

## Basic Dog Food

**Canine nutrition is a complicated but widely studied subject, and every dog owner has access to the experts.**

Brought to you by The Original Dog Bible If you are like most dog owners, you probably buy bags of kibble at the grocery store or the pet supply store, scoop the proper amount according to package directions into your dogs bowl once or twice a day, keep the water dish full, and consider that to be that. For some dogs, this nutritional strategy works. For others, it does not.

Not all dog food is the same. Are you sure the kibble or the canned or the semimoist food you chose is providing your dog with the nutrition he needs to function at his best? Is your dog food of choice complete and balanced? Does it meet your dogs special needs?

Maybe you also supplement your dogs food with table scraps. Does this improve or compromise your dogs health? You've probably heard from some sources that a good quality commercial kibble is all your dog ever needs. Other sources say that a healthy homemade diet is best. With so much conflicting information, it can be hard to decide what type of food is reasonable, affordable, and best for your dogs health.

Dog owners typically spend more money on dog food than on any other pet-related expense. Knowing the basics of canine nutrition, how to read a dog food label, and what your dog really needs and doesn't need for good health will help you make sure that your investment in canine nutrition is wise, contributing to rather than compromising your dogs healthy life.

Fortunately, you don't have to do all the work on your own. Canine nutrition is a complicated subject, but it is also widely studied and every dog owner has access to the experts. The reputable breeder, animal shelter, or rescue group from which you adopted your dog can give you a lot of information about what your dog has been eating and how to continue feeding him. Your veterinarian knows about canine nutrition and can recommend a food that matches your dogs needs. Some pet supply store employees also have been well trained in the merits of different brands of dog food and may have additional information, often in the form of take-home brochures from various product lines. A holistic pet store may have more information on natural foods, small stores may stick with the brand they have found to be superior, and larger chains may have a wide array of choices. Even the Internet has a lot of information about canine nutrition, although reputable Web sites from established authorities are likely to be the most reliable. (When in doubt, check with your veterinarian.)