Trimming of the pinna (ear flap) for cosmetic purposes in the dog is usually referred to as ‘ear cropping.’ There is no medical reason for the procedure, but is included here because it is a commonly performed procedure by some veterinarians.

The main purpose of ear cropping is to alter the shape of the ear flap to make the flap stand erect. This is a procedure commonly performed on but not limited to breeds such as Schnauzers, Boxers, Great Danes, Doberman Pinschers, and Boston Terriers. The optimal age for ear cropping is 2-3 months of age. For Boston Terriers, it is between four and six months of age.

The decision to cosmetically crop your pet's ears is a personal one. If you desire to have it performed, we advise discussing the procedure, its risks, and cost with your veterinarian.

Occasionally, pets are born with deformed ears - ears that normally should stand erect but do not. German Shepherds are born with non-erect ears, and with age, the ears normally (without surgery) will stand erect. If the ears fail to become erect, then splinting of the ear flap may help cartilage become erect. As a last result, surgery to reposition segments of the cartilage may be beneficial in some dogs. Again, this surgery is one of cosmetics only, with no medical reason to perform it.