



Dog Food Score Sheet

How to grade your dog's food. Start with a grade of 100.

For each ingredient(s) below, add or subtract the points indicated

The higher the score, the better.

Ingredient	Points
For each by-product listed	-10
For each nonspecific animal source("meat" or "poultry", meat, meal or fat) -	-10
Contains BHA, BHT, or ethoxyquin	-10
"mill run" or non-specific grain source	-5
Same grain ingredient is used 2 or more times in the first five ingredients (i.e. "ground brown rice", "brewers rice", "rice flour" are all the same grain),	-5
Protein sources are not meat meal and less than 2 meats in the top 3 ingredients,	-3
Any artificial colorants	-3
Contains ground corn or whole grain corn,	-3
Also if corn is listed in the top 5 ingredients,	-2
Any animal fat other than fish oils	-2
If lamb is the only animal protein source (unless hypoallergenic)	-2
If it contains soy or soybeans	-2
If it contains wheat	-2
If it contains beef	-1
If it contains salt (NaCl)	-1
If any of the meat sources are organic	+5
Endorsed by a nutritionist	+5
If the food is baked not extruded	+5
If the food contains probiotics,	+3
If the food contains fruit	+3
If the food contains vegetables (NOT corn or other grains)	+3
If the animal sources are hormone-free and antibiotic-free	+2
If the food contains barley	+2
Flax seed oil (not the seeds)	+2
If the food contains oats or oatmeal	+1
If the food contains sunflower oil	+1
For every different specific animal protein source	+1
If it contains glucosamine and chondroitin	+1
If the vegetables have been tested for pesticides and are pesticide-free	+1

Common Foods

Authority Harvest Baked	116	Merrick Senior Medley	120
Bil-Jac Select	68	Nutrisource Lamb and Rice	87
Canidae	112	Nutro Natural Choice	87
Chicken Soup Senior	115	Purina One Chicken	42
Diamond Maintenance	64	Purina Beneful	17
Dick Van Patten's Natural Balance	112	Purina Come-and-get-it	16
Dick Van Patten Duck and Potato	106	Sensible Choice Chicken	97
Foundations	106	Science Diet Advance Protein Senior	63
Hund-n-Flocken Lamb by Solid Gold	93	Science Diet Large Breed Puppy	69
Iams Lamb and Rice	73	Wellness Super5 Mix Chicken	110
Innova Dog	114	Orijen 6 Fish	115
Innova Evo	114	Natures Variety Salmon Brown rice	116

Common Food Questions

Q: What do you recommend for overweight dogs?

A: I generally do not recommend diets labeled for weight loss or overweight dogs. They tend to be of lower nutritional values leading to other health problems. Start feeding in two meals each day, at the end of each feeding your dog should still be slightly hungry. Exercise helps but if you are feeding too many calories you will not succeed in helping your dog lose weight. Canned pumpkin can help make them feel more satisfied.

Q: What do you recommend for overweight cats?

A: Most cats gain weight due to the excessive carbohydrates in their food. I recommend a grain free diet for all cats with canned food preferred over dry. Exercising your indoor cat with toys daily may help; nothing is more successful than a grain-free diet and meal feeding twice a day. You do not ever want your obese feline to lose weight too quickly as this can cause liver problems.

Q: What brand of dog food do you recommend?

A: This depends on your pet and his/her specific health concerns. For dry dog food I like Natures Variety – Instinct line, Innova Evo (grain-free), Before Grain-salmon, Merrick trout, Taste of the Wild-salmon, Orijen, Acana Discuss with us homemade and raw diets too!

Q: What brand of cat food do you recommend?

A: Strongly recommend a grain-free diet, preferably canned over dry. Some cats will only eat dry food. Orijen (dry only), Innova Evo, Wellness, Merrick before grain, Natures Variety. Discuss with us home made and raw diets too!

Q: How do I change my pets food and how often?

A: I recommend mixing the new food into the old food for 4 to 5 days gradually. You should change your pet's food several times a year. This will help to insure your pet does not become deficient in any nutrients or develop an allergy to a particular ingredient. Some animals do have a more sensitive stomach and cannot handle frequent or quick changes.

Q: Is it bad to share my food with my pet?

A: Many things in moderation are safe. Care needs to be taken not to create a nutritional imbalance. I especially recommend fruits and vegetables like organic raw apples, kale, berries, carrots, pumpkin, celery, and more.

Q: What human foods need to be avoided?

A: Avoid giving fatty foods with excessive carbohydrates like pasta or sugar. "Avoid grapes and raisins" (discuss this with me), onions in large amounts, chocolate, gum with xylitol. Also avoid macadamia nuts. Some common food allergies chronically seen are from wheat, beef, and soy. Cat food allergies include chicken, fish, wheat, beef, and soy. It is especially important to avoid salty foods with geriatric patients that are having health problems. If you have any questions on the safety of food and your pet, please contact our veterinarians and see our poisonous plant section.

