



Choosing a Pet Food

# CHOOSING TO FEED WET OR DRY CAT FOODS

When feeding cats, many options are available, including a variety of different flavors, and also a choice of feeding wet or dry foods, or a combination of both.



Cat food should be complete and balanced for the cat's life stage or special needs. Ultimately, the decision to feed a wet or dry food will be determined by the cat or owner's preference – one format is not nutritionally better than the other. Both options provide unique benefits.

## Key Messages

- Benefits of feeding wet cat food:
  - Typically packaged in small servings (cans or pouches) making it easy to offer a variety of flavors. For some, small servings may also help with portion control.
  - Helps increase total water intake, which can be helpful for cats with lower urinary tract issues, some senior cats, and cats prone to constipation.
  - Easier to chew, which can be beneficial in older cats or those with missing teeth.

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## Key Messages (continued)

- Benefits of feeding dry cat food:
  - Convenience – due to the low moisture content, dry food can be left out for cats to nibble throughout the day (less risk of deterioration, especially in hot weather). Ideally cats should be given the daily feeding amount, but if feeding free choice, monitoring their body condition will help ensure they do not become overweight.
  - Crunchy kibbles can help reduce tartar and plaque build-up on cats' teeth.
  - Value – dry food typically comes in larger pack sizes containing multiple feedings and has a longer shelf life, which makes it cost effective to feed.
- Benefits of feeding both wet and dry cat food:
  - Mixing wet and dry cat food for a meal or feeding them as separate meals provides variety in the diet (cats are neophiliacs – they appreciate novelty).
  - Helps ensure cats get plenty of moisture plus the dental benefits of dry food.
  - Accustoms the cat to variety in case health issues necessitate feeding one or the other in the future.

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.