

# FINDING GOOD QUALITY DOG FOOD

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MAKING SURE YOUR DOG GET'S ONLY  
THE BEST!



**Holistic Hounds**  
Award-Winning Dog Training & Therapy



# WHY IS DOG FOOD IMPORTANT?

What you feed your dog directly impacts almost every aspect of your dog's health and well-being. From their skin, coat, organ function and behaviour, good food will allow your dog to function at their very best where poor nutrition can affect your dog's health in so many ways.

Too much or too little of any one nutrient can quickly cause issues as it is diet more than any other factor that will determine the quality and the length of your dog's life.

However, every dog is different and there is no straight answer as to what you should feed your dog.

In this guide, we're going to give you the tools to help you find good quality food for your dog and hopefully make the process of finding that food as simple and easy to understand as possible.

It's important to remember that every dog is different and just like us, dogs have preferences and certain issues that need to be taken into account when we are feeding.

If your dog has any specific allergies or medical conditions, it is always a good idea to speak to your vet before making changes to your food to make sure your dog is able to manage the changes well.



*Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.*

**World Health Organisation**

# A LITTLE SCIENCE...

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As a new dog owner or even an established owner, it can be so difficult trying to navigate the dog food industry and finding an honest answer about what your dog needs and what is going to be the best for them. So let's start by talking about dogs biological nutritional needs and go right to the basics to help you understand what your dog needs and why.

So for starters, dogs are members of the mammalian order Carnivora - through DNA studies we know that the dog evolved directly from the Timber Wolf around 15, 000 years ago. Wolves are undeniably carnivores and so our dogs

share the same preferences.

So this points to the fact that dogs are carnivorous animals and therefore need meat in their diet in order to thrive. However, studies have shown time and time again that dogs have an omnivorous ability and can process and digest carbohydrate-based foods as well as fruits and vegetables.

This however, does not take away from the fact that a dog's body is mistakenly optimised for eating meat.

So although dogs have an omnivorous ability, we believe it is important to give preference to a meat based diet.

*With a lot of experience in the canine nutrition world I can tell you with sad confidence that the pet food world cares not a jot for the health of your pet.*

**Dr Conor Brady**





# DIFFERENT FOOD OPTIONS

So, there are three different dog food options currently on the market with a ton of different brands within each different category with a varying range of quality.

**1. Raw food** - this is what it says on the tin, raw meat completely uncooked and in it's most natural form

**2. Wet food** - originally raw food generally slightly cooked and preserved accordingly

**3. Dry food** - food that is completely cooked and dried out in small biscuit shapes

There are high quality foods in each category so you can pick a brand and category that works for you and your lifestyle.

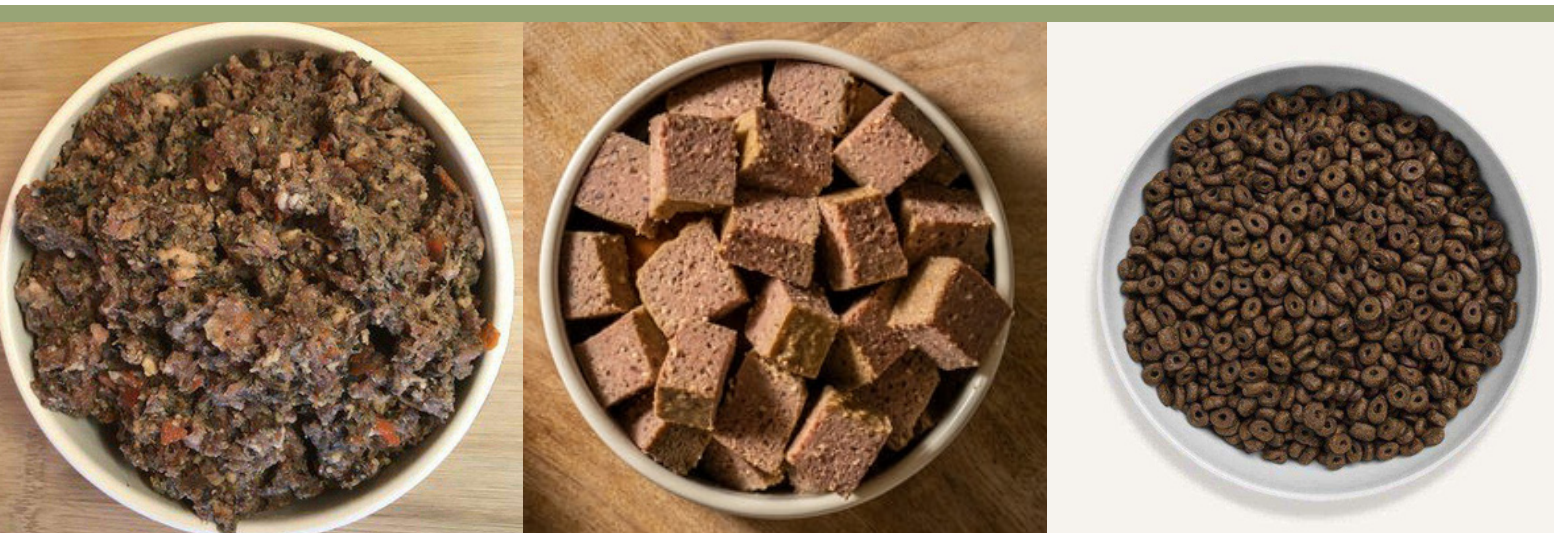
Now let's talk about quality.

Raw food is unarguably the best quality as it is in it's most natural form and is therefore the most digestible by dogs digestive systems.

Next is wet food. As it is cooked, it does lose some nutrients in the process meaning it will be less nutritional for your dog but not as much as dry food.

Dry food is generally last on the list as it is heavily cooked and processed so loses nutrients throughout the processing stage.

A good wet and dry food brand will equate for the loss of nutrients with supplementation which we will talk about later.



# WHAT MAKES A GOOD FOOD?

Well there are several factors to consider when looking at the quality of a dog food and as always, it differs for each dog.

## 1. Natural ingredients

Foods high in artificial preservatives, antioxidants, colourings and flavourings are simply not going to be as nutritional as those that are in their natural forms

## 2. High meat content

As discussed above, dogs need a good amount of meat content in order to thrive! So we recommend at the very minimum 30% natural meat content in your food and no lower

## 3. Animal derivatives/meat meal

So these are the leftover parts that we as humans don't eat and although these are fine for dogs to eat, they shouldn't be making up your dog's main meat source

## 4. Grain free

Although dogs can process carbohydrates, a lot of dogs actually have allergies to things like grains, wheat and maize and so we often avoid these in order to avoid any issues with allergy inducing ingredients

## 5. Fully complete

When we're looking for a food we want to ensure it contains all of the required nutrients your dog needs without having to add any extras



*If your dog has a specific dietary need or illness, please speak to your vet in order to get professional support.*

# WHERE TO START?

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So the first thing you need to decide is what food best fits your lifestyle. Feeding raw food does require more preparation than dry or wet food as you need to defrost as you go and prepare the food out of larger containers. You also need more storage for it in your freezer and fridge which is more difficult than a box of dry or wet food to store.

So pick a food that works for you and your dog and then you can decide from there what brands to go for in terms of quality.

A great resource to use is a website called:  
[www.allaboutdogfood.co.uk](http://www.allaboutdogfood.co.uk)  
The site rates different food brands based on quality and is un independently.

We recommend a minimum of a 75% rating on the site to ensure your dog is getting the best quality food they can possibly get. Whether that be raw, wet or dry food, the higher the percentage, the better the quality and the better the nutritional impact on your dog's health!

You also need to look at your dog's treats too, especially if you are using treats for training and getting through a lot of them a day. Again, check the ingredients, make sure they are good quality and are going to be positively impacting your dogs health and well being.

We have a blog on our website with some recommendations of different good quality treats we use so if you're looking for where to start, pop on over there and have a look.

Some of the big no's are:

- rawhide
- dried out bones like knuckles and joints





# SWITCHING TO A NEW FOOD

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Once you've picked and got your new food, how do you switch your dog onto it?

Well for most dogs you can switch their food in two ways:

1. A slow switch
2. A quick switch

A slow switch is where you change a small percentage of the dogs food over a week or two to ensure they are able to adjust to the new one. So for adult dogs you can change over about 20-30% of their food every couple of days and if they don't have any issues, continue until they are completely on the new food.

For puppies or older dogs, change about 10% every couple of days as their stomachs can be more sensitive to change.

A quick switch is where you change over to the new food immediately and add in supplements to help the dogs gut manage the change well. This is only recommended for healthy dogs without known stomach issues or in rare cases where you don't have any of the

old food to do a slow switch.

We recommend that if you are doing a quick switch to add in the following supplements for the first 3-5 days to help the dog's stomach to adjust to the change well:

- plain yoghurt - for added good bacteria
- slippery elm powder/tree barks powder - to maintain gut and stool health

Most dogs don't have issues with a food change but please speak to your veterinarian if your dog shows any prolonged signs of stomach issues such as: vomiting, diarrhoea, not wanting to eat or struggling to toilet.



# SOME BRANDS WE RECOMMEND

To help you out, here are some of our favourite food brands that we use and recommend!

## Canagan

Canagan do both dry and wet food as well as dog treats. They are high quality and the team are extremely helpful and supportive if you need any help.



## Nutriment

A raw food brand we personally use and love, they offer complete meals as well as raw bones and freeze dried treats.



## Caboodle

Pre portioned wet and dry food as well as dog treats in a subscription plan made for your dog. Currently only available for dogs under 16kg.





# DOG TREATS WE LOVE

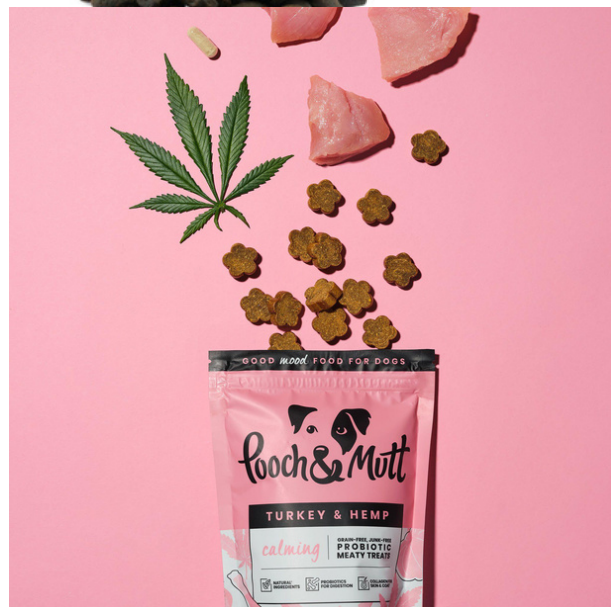
## Bounce and Bella

Bounce and Bella do a ton of different high quality treat options, our favourites are their training treat bags! They also do healthy chews for dogs wanting something to last a bit longer.



## Pooch and Mutt

Pooch and Mutt do lots of different flavours and options to suite all dogs. Their treats are soft and easily breakable for smaller chunks if needed.



## Denzels

Denzels are another great company with lots of different flavours to choose from. You can buy bags in bulk making them cost effective and even find them in some supermarkets.



# NEED SUPPORT?

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If you need any help in finding the right food for your dog, switching them over to a new food or any food or supplement advice, you can contact a member of our team who will be happy to offer any advice or support they can!

We offer nutritional and supplement consultations with our nutritional teams who are able to offer impartial advice and recommendations to help make picking your dog's food as simple as possible.



## Holistic Hounds

Award-Winning Dog Training & Therapy

You can get in contact with us using the following methods:

Email: [uk.holistichounds@gmail.com](mailto:uk.holistichounds@gmail.com)

Phone: 07591576330