



## HOW TO TRANSITION YOUR SPORTING DOG TO A NEW FOOD

At some point in their dog's life, owners and handlers need to transition their dog to a new food. In-season performance sometimes requires different formulas from off-season maintenance diets.

One cause for a change in foods comes from a life stage change. Puppies become adults just as adults become seniors. A second reason for a shift is from a seasonal change. In-season performance sometimes requires different formulas from off-season maintenance diets. A third is the changing of brands. Brett Volmert, the PRO Development Manager for Eukanuba™ Sporting Dog, regularly fields these questions from pro trainers, boarding kennels, pro guides, and key opinion leaders. Here are his 6 tips to successfully introduce a new food to your dog.

### PLAN AHEAD

“The most important part in diet transitions is to plan ahead,” said Volmert. “Set time aside to research food and determine what formula is best for your dog. Considerations include age, breed, activity level, and general health. That kind of research is best cross-referenced with your veterinarian as well. Medium breed dogs transition from puppy to adult dog food around 12 months, while large breeds typically transition at 15 months. Formulas for Senior dogs are different from formulas for performance dogs, so be sure to determine what kind of diet your dog needs or ask your vet if you have questions.”

### EASY DOES IT

“When you're ready to change, make it a gradual process,” Volmert said. “Introduce the new kibble progressively. On day one, 75% of your dog's food should be his current kibble with 25% of the food being

the new formula. Gradually increase the amounts of the new dog food while decreasing the amounts of the current food. The process should take about a week.”

## MAINTAIN NORMAL FEEDING PATTERNS

Volmert suggests maintaining a consistent feeding program. “Feed your dog at the same time of day. Dogs are routine oriented and schedule changes can cause bumps. Consistency is important for a successful transition.”

## MISSED MEALS

“Don’t worry too much about a missed meal unless they are acting sick,” said Volmert. “Some dogs buck new trends. Sometimes they pick out their old food while other times they simply refuse to eat. If they skip a meal or two, they will usually eat their new food at the next feeding. If the non-eating period goes on for a more than a couple of meals, consult your vet.”

## DRESS IT UP

“Sometimes I hear about picky dogs,” Volmert said. “Dogs that are picky eaters may need a meal with appeal. Add a little warm water to the bowl, stir it well, and the enhanced flavor is usually enough to motivate them to eat. That extra water can also hydrate hard-working dogs, too.”

## HOW’S IT WORKING OUT?

“After six or eight weeks, evaluate your pet’s overall condition. Check his Body Condition Score, look at his skin and coat, and survey his stool volume and consistency. If his Body Condition Score is above or below his ideal weight, then modify his feeding amount or consult your vet,” Volmert said.

One of the cool parts of the Eukanuba™ Premium Performance line is that it’s built on a nutritional chassis. That simply means that the foundation of the Sprint, Exercise, Sport and Work formulas comes from similar ingredients of the highest quality to help ensure whole dog nutrition. Knowing that all of the formulas offer a baseline of core nutrients, handlers can focus more on which ratio of protein, fat and carbohydrate matches their dogs in-season and off-season needs.