

What's for Dinner?

Your puppy is your new best friend, and you want to give him the best foundation to grow and thrive. How do you know what your puppy really needs as he grows? Here are some common questions and a few important tips to help you put the perfect portion on your pup's plate!

What's the most important thing to know about feeding your pup?

Dogs are omnivores, like people. A balanced diet really does matter! It's important that your puppy get a diet that is labeled for "growth" or at least says "all life stages" (look for the AAFCO feeding statement on the back of the bag). These diets have been shown to be adequate for growth for an average dog. Be aware, your puppy might not be average, so be sure to ask your own veterinary team about the ways your pup might be unique.

How much do I feed my puppy?

Ask your veterinary team to help determine the right amount of food. The back of the bag is a good place to start, but often a puppy will need more or less. It's important that you measure the amount of food you offer using a measuring cup. Some breeds are casual eaters and some will never turn food down, so you can't allow your puppy to decide! If your pup is a fast eater, puzzle feeders can provide mental stimulation and slow your puppy down. You should be able to feel, but not see, your puppy's ribs.

Which brands should I consider?

Most foods on the market are safe to feed. Grain-free foods are a current fad in the dog food market, but there is no research that suggests feeding grain free is a good idea. There is some research to suggest "boutique" grain-free foods are actually harmful. The best choice is a dog food that has been around for a long time with few issues: Purina products, Science Diet, Royal Canin, and Natural Balance are some good options available.



More Thoughts:

Should I give vitamins?

High-quality diets should provide all the nutrients needed, making vitamin supplements unnecessary.

Is some diarrhea normal?

Even if your puppy feels great, he should not be throwing up or having loose stool. Call your vet if your puppy is having these issues.

How about homemade?

Homemade diets are risky for young animals. The chance for nutrient imbalance is too high during such a critical phase of growth.

What about treats?

Avoid grapes, raisins, onions, chocolate, or any treats made in China. Cheerios make great training treats! Hard treats like rawhide are good for teeth but can cause problems if chunks are swallowed – supervise your dog while she eats these.