



## Choosing a Pet Food

# WHY CHOOSE A LARGE BREED DOG FOOD



Every dog has unique nutritional needs that should be addressed through their diet.

If you have a large dog (25–45 kg [55–100 lbs.] at maturity) or a giant dog (> 45 kg [> 100 lbs.] at maturity), you should consider feeding a dog food specifically formulated for large dogs. Here are some considerations when choosing a large breed dog food.

### **Large dogs need food that is less calorically dense than small dogs.**

While it may seem counterintuitive, large and giant breed dogs need a dog food that is less concentrated in calories than food specifically formulated for toy and small dogs. Large breed dogs have relatively slower metabolic rates, which means they need fewer calories per kilogram (pound) of body weight than small and toy dogs. Large and giant breed dogs also have larger stomachs that require a larger amount of food to feel full. Foods designed specifically for large dogs tend to be lower in calories and fat to help keep large dogs in ideal body condition (4–5 on the Purina Body Condition System 9-point scale).

### **Portion-controlled feeding helps avoid excessive weight gain.**

Obesity is a common problem in dogs of all sizes, including large and giant dogs. Some large dog breeds are well-known for their ability to become overweight. Extra weight can have serious health consequences for large and giant dogs, such as adding stress on joints and increasing risk of orthopedic diseases later in life. You can avoid overfeeding your large dog if you carefully measure or weigh the amount of food and treats you are giving and routinely monitor your pet's body condition. Since all dogs are individuals and may have unique calorie needs, it is important to adjust the amount of food provided to keep your dog in ideal body condition.

### **Large dogs need nutrients that support joint health.**

Large and giant breed dogs can be prone to joint problems, which is why they can benefit from a food designed for large dogs. Large breed diets often contain ingredients that may help support joint health, such as omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil or glucosamine from some meat and poultry ingredients. Omega-3 fatty acids may help manage inflammation, especially in joints, and help your large dog move comfortably.

Finding a dog food that meets all the unique nutritional needs of your large or giant breed 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 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.