



# Dog Nutrition Guide

Please take a moment to check out the [All About Dog Food](#) website which grades how nutritional each brand and type of food is and is great for helping choose the right food.

## The downside of dry food

Whilst dry food is easier to get hold of, more convenient and is cheaper than some other foods, it does tend to be the “go to” food for a lot of owners. However, many brands of dry food are heavily processed, low in protein, very high in carbs and packed with more energy (so you can feed less). If you have a dog who is already high energy or difficult to calm, this is like feeding a child blue smarties!

Some of the behavioural problems we see on kibble fed dogs include:

- Being overly energetic/hyper
- Difficulty training or keeping their attention
- Separation anxiety
- Eating of theirs and other dog's poo (because they're seeking out things missing in their diet)
- Aggression and mood swings
- Struggling to settle and relax

You may find other issues too such as:

- Excessive itching and scratching
- Allergic reactions
- Excessive drinking
- Digestive problems (such as diarrhoea and constipation)
- Eating grass

Dry food is also not very appetising which isn't great for fussy eaters. Most dogs will eat it because they're hungry and it's available but if you are finding any of these issues, it might be time to consider a new food or change of diet.

- Dogs digestive systems are still similar to when they were living in the wild
- Dogs are omnivores meaning they digest both meat and vegetables)
- They need a balanced diet of proteins, fats, fibre, minerals and vitamins
- High-quality dog food is always better than a cheap, low-quality alternative
- When looking at ingredients, the meat content should be listed first (e.g. chicken, beef, duck) avoid foods that use 'animal derivative', 'meal' or 'cereals' as this indicates a lower quality food
- They need a high protein, low carb diet and not just a diet that is convenient for us to buy/feed
- Always change to a new feed gradually

	Other types of food	Popular brands by nutritional value
<b>Wet</b>	Slightly more appetising Contains more protein but low quality wet food (like supermarket brands) may lack natural nutrients and cause loose stools Good for dogs with missing teeth, recovering from illness or limited kidney function	<a href="#">Freshpet Select Rolls</a> 93% <a href="#">Naturol</a> 92% <a href="#">Fortglade</a> 92% <a href="#">Wainwrights</a> 89% <a href="#">Butchers</a> 89% <a href="#">Pedigree</a> 37% <a href="#">Earls</a> 31% <a href="#">Winalot</a> 27% <a href="#">Asda Hero</a> 18%
<b>Fresh</b>	Very appetising Healthier skin and teeth Contains a balanced selection of high end ingredients so it's high in natural nutrients Low levels of processing	<a href="#">Different Dog</a> 97% <a href="#">Butternut Box</a> 93% <a href="#">Freshpet Select Bags</a> 90% <a href="#">Michie's of Cornwall</a> 89% <a href="#">Pets Love Fresh</a> 88%
<b>Raw</b>	Healthier skin and cleaner teeth Improved digestion Smaller, firmer stools Natural for their digestive system Handle carefully due to increased risk of bacteria Need to feed a balanced raw food diet with the right amount of meat, offal and bone Be careful of bone fragments Some dogs may struggle with bone fragments	<a href="#">Paleo Plus</a> 99% <a href="#">Luna &amp; Me</a> 99% <a href="#">Bella &amp; Duke</a> 99% <a href="#">Nutriment</a> 97% <a href="#">Natures Menu</a> 95% Other good brands- <a href="#">The Dogs Butcher</a> , <a href="#">Bulmers</a> , <a href="#">Southcliffe</a>

For guidance on raw diets and correctly balancing them, please visit [Raw Pet Food Shrewsbury](#) where they have a huge range of raw food and are really knowledgeable!

## Body condition scoring

The BODY CONDITION SYSTEM was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated for use in the following conditions:  
Murray D, Barajas JW, Anoretz T, et al. Comparison of body fat estimates by dual energy x-ray absorptiometry and abdominal palpation in adult mixed-breed dogs. *Compendium* 2011; 23(10): 170  
Lafonts EF. Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs. *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22(10):15

## How many meals a day?

Dogs should ideally be fed two or three meals throughout the day. This helps avoid bloat (a gastric torsion) which has been linked to feeding only one large meal a day.

## Extras to feed

Plaques can be removed from teeth by giving your dog hard treats like dentasticks or bones regularly. Remember bones should be raw as cooked bone can splinter causing all sorts of internal damage.

You can also bulk a meal out with cooked pumpkin or grated carrot which adds fibre to their diet and can improve their bowel health.