

Achieving the Right Balance in Dog Food

As a pet owner, one of your most important responsibilities is feeding the dog with the right kind of food in the right amounts at the right time. The statement sounds simple, yes, but it can be difficult to determine the right balance for your dog. In this article, the basics of providing for the right balance in dog food will be discussed although it must be emphasized that working with a veterinarian in this regard is still advisable.

Why the Right Balance

But first, let's discuss why the right balance - neither too much nor too little - is essential in feeding your dog its food. On one hand, underweight dogs can suffer from delayed healing from injuries and illnesses, poor muscle tone and skin quality, sluggish movements and metabolic disorders. Your dog will definitely not be good for shows.

On the other hand, overweight dogs have more than their fair share of health problems, too. Arthritis, diabetes and other chronic degenerative diseases affecting the internal organs like the heart, kidney and liver are all too common in overweight dogs. Physical manifestations of obesity include lack of energy to even move from the couch, lack of luster in the skin and coat, and even a shortened life expectancy.

Indeed, you should also be concerned about your dog's food consumption. As experienced dog owners will tell any new ones, the rule of thumb is to feed your dog more food when it appears skinny and to lessen its food when it appears too fat. Your months of living with the dog should give you an idea about which category - too skinny or too fat - your dog falls into.

How to Achieve the Right Balance

So, how much is too much or too little in dog food? The answer can become complicated when concepts like the Resting Energy Requirements (RER) are introduced. In this case, we suggest the following steps to determine the right amount of commercial dog food for your pet:

- Always choose high-quality food from the first get-go. Low-quality dog food provides little of the nutritional requirements of pets, thus, leading to health issues caused by poor nutrition including metabolic, digestive and behavioral problems.
- Determine the current weight and the target weight for your dog depending on its age (puppy or senior dog), present and future physical demands (participation in a race, pregnancy and other strenuous activities) and breed. You must work with the veterinarian in this regard as he is in the best position to know about canine nutritional requirements.
- Feed your dog the recommended amount of food. Be sure to also adhere to the rule of thumb for water - 2.5 times higher than the amount of dry and wet food provided for good health.
- Regularly monitor your dog's weight - two times a month is a good interval - to look for the desired changes. You must adjust your dog's food intake depending on the target weight.

In the end, your dog's appearance and state of health will be the best barometer of whether you have achieved the right balance in its diet. Content written by Kate Perry of Oh My Dog Supplies, where you can find a fantastic collection of personalized dog dishes online.

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