

Apparel that ticks all boxes

A WA dog clothing line is hitting the sweet spot with stylish canine fashion that is also sustainable



Raquel de Brito

It may be fun to dress your dogs up in stylish apparel but there's nothing cute about the stench that quickly settles in from even just a day's wear.

Danielle Hall, from Crooked Brook in WA's South West, discovered it was near impossible dressing her golden retriever in any type of coat during the colder months without dealing with the odour the garments would quickly accumulate.

So when it came time to design her own line of dog jumpers under her Huskimo label, an odourless material was high on the priority list.

"I researched natural alternatives for odour protection and found a company in California that had patented a process that uses colloidal silver to treat fabrics called Silverclear®," she reveals.

"The smell from a dog coat comes from bacteria which grows and emits odours. This technology eliminates bacteria, mould, and fungi."

As an added bonus, it was originally used in the treatment of wound care for humans so it is very safe, hypo-allergenic and non-toxic.

"This technology is featured in the two bestselling coats, Summit and Sherpa," she says.

She began the brand with jumpers and when they completely sold out, she expanded into coats and tethering.

And with fast fashion and its environmental implications quickly going out of style in the human world, Hall ensured her dog clothing was also made sustainably.

"I firmly believe that 'longevity is the ultimate sustainability' —



Huskimo. Picture: @peanut.black.staffy/Pet Circle

Making sure your pet is dressed appropriately for the weather

Pet Circle head vet Dr Teagan Lever offers the following tips:

- When buying winter clothing for your dog, consider your dog's breed as some breeds with very thick coats, such as huskies or Alaskan malamutes, may not require a coat in the Australian winter. Dogs that are small, including puppies, thin dogs like greyhounds, and short haired dogs, like boxers, cattle dogs and even Staffies, can feel the cold so may require the extra protection of winter clothing.
- Also consider your dog's activity level and their age. For example, active dogs will need thinner layers to ensure they don't overheat, whereas older and less active dogs may need clothing that is thicker and warmer.
- Fit is important so make sure jumper styles fit easily over the

head and that the coat is not too big so that there is enough room to allow your dog to go to the toilet. When buying clothing for your pet online, it's essential to measure them to get the best fit.

- If you have a puppy or your dog is in between sizes, consider buying a coat with adjustable or velcro straps as they allow you to custom fit the coat to your dog.
- If your dog gets cold at night, consider dog PJs instead of coats as they are made to be more comfortable for your dog to sleep in.
- If you have an active dog that loves to go for walks or if your dog is outside in your backyard a lot, consider buying a durable, washable and waterproof fabric that will withstand dirt and rain, like a raincoat.

Huskimo is made with quality materials and techniques that make the products last," she says.

"I don't like seeing 'fast fashion' where apparel is made cheaply and does not last so ends up in landfill. I have customers who still send me photos of their dogs wearing coats that are a few years old."

Each year, Huskimo progresses with a sustainable initiative, recently changing all its dust protection covers to biodegradable, removing plastic tags, and reducing the number of swing tags and used recycled materials.

"There is more we can do, particularly in reducing landfill so this is a project I am working on where we can recycle components of tethering and apparel," Hall says.

Huskimo recently expanded to New Zealand and has plans to enter the European market.



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