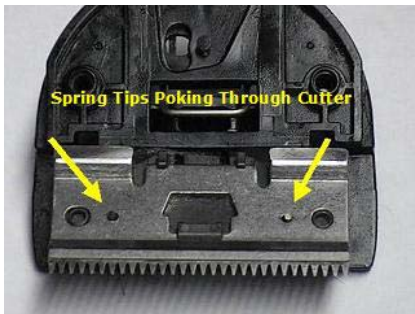
All the Wahl trimmers (Bravura, Chromado, and Arco) use the 5-N-1 blade. It is durable, quiet running, and can be resharpened successfully. It does have a drawback, if it isn't cleaned properly it can seem like it dulls out very quickly. These suggestions will help.



To start, take the blade off the trimmer and clean the hair out of the "spring deck". Use your HV or vacuum, but don't submerge it in blade wash because it will turn messy.



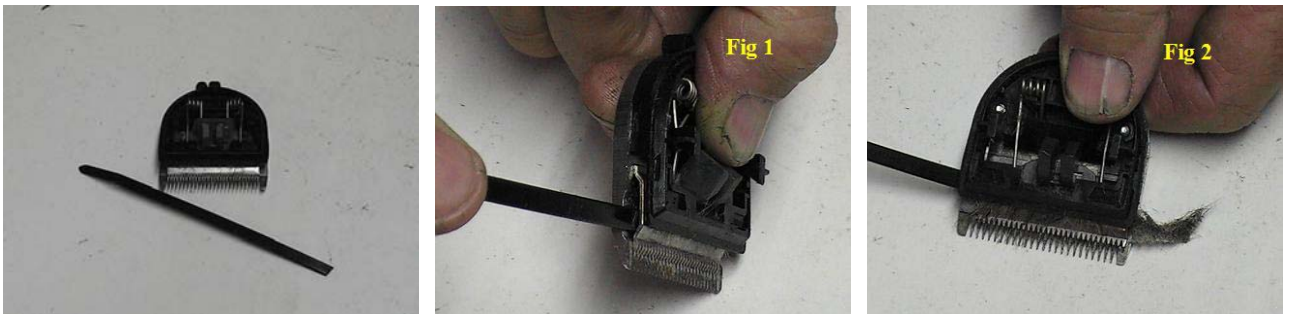
Many styles of trimmer blades, as well as the 5-N-1, use a wire spring to put tension on the cutter to hold it against the comb (bottom blade). These springs can trap hair between the cutter and comb. When the hair collects enough, it pushes the cutter up just enough to make the blade snag or drag. At this point you will think the blade is dull. Check for hair by looking at the blade from the side. If you can't see all the way through the blade halves, it is packed with hair as shown. You need to clean the blade.



Before sending this blade off to the sharpener, clean any hair trapped under the cutter first. Its simple and could save you the expense of sharpening, or worse yet, throwing the blade away and buying a new one.

Figure 1. Get a small Zip-Tie, or a pipe cleaner, or even a broom straw, Take the Zip-Tie and align it up on either side of the blade at the space between the blade halves. Now get ready to push it through and in-between the blade halves.

Figure 2. Pushing the Zip-Tie through the blade halves will force hair out the other side. This could be a mixture of hair, pet dander, or a solid form of hair that was melted by either heat or solvents. Cat hair melts at a lower temp than dog hair, so this can clump up real quick under the cutter. Keep plunging the Zip-Tie between the blade halves until your satisfied all the material out from there.



When your done cleaning the blade this way, look at it from the side again. You should see a clean space between the blade halves now. Put the blade back on the trimmer again and try using it at the fine or medium setting. If it cuts normally again your finished and you'll know what to do next time it stops cutting. If the blade continues to snag or drag through the coat it may actually be dull. Send it out for sharpening. Several sharpeners around the country do sharpen the Wahl 5-N-1 trimmer blade along with other popular trimmer blades.

Another way to clean the blade during a groom is to dip it in blade wash and run it a few seconds or until you feel its clean.

Cat hair tends to melt and cause buildup at a very low temp, you see this on #10 blades if your using one of those to shave a cat. When the 5-N-1 blade starts to snag or drag during a groom, follow these few steps.



Step 1. Brush or blow the obvious hair from the front of the blade, it will just float in the blade wash and cause a mess. Turn the trimmer on and gently stick just the tips of blade into the wash. Don't submerge more than the tips of the blade because its just the tip that does the cutting and gets hot enough to melt the dander on the cutting surfaces. I suggest doing this in the #40 or fine position, this will clean most of the cutting surfaces. Run it until you think its clean or you hear the rpm's go up a little.

Step 2. After cleaning, stop the trimmer motor. Bring the trimmer out of the wash and make sure its pointed DOWN. If you tilt it up to take the blade off to clean it off, the wash will run down inside your trimmer and cause problems. While holding the trimmer pointed DOWN, take the blade off with a rag in your hand and wipe it dry. Put a drop of blade oil on the front teeth and try it. If it still doesn't work make sure there isn't any hair between the blade halves. If there is, clean it out as previously explained.

If you dropped your trimmer and the blade popped off and broke either the rear tab, or the side post, don't throw it away. Several sharpeners around the country can replace the "spring deck" and make it a usable blade again.

Broken rear or side tab

