

Feeding treats to your dog

What are treats?

Treats include any food items that are given to your dog in addition to a complete and balanced diet.

- These include snacks, chews, supplements, and foods used to administer medication.
- They may be commercially available or home prepared using food intended for people.

Facts about food treats

- Used as training aids or rewards for good behaviour.
- Provide enrichment and mental stimulation.
- May strengthen the bond with your dog.
- Too many treats can be harmful if they:
 - unbalance the main diet
 - contribute to unintended weight gain



Developing healthy treating habits

- Treats should always make up less than 10% of a dog's daily calorie intake.
- Maintaining an optimal weight is essential to supporting dog health and quality of life.
- For commercial treats, contact the manufacturer for calorie information if not stated on the label.
- Treats should never replace a meal – every dog needs a complete and balanced diet.
- Chat with your dog's veterinary health care team to determine a suitable quantity and type of treat.
- Supervise your dog with chews, treats and toys.
- Consider alternative ways of spending fun, quality time with your dog.
- Ensure that any treat offered is an appropriate size and shape to reduce the risk of choking.

Unsafe treats

- Treats must be safe and appropriate for your dog. The wrong treat, even if popular, can result in obesity¹, trauma², obstruction³ and even death.⁴ If your dog has a medical condition, dietary sensitivities, or is being fed a veterinary-prescribed diet, conventional treats may not be appropriate. Ask your veterinary healthcare team for advice if you are unsure what is suitable for your dog.
- Bones (cooked and raw) can be very dangerous and cause significant damage if chewed and/or ingested by dogs.⁵
- Excessively hard chews and treats, for example, antlers and hooves, and those with sharp edges should be avoided.⁶
- Unprocessed, raw animal-based treats, for example, contaminated pigs' ears, are a risk of pathogen transmission.⁷⁻¹⁰
- Human food and table scraps can be unhealthy¹¹ and potentially dangerous¹² to dogs.
- Toxic food ingredients include:
 - Chocolate
 - Macadamia nuts
 - Onions, leeks, shallots, garlic, chives
 - Grapes, raisins, currants and sultanas
 - Xylitol (sweetener)
 - Alcohol and raw yeast dough
 - Caffeinated drinks, including coffee, tea and energy drinks

How many treats can I feed?

Treats should make up no more than 10% of a dog's daily calorie intake. The following table identifies the maximum number of calories your dog should be consuming based on their current bodyweight.

Dog's body weight (kg)	2	4	6	8	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45
Daily calorie intake from treats*	14	24	32	40	47	64	79	94	108	121	134	146

**Based on a daily calorie requirement (kcal/day) for an average healthy adult dog in ideal body condition. Please speak to your veterinary healthcare team to determine your own dog's daily energy requirement.*

Below is the energy density of commercial chews or human foods that are commonly fed to dogs. For some dogs, consuming just one of these in the specified quantity could exceed their maximum recommended daily calorie intake from treats.

Food	Measure	Calories
Ham	1oz / 28g	46
Lean cooked chicken breast (without skin)	1oz / 28g	47
Lean turkey breast (without skin)	1oz / 28g	50
Lean cooked beef	1oz / 28g	64
Digestive biscuit	0.6oz / 17g (1 biscuit)	75
Peanut butter	1 tbsp	81
Cheddar cheese	1oz / 28g	120
Tripe stick	1oz / 28g	217
Dried pig's ear	2oz / 56g	242
Rawhide bone	6.7oz / 190g	700

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