

How to Pick the Best Dog Food

Last time I talked about [fun things you can do for your dog](#). In today's post, I want to discuss a very important issue- Your dog's nutrition.

Dogs are not just pets that coexist with humans. Your Dog quickly becomes just another furrier member of your family. When you select items for your own children and family members to eat, you are very picky about the nutritional content of the food you are feeding them. Why wouldn't you do the same for your dog? There are so many food items and diets available for your dog; it can be extremely difficult to choose the right one. It is important to know what you are looking for to ensure that your dog is getting the proper nutrition.

When it comes to picking food for your dog, there are a few considerations to think about. Your pet's age is important, as some foods are specially formulated with different life stages in mind. A puppy will have different nutritional needs than a senior dog. There are also often different formulations for larger and smaller dogs, which may not be an economical choice when you have dogs of different breeds and sizes. A final consideration comes down to your dog's overall health. Some dogs may require special food for different ailments. A dog with sensitive stomach will require food that accommodates that sensitivity. There are even formulas that help arthritic dogs feel better. For special circumstances like this, getting a vet's recommendation can be extremely helpful.

Here are some tips for picking the right dog food:

- **Labels**

The labels are your friend. The ingredients label lists items by highest to lowest weight. The first ingredient may be a protein, which is incredibly important. However, if the next

few ingredients are grains or cereal, it may not have high protein content, which is not ideal. Dogs need their protein. Labels also provide additional information such as the guaranteed analysis that is required and tells consumers what the minimum guarantees for protein and fat as well as the maximum guarantees of moisture and fiber. You will also need to look for the “Nutritional Adequacy Statement”, which informs consumers if the dog food offers complete and balanced nutrition and tells whether or not it is specifically made for a specific life stage.

▪ **Study Up**

It is important to do your research. You can call the consumer relations department of the brand, and the companies will take the time to answer any of your questions. When speaking to a consumer relations person, ask if they manufacture the food in their own factories or if they outsource it. If they manufacture their own, than you know that they offer better quality control and it generally leads to a better quality food. You should research several brands before making a final decision, and there are numerous websites to help you with this.

▪ **Ask Your Vet**

Your vet has a wealth of knowledge in this field. As part of their training, they take nutrition classes to help their patients pick the right food for their dog’s needs. If your vet cannot help you, there are specialized vet nutritionists that can help you pick the right dog food. If your dog needs a special diet, your vet can point you into the right direction

▪ **Nutritional Value**

When you are looking at the commercial dog food label, you will want to find a product that is preserved with vitamin E and other natural preservatives. You will also want a high level of quality protein instead of meat by-products. You will

also want to look for products that are supplemented with fatty acids.

▪ **Type of Food**

There are different types of dog food to choose from. There are dry food options, as well as semi-moist and canned options. This is a choice that is based on the individual animal; however dry food is most often recommended for dogs.

If you already have your dog on a specific dog food and you are going to change it, you should take this process slowly. If you immediately switch your dog's food, you can cause them intestinal problems because the bacteria needed to digest one food may not be applicable to another type of food. When you switch foods, it should be a week to 10 day long process. You will first want to mix 25% of the new food with 75% of the old food for their meal time for at least 3 days. If that is successful, you can then move to a 50/50 mix of the new and old food for 3 days. Then, you should move to a 25% old food, 75% new food mix for another 3 days. At this point, you can completely switch to the new dog food.

So which dog food is the best one for your dog? There really is no definitive answer to this question. Different dogs have different needs, much like humans do. It can take a bit of trial and error finding the right food for your dog, and finding one that they will enjoy eating. If your dog has an excellent body condition, great energy, and bright eyes, you will know that the food you are providing for them is the right one. If you ever have any questions, your vet will be able to assist you in any way they can.

Top 5 fun things you can do for your dog

Last time I explained some things about my breed- [Golden Retriever](#) and why we are so awesome.

In today's post, I want to talk about the top five fun things you can do for your dog!

Chase-

I love to chase, the most fun I have chasing is at the beach chasing the shore birds through the shallow water. So far, I have never got close enough to even nip at a feather, but one day those birds are going to make a tasty treat. I think. I have never tasted bird. An alternative if you're afraid your dog might catch a bird is the awesome [iFetch](#) I just started playing with.

Swimming-

Some dogs love to swim. I have seen dogs swimming with their owners at the lake and even in the swimming pool! I want to keep my feet firmly on the lake bottom. Once my owner threw a stick out into the water and I ran after it through the shallow water. All of a sudden my feet were paddling in the water and not touching the bottom. That was an exciting experience!

Hide and seek-

Hide and seek can be entertaining. My owner started by hiding a special treat under a sheet of newspaper and helping me find it. When I got good at finding that, they found harder hiding places. One day my owner brought a book home from the library. It was yellow and was about Dummy dogs or something. Imagine, Dummy dogs. I was insulted! She tried to teach me to open the

fridge with a sock tied to the handle. Even though I knew there was a special treat in there for me, I didn't like opening the fridge door. I liked learning to bring an empty pop can to her; I liked smashing it in my teeth and making noise with it. I think she was planning to train me to open the fridge and bring her a pop. Why would I learn that? I already have her trained to keep my bowl at least half full at all times. Haha

Real Training-

Once my owner stopped with the yellow Dummy Dog books and started teaching me basic [obedience training with Dan](#), it helped me stay challenged and alert. I started feeling smarter from the Go! You know... dogs get pretty excited when they're exposed to new stuff.

Squirrels-

Squirrels always are exciting. I can stand under a tree and bark for hours if I see a squirrel. If the squirrel leaps to another tree I can run over and bark there. Sometimes I can run from tree to tree and bark and bark. And those sneaky squirrels have already left the yard. I don't know what I would do with the squirrel but I sure want to catch one! Sometimes in the house people mention squirrels and I can have fun running from window to window barking and looking for squirrels.



Nina

Golden heart

I'm a golden retriever and once you get to know my breed, you won't be surprised I am considered one of the most famous dog breeds in the world today.

As a golden retriever, I am quite an easy dog to keep and maintain around home. I am very calm, affectionate and easy to teach. I work well with children as well as elderly, and happy to let everyone know how much I love them.



For first time dog owners, you can learn a lot from Golden Retrievers. First, you can learn what it really takes to be a dog owner. You can also learn the things you need to do in order to keep a dog happy. For instance, you may provide me enough amount of water and foods, lots of walks, and good chewing toys. I also love hugs and petting. Golden Retrievers are a very strong breed of dogs, hence you need to know [how to handle and train them](#). One thing to look out for though, is that my breed is considered to be a furry one so you need to help me have proper grooming all the time. You can make use of the right tools such as combs, brushes, nail clippers and any others to help me look healthy and sharp all the time.

If you are into sports, one of the best breed to accompany you

is the Golden Retriever. There's nothing I love more than running and jogging.



My breed really loves water so if you are a swimmer, you'll love going with me for a swim.

[I have a retrieving instinct so you can toss a ball or we can play a Frisbee!](#)

Folks with special needs can also acquire benefits from my breed. I am taught to become a seeing-eye dog, rescue dog, bomb dog and many others. It's very easy to train Golden Retrievers. We respond to positive reinforcement such as repetitive praising and treats for well-done jobs :-).

Golden retrievers are not only here to be a companion or a friend, but an addition to your family who knows how to care and love their owners.



Nina