



DOG FEEDING SCHEDULE: HOW MUCH AND HOW OFTEN?

Dog Feeding Schedule: How Much and How Often?

The best way to keep your dog in good health is feeding them the right amount of dog food daily. But many owners are left wondering "How much should I feed my dog?" Feeding your dog too little can lead to lack of nutrition while over feeding can lead to obesity. So how much is the right amount to feed your dog?

Feeding Guidelines

The basic guidelines are normally on the back of your dog food bag. The feeding guide looks something like this:



This is a general feeding guide that you will see on most dog food bags. These feeding guides should not be the only thing that you base your dog's food intake. Owners should take into consideration on their individual dog. There is no such thing as an universal feeding guide. Your dog's age, weight and his activity levels also influences how much and how often you should feed your dog.

Daily Feeding Frequently and Amount

-Puppies are growing and need all the nutrients they can get to grow healthy and strong. Because of this, it is normally recommended for them to eat twice as much as the serving size for adult dogs.

- Puppies should be fed three to five times a day. This is because puppies have an abundance amount of energy—they will burn off a lot of calories throughout the day requiring them to need more fuel.

-Adult dogs should be fed depending on their weight and level of activity. Assuming your dog has a typical activity level, toy breeds should have about $\frac{1}{4}$ cups to 1 cup, small breeds should have about 1 cup to $1\frac{2}{5}$ cup, medium breeds should have about 2 cups to $2\frac{2}{3}$ cups, and large breeds should have about $2\frac{4}{5}$ cups to 3 cups.

-Senior dogs should be fed a little less than adult dogs. Because they have lower energy levels, lessening the amount of food should be taken into consideration to keep your dog at a healthy weight.

-Adult dogs and senior dogs should be fed two times daily.

-For pregnant dogs, it is a little different. For the first 6 weeks of pregnancy, you should increase your dog's intake minimally. You should start to increase the food by 20% during week 7 to 9.

-Lactating dogs are a special case as well. Immediately after giving birth, you should feed your dog up to 50% more dog food than her normal amount. During the peak lactation, which is around 4 to 5 weeks, you can feed your dog up to 30% more food than her normal amount.

-Lactating dogs should be fed three equal meals a day.

Best Way to Starting a Feeding Schedule

It could be a little daunting for new doggie parents to create a solid feeding schedule that best optimizes your dog's health and well-being. The best way to start a routine is begin loosely basing your dog food amount from the feeding guide.

Take into consideration your dog's activity levels—if he is more active, feed the dog more. Combine all the information of the feeding guide and your dog's lifestyle and create the amount and time you would like to feed your dog.

Having a set time schedule for your dog doesn't only establish a feeding routine but it is also easiest way to monitor your dog's eating. If your dog is given the option to pick at his food throughout the day, you might not be able to easily notice how well your new feeding schedule is working. This also ties into learning your dog's food habits and manners which can help you track down his health. For example, if your dog is normally gobbling down his food right when it is given, wouldn't it be strange if the next day he isn't too excited or thrilled about the food that he normally goes wild for? You can immediately sense there is a problem with your dog's lack of appetite, which normally mean he is not feeling well. Addressing the problem sooner than later is always best for your dog—who wants to be sick longer than they have to? Tracking this is important for your dog's health and early prevention is important to avoid potential health problems. We recommend for adult dogs to have a feeding time once in the morning and once in the evening.

Make sure you are monitoring your dog for the next 2-3 weeks and track down if his weight is dramatically fluctuating. If he is, adjust how much you are feeding your dog according and keep track of which amount of dog food is the perfect for your pooch.

Tips and Tools

There are a couple of tools online to help you create a solid feeding routine. One in particular is a dog food calculator:

<https://www.dogfoodadvisor.com/dog-feeding-tips/dog-food-calculator/> (hyper link "dog food calculator")

This, like the feeding guide on your dog food bag, can be used as a starting point. But, like the feeding guide, make sure to be mindful of your individual dog's lifestyle as well. Another tool to help you monitor your dog's weight is the body condition chart. Here is a visual guide of the ideal weight for your dog: