



Fresh food, fully explained.



Your Free Dog Nutrition Guide

Evidence-based feeding for healthier, happier dogs

Welcome to better nutrition!

This guide will help you understand what your dog really needs to thrive. Inside, you'll discover science-backed nutrition tips, portion guidelines, and how to spot quality ingredients—all explained in plain English.

★ What's Inside This Guide:

- How to calculate your dog's daily calorie needs
- Fresh food vs. kibble: the real comparison
- Portion sizing by weight and activity level
- When to consult your veterinarian
- Understanding AAFCO standards and what they mean
- Reading ingredient labels like a pro
- Common nutrition mistakes to avoid



1. Understanding Your Dog's Calorie Needs

Every dog is unique. Their calorie needs depend on weight, age, activity level, and body condition. Here's how to calculate what your dog really needs:

STEP 1: Calculate Resting Energy Requirement (RER)

$$\text{RER} = 70 \times (\text{body weight in kg})^{0.75}$$

STEP 2: Multiply by Activity Factor

Inactive/senior dogs: **RER × 1.2-1.4**

Normal adult dogs: **RER × 1.6-1.8**

Active/working dogs: **RER × 2.0-5.0**

Puppies (growing): **RER × 2.0-3.0**

Example: A 20kg moderately active adult dog

$$\text{RER} = 70 \times (20)^{0.75} = 662 \text{ calories}$$

$$\text{Daily needs} = 662 \times 1.6 = \textcolor{blue}{1,059 \text{ calories per day}}$$

★ Pro Tip:

Body condition is just as important as the scale. A lean, muscular dog may need more calories than an overweight dog of the same size. Check your dog's ribs—you should be able to feel them easily but not see them prominently.



2. Understanding AAFCO Standards

AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) sets nutritional standards for pet food. Here's what you need to know:

What "Complete & Balanced" Really Means:

- Contains all essential nutrients in correct proportions
- Meets minimum requirements for your dog's life stage
- Verified through feeding trials or nutrient analysis

Growth

Puppies & pregnant/nursing dogs

Adult Maintenance

Healthy adult dogs

All Life Stages

Suitable for all ages

Key Nutrients AAFCO Regulates:

Protein: Min 18% adults, 22.5% puppies

Fat: Min 5.5% adults, 8.5% puppies

Essential vitamins & minerals

Calcium & phosphorus ratios

Look for this statement on labels:

"[Product] is formulated to meet the nutritional levels established by the AAFCO Dog Food Nutrient Profiles for [life stage]"



3. Fresh Food vs. Kibble: The Real Comparison

Fresh Food

Higher moisture (70-80%)

Minimal processing

Visible ingredients

3x more bioavailable nutrients

Shorter shelf life

Refrigeration required

Higher cost per serving

Fresh preparation

Kibble

Low moisture (10%)

High-heat processing

Processed ingredients

Lower bioavailability

Long shelf life

Shelf stable

Lower cost per serving

Convenience

The Bottom Line:

Both can be nutritionally complete. Fresh food offers higher digestibility and bioavailability, while kibble offers convenience and affordability.



4. Reading Ingredient Labels Like a Pro

Ingredients are listed by weight, from highest to lowest. Here's what to look for:

What to Look For:

Named protein sources (chicken, beef, salmon—not "meat meal")

Whole foods you recognize (sweet potato, carrots, blueberries)

Limited ingredients (shorter lists often mean less processing)

Named fats (chicken fat, salmon oil—not "animal fat")

Red Flags to Avoid:

Generic terms ("meat by-products", "animal digest")

Artificial colors (Blue 2, Red 40, Yellow 5)

Chemical preservatives (BHA, BHT, ethoxyquin)

Excessive fillers (corn, wheat gluten, soy)

Guaranteed Analysis Breakdown:

Protein

Min % - look for 18%+ for adults

Fat

Min % - quality fats are essential

Fiber

Max % - helps with digestion

Moisture

Max % - critical for comparing



5. Portion Sizing & Common Mistakes

Quick Portion Guide by Weight:

200-600

calories/day

Small dogs (5-20 lbs)

**600-
1,200**

calories/day

Medium dogs (21-50
lbs)

**1,200-
2,000**

calories/day

Large dogs (51-90 lbs)

**2,000-
3,500**

calories/day

XL dogs (91+ lbs)

⚠ Common Nutrition Mistakes to Avoid:

1. Free feeding: Leaving food out all day can lead to obesity

2. Ignoring treats: Treats should be <10% of daily calories

3. People food additions: Can unbalance nutrition and add calories

4. Not adjusting for activity: Active dogs need more food

5. Switching foods too quickly:
Transition over 7-10 days

6. Forgetting to measure: Eyeballing portions leads to overfeeding

7. Skipping vet checkups: Regular weight checks are essential



Best Practice:

Feed measured portions 2x daily (morning and evening). Monitor your dog's body condition weekly and adjust portions as needed.



6. When to Consult Your Veterinarian

Always consult your vet before making major diet changes, especially if your dog:

- Has medical conditions (diabetes, kidney disease, allergies)
- Is pregnant or nursing
- Is a growing puppy or senior dog
- Takes medications that interact with food
- Shows signs of nutritional deficiency
- Has sudden weight gain or loss
- Experiences digestive issues

Ready for Fresh, Personalized Nutrition?

NouriPet makes fresh food simple:

- 1 Tell us about your dog (weight, age, activity level)
- 2 We calculate exact calorie needs using veterinary formulas
- 3 Choose from AAFCO-certified recipes
- 4 Get perfectly portioned, fresh meals delivered every 2 weeks

Plus, enjoy these benefits:

- ♥ Free local delivery (Westchester NY & Fairfield CT)
- ♥ 100% satisfaction guarantee
- ♥ Cancel or pause anytime—no commitment

Special Offer:

Use code **NOURI15**

15% OFF

your first month

 Full ingredient transparency and nutrition
data

© 2025 NouriPet • support@nouripet.net • (203) 208-6186