
How To Select the Best Dog Food for Small Dogs



How To Select the Best Dog Food for Small Dogs

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You want to feed your small breed dog the healthiest and tastiest food you can — a diet that will have them running to their bowl at mealtime. But there are so many choices out there that it can be a bit confusing to find the best dog food for small dogs. Don't worry, we're here to help.

In this article, we'll tell you everything you need to look for when selecting your canine companion's food, from nutrition and type of food to portion size. Your dog's tummy will thank you!

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Small Dog Nutritional Needs

You might think that your [small dog\(open in new tab\)](#) doesn't need as much food as a bigger dog, but that's not true. Proportionally speaking, they need even more. That's because smaller dogs have both a smaller stomach and a higher metabolism.

So how do you get your small dog a nutritional bang for their buck? Let's take a look.

Nutrient-Dense Foods

First, your little Fido is going to need to eat food dense in nutrients, including protein to build muscle and help them grow, carbohydrates to maintain blood sugar levels, fiber for easy digestion, and essential fatty acids (like Omega-3 and Omega-6) for healthy fur and skin.



Your pup's food should also include animal fats or plant-based oils and have plenty of vitamins and minerals, such as:

- Vitamin D, calcium, and phosphorus for strong and healthy bones
- Vitamin B complex to keep a healthy metabolism and nervous system
- Iron to move oxygen throughout the body

- Zinc for healthy skin and fur

More Frequent Meals

Because smaller dogs have smaller stomachs, it may be recommended to feed them smaller, more frequent meals to help them meet their energy requirements. Talk with your veterinarian about the right feeding schedule for your small dog.

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Easily Digestible Food

Whatever food you choose for your dog, it should be easy for their body to digest. Consider kibble size as well, as smaller kibble will be easier for them to chew and swallow.

Different Requirements for Certain Nutrients

Small dogs typically have a longer lifespan than larger dogs. They have requirements for certain nutrients, including antioxidants which support cellular health.



Special Considerations by Age

Some recommendations change in accordance with the age of your dog, particularly with puppies.

Puppies

A small breed [puppy\(open in new tab\)](#) — up to 12 months old — will have some extra nutritional requirements. Because they're growing so fast, it's important that they eat food formulated specifically for puppies, with extra protein and calories.

Small breed puppies should also eat even more frequently — three to six meals a day until they are three to six months old. After this, they can transition to two to three meals a day.

Senior Dogs

Although there are senior dog foods on the market, the Association of American Feed Control Officials ([AAFCO\(open in new tab\)](#)) has not published a specific nutritional profile for senior dogs. Therefore, it's best to check with your veterinarian for nutritional recommendations.

How To Choose the Best Dog Food for Small Dogs

When it comes to choosing the best dog food for your small dog, you'll want to read the label carefully, check the ingredients, and talk to your vet.



Read the Label

Sometimes dog food labels can be trickier to read than you might think. You want to be sure that the food you've chosen has been formulated for the age and size of your dog. If you have a small breed puppy, for instance, you need to be sure to get them the food that is nutritionally adequate for them.

Small breed adult dog food or large breed puppy food (or any other variety that does not reflect your dog's age and size) may not offer the appropriate nutrition.

Once you know the food is just right for your pup, look for the words "complete and balanced" on the label. This indicates that the food has all of the ingredients your small breed dog needs.

Look at the Ingredients

Now that you know that the food is nutritionally complete, check what the ingredients actually are. The more whole foods — like real chicken, beef, vegetables, or fruits — the better. Additionally, be sure to check that the food doesn't contain anything your pup is sensitive to.

Talk to Your Veterinarian

If you have any questions about what to feed your small dog, it's always a good idea to check with your veterinarian for a personalized feeding plan.

Types of Dog Food for Small Dogs

There are several different types of food you can feed your small dog, each with their own benefits. Let's take a look.



Dry Food

Dry food, also known as kibble, is a popular option because it's easy to store and is generally less expensive than wet food. Other benefits of dry food include:

- Quality complete and balanced kibble provides all the nutrients your dog needs.
- It's easy to adjust portion sizes.
- Crunchy kibble can promote dental health by causing less plaque buildup on teeth.

Tailored for small dogs, CESAR® [Filet Mignon Flavor & Spring Vegetables Garnish](#)(open in new tab) dry dog food is a pup-parent favorite because it's made with real beef and includes 26 nutrients to support small dog health.

Wet Food

[Wet dog food](#)(open in new tab) tends to be very aromatic and tasty, making it a top choice for small breed dogs. It can also support better hydration by containing more water than dry food.

CESAR® [Classic Loaf](#)(open in new tab) wet food is grain-free and comes in a host of flavors,

including grilled chicken, filet mignon, Porterhouse steak, chicken and liver, grilled steak and eggs, and turkey. Your dog will love it for its great taste, and you'll love it for its balanced nutrition.

Refrigerated

Refrigerated dog food is a great way to offer gently cooked, culinary inspired meals to your small dog. It may come in different formats including rolls, which can be sliced to serve your furry [best friend\(open in new tab\)](#).

CESAR® [FRESH CHEF\(open in new tab\)](#)™ Chicken Recipe with Peas and Carrots uses chicken as the first ingredient and is formulated without artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives. Bone Appetit, as they say.

Mixed

If your dog loves wet and dry, don't be afraid to mix it up! Our [SIMPLY CRAFTED\(open in new tab\)](#)™ toppers, made in an array of flavors using no more than six high-quality ingredients, are the perfect complement to a small bowl of our kibble.

Portion Size for Small Dogs

Below, we've put together an example guide as to how much you should feed a small breed dog based solely on your pup's weight.

Keep in mind the correct portion size for individual small dogs is not only based on their weight, but also their activity level and other individual factors. It's best to check with your vet when deciding how much to feed your pup.

Dry Food

- For dogs weighing 5 pounds, serve ½ cup of CESAR® Rotisserie Chicken Flavor & Spring Vegetables dry food per day.

- For dogs weighing 10 pounds, serve $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of CESAR® Rotisserie Chicken Flavor & Spring Vegetables dry food per day.
- For dogs weighing 15 pounds, serve 1 cup of CESAR® Rotisserie Chicken Flavor & Spring Vegetables dry food per day.

Wet Food

Feed adult dogs, serve approximately 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ trays of CESAR® Classic Loaf in Sauce Grilled Chicken daily per 10 pounds of body weight.

Refrigerated Food

Feed according to package directions and adjust as needed to maintain ideal body weight. CESAR FreshChef makes it easy to slice and serve the right amount for your furry friend!

Remember that whatever type of food you serve, your dog should always have fresh water alongside their food at mealtime.



Tail-Wagging Meals for Your Small Dog

Now that you know picking the best dog food for your little canine pal means looking at the nutrients, portion size, and ingredients, it's time to make your selection.

CESAR® offers a wide range of options, from our [Rotisserie Chicken & Spring Vegetables\(open in new tab\)](#) dry food to our [WHOLESOME BOWLS™ Chicken, Apple & Sweet Potato\(open in new tab\)](#) wet food, so you can be sure your petite pooch has the best in balanced nutrition just the way they want it.

With [CESAR®\(open in new tab\)](#) on the plate, your dog will have all the nutrients they need and the tail-wagging taste they deserve!

Sources

- [https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/proper-puppy-nutrition-nourishes-rapid-growth/\(open in new tab\)](https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/proper-puppy-nutrition-nourishes-rapid-growth/(open in new tab))
- [https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/puppy-feeding-fundamentals\(open in new tab\)](https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/puppy-feeding-fundamentals(open in new tab))

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