

Puppy Food

Guidelines for Choosing a Food

- Choose a food that bears an AAFCO label. AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) is a voluntary membership association of local, state and federal agencies charged by law to regulate the sale and distribution of animal feeds and animal drug remedies.
- A new food should be selected for the appropriate life stage (puppy) and/or based on the anticipated adult body weight (small-, medium-, large-breed puppy).
- Large breed puppies do best on a food that contains less energy and calcium to decrease the risk of developmental orthopedic (bone) diseases. These foods are usually labeled specifically for "Large Breed Puppy."
- Premium foods have more high quality, digestible proteins and less lower quality proteins. The more high quality proteins in the food, the more the food can be utilized by the body.
- Avoid foods with excessive amounts of added sweeteners, colors, and salt.

How much do I feed?

- Food labels generally have a feeding chart on the bag. These provide a rough estimate that can be used as a guideline for the quantity of food. Growing puppies will require more food as they get bigger. Keep in mind that the food label gives very generous portion suggestions. While growing puppies will need more food, adults generally need much less food than is listed on the bag.
- Get into the habit of measuring your dog's food with a standard measuring cup. This way, it will be easier to adjust the food up or down as needed.
- Feedings should be divided into 3 to 4 meals a day. At 4 to 6 months of age, feedings can be reduced to twice a day. Fresh water should be available at all times.

Introducing a new food

When introducing a dog or puppy to a new food, blend it gradually with the existing food. Over the course of 7 days, gradually increase the amount of new food until it replaces the old. This will prevent the puppy from rejecting the food or having stomach upset.