

WHOLESOMES

How To Choose the Right Dog Food

Feeling overwhelmed and unsure what is the right food for your dog? There are so many pet food options in the market it can crowd your mind and make your buying decision even harder. Maybe you have a pet who is allergic to specific ingredients or is just a picky eater in general. Things to consider include size of dog, breed, and age. Below are ideas on how to choose the right dog food.



Dog Food Nutrition

With tons of dog food options out there, you may not know what exact nutritional needs your dog has to have to live a happy life. Unlike what you'd think, dogs are omnivores more so than carnivores. Their teeth are made to be able to chew other ingredients such as grains, fruits, and vegetables. Some think that these types of foods are fillers, but they actually are great sources of essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Your dog can survive on a variety of high-quality ingredients that are in dog food including meat proteins, grains, fruits, or vegetables.

Over the course of a dog's life, they have different nutritional needs with each stage of growth. A puppy recipe or all life stages recipe can contain extra DHA (Docosahexaenoic acid) that aids in brain development. Adult dog nutrition can vary based on the dog's breed, age, and weight.

How To Read A Dog Food Label

Reading a pet food label is important so you are aware of the ingredients you are feeding your dog. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) requires pet food companies to include eight key pieces of information to a food label:

- Product name
- Net weight of the product
- Name and address of the manufacturer
- Guaranteed analysis
- List of ingredients
- Intended animal species (i.e. dog or cat)
- Statement of nutritional adequacy
- Feeding guidelines

Another thing to look for on dog food labels is the AAFCO statement. This organization, the Association of American Feed Control Officials, has strict requirements to make sure that it is a complete and balanced dog food. According to the American Kennel Club,

“Complete and balanced diets must contain the minimum amount of all of the nutrients necessary for dogs, which is also indicated in the ‘guaranteed analysis.’ This analysis gives the minimum amount of crude protein and fat, along with the maximum amounts of water and crude fiber. The analysis does not, however, give the exact amount of these components, which means there is room for considerable variation.”

If you are ever in need of more nutritional information for the sake of your dog's health, you can also contact the pet food company to inquire about other ingredients and their amounts within a certain recipe.

Specialized Dog Foods

Many dry dog foods cater to many different ages, sizes, and breeds of dogs. These can be for small and large breeds, puppies, adult dogs, senior dogs, or even dogs with special dietary needs. Let's look into these a little closer.

SMALL AND LARGE BREED DOG FOODS

Small breed dogs require small-sized kibble so they don't choke and higher calorie content. Small bodied dogs have high amounts of energy, so having food with a higher calorie content can help them keep up. Large breed dogs and

puppies tend to have more musculoskeletal problems therefore they require certain supplements that will aid in this development. Ingredients such as Glucosamine and Chondroitin Sulfate can support joint health in large dogs. Wholesomes Large Breed contains these required amounts to help your large breed dog live a healthy, active life.

PUPPY FOODS

Puppies need twice the amount of nutrients as an adult dog. Puppy recipes provide extra calories for energy & growth, & high protein to build muscles, organs & strong bones. Puppy foods can be labeled as “for puppies” or “for all life stages” which allows you to feed that same recipe throughout the duration of your dogs’ life. Within the Wholesomes line, there is a specific puppy recipe, but also other all life stages recipes such as Wholesomes Whitefish Meal & Potatoes recipe.

SENIOR DOG FOODS

If your dog is 7+ years old, they may be classified as a senior dog. Senior dogs can struggle with being overweight or even underweight. Finding a food to help with either of these struggles is important so your dog can live out a healthy life. Senior dogs may also begin to lose teeth. Wet food can help with this or even adding some water or broth to dry kibble can help soften it to make it easier to eat.

SPECIAL DIET DOG FOODS

Dogs can have a variety of issues including allergies, sensitive stomachs or dietary restrictions. Finding a food can be difficult, but thankfully pet owners’ voices have been heard and many recipes are being made to help with these issues. Wholesomes Sensitive Skin & Stomach recipes make great special diet options. As always though, consult your veterinarian about what dog food would be best to help with your dog’s condition.

Choose a dog food that best suits your specific pup. You may have to try out a few different options before you decide on which is best. In the end, your dog will thank you for feeding them the best quality ingredients to help them live a long, healthy life.

Now that you’ve found the right dog food, be sure to check out our blog on how much food you should feed your dog next!



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