

Dog Treats: How to Choose

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If you're like most pet parents, you love to give good things to your pup. Treats are often helpful as training aids and can be used to distract pets undergoing procedures such as removing mats, trimming nails, etc. Fortified treats offer extra health benefits. And sometimes, it is just fun to give pets something special. But are all treats created equal?

All-Natural Meat Treats

Protein is the building block of good nutrition for dogs. Choose a premium dog food with meat or meat meal listed as the first ingredient. In addition, treats high in animal protein and low in fat, like real meat treats made of 100% chicken, duck or pork are a healthy complement to your dog's diet. They offer the necessary animal protein that is often missing in cheaper dog foods and snacks. These treats are a good choice for picky dogs.



Rawhide

Natural rawhide bones are low in calories and offer dental benefits. Rawhide bones help remove plaque from your dog's teeth to keep them clean and healthy. This is significant as periodontal disease is a real problem in many dogs. There are several different forms of rawhide available including [bones or sticks](#),

pressed or [ground](#), beef or pork, smoked or [natural](#), etc. Choose a shape and form that best suits your dog's mouth size and chewing habits - then watch them chew their way to contentment and better dental health.

When selecting treats for your pet, be calorie-conscious, aware of the nutritional value of the treat and be sure that treats do not make up more than 10% of your pet's daily intake. Remember, your pet cannot drive up to the take-out window, open the freezer, or scrape the dishes. What your pet eats is determined by you. Choose healthy!

TABLE SCRAPS

Once you reward begging behavior with table scraps or something off your plate, you can expect to see the same hopeful eyes looking up at you every meal from that day forward. That is fine if you do not mind, but if you have a dog that whines, the behavior may disrupt your dinner. If you do mind, you will have a hard time training your dog to stay out of the room now that he knows he just might get a handout. Table scraps do not offer the nutrition dogs need. The more you fill your pet up with your food the less likely he is to eat his own. And since our nutritional needs are not the same as our dogs', your dog will get less of the vitamins and minerals he needs and probably more of those he does not need. Quality dog treats are developed with your dog's nutritional needs in mind.

