

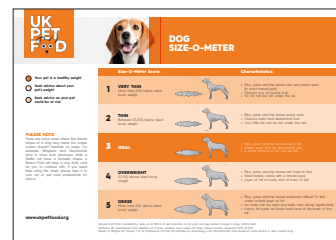


# HOW TO HELP YOUR DOG LOSE WEIGHT A HELP SHEET FOR DOG OWNERS

**Maintaining a healthy weight and body condition is not easy, neither for humans nor for their furry companions. According to the World Health Organisation, human obesity has nearly tripled globally since 1975 due to changes such as increased consumption of energy dense foods, urbanisation and a sedentary lifestyle. The same pattern is also seen in dogs with the majority of veterinary professionals believing that pet obesity is on the increase.**

UK Pet Food wants to help to reverse this trend and has teamed up with experts in human behaviour to give pet owners tools to help them keep their furry friends a healthy weight. In addition to our existing Pet Size-O-Meters, pet food calorie calculators, posters and food diaries, thanks to research funded by Purina and published in the journal *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, we have developed a new tool to help you identify and tackle some of the most challenging scenarios in feeding and treating your pets.

If you would like to give it a go, then look at the information on the next few pages, which describes some of the challenges that dog owners might encounter, including common situations that lead people to feed their dog too much or the wrong types of food.



Our Pet Size-O-Meters are a great start to determining if your dog is overweight.

### STEP 1

The first step is to identify which of the Challenges/Situations are relevant to you, and then think about why these are challenging for you (we have provided some suggestions in the first column, or you can add your own).

### STEP 2

Next, think about what you will do to address this challenge – again, we have provided some suggestions in the second column. This is the second step to helping your dog be a healthy weight.

### STEP 3

Finally, link your chosen challenge(s) with your chosen strategies to make a plan. To do this, complete the **If** and **Then** sentence/s on the last page. You can make one or more plans by writing extra sentences.

For example, you might make the plan: **“If I am tempted to share what I am eating with my dog to show I love them, then I will remind myself that my dog could live a longer, healthier, life if they are not overweight”**. When you have made your plans, read them back to yourself, share them with others if you want, and commit to carrying them out and keeping your dog happy and healthy!

1. WHO, *Obesity and Overweight (2021)* <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>

2. PFMA, *Pet Obesity Report (2019)* [https://www.pfma.org.uk/\\_assets/docs/White%20Papers/PFMA-Obesity-Report-2019.pdf](https://www.pfma.org.uk/_assets/docs/White%20Papers/PFMA-Obesity-Report-2019.pdf)

3. Webb, T. L., Krasuska, M., Toth, Z., du Plessis, H. R., & Colliard, L. (2018). Using research on self-regulation to understand and tackle the challenges that owners face helping their (overweight) dogs to lose weight. *Preventive Veterinary Medicine*, 159, 227-231. doi:10.1016/j.prevetmed.2018.08.017



Please ✓ the situations and challenges that apply to you and then ✓ your chosen strategy.

### CHALLENGE/SITUATION

### SOLUTION/STRATEGY

#### I share what I am eating with my pet

I share what I am eating with my pet because I worry that my pet finds their pet food boring...

I will remind myself that dog food is designed to be appealing and palatable for dogs and a good quality complete diet will meet all their nutritional requirements!

I share what I am eating with my pet because I want them to feel part of the family...

I will remind myself that, instead of sharing my food, I can show them my love through play, more walks and interaction.

I share what I am eating with my pet because I feel guilty or cruel not to share with them...

I will give my dog their meal before I eat mine or at the same time as I eat mine but in a different room!

I share what I am eating with my pet because they beg for food...

I will remind myself that my pet could live a longer, healthier, life if they are not overweight!

If there is another reason why you are tempted to share what you are eating with your pet, specify it here:

#### I struggle to know what or how much food to give to my dog

I struggle to know what to feed my dog...

I will speak to my vet to help me choose the most appropriate type of food for my dog!

I struggle to know how much dog food to give my dog...

I will check the product's feeding guidelines as a starting point to see how much I should be feeding my dog, based on his/her ideal body weight or ask my vet or the dog food's manufacturer if unsure.



### I give too many treats to my pet

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I give too many treats to my dog...  | <input type="checkbox"/> I will start factoring the treats into my pet's total daily calorie allowance (treats should not make up more than 10% of a pet's energy intake).                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I give treats to my pet as part of training, in the form of dental chews, or as a reward for good behaviour (eg. after a vet visit)... | <input type="checkbox"/> I will cut the treats into smaller pieces, or replace them with low calorie treats, to make sure the total amount is still no more than 10% of my dog's daily calorie allowance! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I give table scraps and leftovers as treats to my dog...   | <input type="checkbox"/> I will remind myself that scraps and leftovers have lots of calories. A piece of cheese for a cat equals 9 pieces of cheese for a person in terms of calories!                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (If there's another reason why you provide treats, specify it here)  | <input type="checkbox"/> I will look for alternative, less calorific, treats such as vegetables that are safe and suitable for my dog.  |

### More than one person feeds my pet making it difficult to control their intake

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than one person feeds my dog... | <input type="checkbox"/> I will designate one person to be responsible for feeding my dog.                                   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> I will use a board to mark when my dog has received their meal, so everyone in the household knows. |

### Guests or children give too many treats to my dog

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guests or children give too many treats to my dog... | <input type="checkbox"/> I will tell them that if they give my dog treats then they are 'treating them to lots of problems'.          |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> I will tell them to play and interact with my dog instead of feeding them (children only under supervision). |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> I will set aside treats which are included in the dog's daily ration which can be offered at set times.      |

### My dog steals food

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> My dog steals food... | <input type="checkbox"/> I will not leave food in places that my dog can access! |
|--|--|

You can insert a picture of your pet here!

MY DOG'S NAME

DATE OF PLAN

MY DOG'S BRAND/TYPE OF FOOD

MY DOG'S CURRENT WEIGHT

IDEAL (TARGET) WEIGHT

RECOMMENDED DAILY FEEDING AMOUNT FOR TARGET WEIGHT

If you are not sure about the above, please consult your vet or the manufacturer of your dog food.

If *[write what you find challenging here]*

then I will *[write your chosen strategy here]*

If *[write what you find challenging here]*

then I will *[write your chosen strategy here]*

If *[write what you find challenging here]*

then I will *[write your chosen strategy here]*

**Please click [here](#) to save a copy of the plan that you have just created.**