

Choosing a Pet Food

# Why Choose a Small Breed Dog Food



Every dog has unique nutritional needs that should be addressed through their diet. If you have a toy dog (up to 5 kg [11 lbs.] at maturity) or a small dog (up to 10 kg [22 lbs.]), you may want to consider feeding a dog food specifically formulated for small breeds. Here are some considerations when feeding small dogs.

## **Small dogs need food that is nutrient dense.**

Toy and small dogs tend to have higher metabolic rates (and smaller stomachs) than large and giant dogs, which is why they need high-quality, calorie- and nutrient-dense food. Dog foods for small dogs may be formulated with higher levels of protein, fat, calories and other nutrients than typical adult dog foods to help provide all the nutrition small dogs need.

## **Portion control helps avoid weight gain.**

While small dogs may need more calories per kilogram (pound) than large dogs, it is important to monitor their weight. Obesity is a common problem in dogs of all sizes, including small dogs, and some small and toy breeds are prone to weight gain. Since they don't weigh as much as their large counterparts, even an extra 1/2 kilogram (about 1 pound) on a small dog can have serious health consequences, such as adding stress to joints or worsening breathing problems.

You can avoid overfeeding your small dog by carefully measuring the amount of food and treats you are giving and routinely monitoring your pet's body condition. Since all dogs are individuals and may have unique calorie needs, it is important to adjust the amount provided to keep your dog in ideal body condition.

## **Smaller kibbles can be easier to chew.**

With small jaws and teeth, toy or small breed dogs may struggle to eat large kibbles. Your small dog may find smaller kibbles easier to chew.

## **Look for a small breed dog food that supports skin and coat health.**

Some small dogs may benefit from extra skin-nourishing nutrients such as vitamin A, essential fatty acids and high-quality protein. These nutrients help promote healthy skin and a shiny coat.

Finding a dog food that meets all the unique nutritional needs of your small dog is the first step in helping your pet live a long, healthy life. Be sure to consult with your veterinarian if you have any questions or concerns about your small dog's nutrition.

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.