

GRADE YOUR DOG FOOD

Here is a grading scale that is being circulated on the web right now.

It's hard to know what the best food for your pup is. There are a lot of factors involved -- ingredients, your dog's age, your dog's general health and weight, and what you can afford! Below is a method to grade your dog food that was posted on one of the online dog communities I belong to. It seems like a lot of effort, but it yields some interesting results.

Start with a grade of 100:

For every listing of "by-product", subtract 10 points for being sketchy!

For every non-specific animal source ("meat" or "poultry", meat, meal or fat) reference, subtract 10 points for being sketchy!

If the food contains BHA, BHT, or ethoxyquin, subtract 10 points

For every grain "mill run" or non-specific grain source, subtract 5 points for being sketchy!

If the same grain ingredient is used 2 or more times in the first five ingredients (i.e. "ground brown rice", "brewer's rice", "rice flour" are all the same grain), subtract 5 points

If the protein sources are not meat meal and there are less than 2 meats in the top 3 ingredients, subtract 3 points

If it contains any artificial colorants, subtract 3 points

If it contains ground corn or whole grain corn, subtract 3 points

If corn is listed in the top 5 ingredients, subtract 2 more points

If the food contains any animal fat other than fish oil, subtract 2 points

If lamb is the only animal protein source (unless your dog is allergic to other protein sources), subtract 2 points

If it contains soy or soybeans, subtract 2 points

If it contains wheat (unless you know that your dog isn't allergic to wheat), subtract 2 points

If it contains beef (unless you know that your dog isn't allergic to beef), subtract 1 point

If it contains salt, subtract 1 point

Extra Credit:

If any of the meat sources are organic, add 5 points

If the food is endorsed by any major breed group or nutritionist, add 5 points

If the food is baked not extruded, add 5 points

If the food contains probiotics, add 3 points

If the food contains fruit, add 3 points

If the food contains vegetables (NOT corn or other grains), add 3 points

If the animal sources are hormone-free and antibiotic-free, add 2 points

If the food contains barley, add 2 points

If the food contains flax seed oil (not just the seeds), add 2 points

If the food contains oats or oatmeal, add 1 point

If the food contains sunflower oil, add 1 point

For every different specific animal protein source (other than the first one; count "chicken" and "chicken meal" as only one protein source, but "chicken" and "beef" as 2 different sources), add 1 point

If it contains glucosamine and chondroitin, add 1 point

If the vegetables have been tested for pesticides and are pesticide-free, add 1 point

Grading:

94-100+ = A

86-93 = B

78-85 = C

70-77 = D

69 = F

Here are some foods that have already been scored.

Dog Food scores:

Authority Harvest Baked

Score 116

A+

Bil-Jac Select

Score 68

F

Canidae

Score 112

A+

Chicken Soup Senior

Score 115

A+

Diamond Maintenance

Score 64

F

Diamond Lamb Meal & Rice

Score 92

B

Diamond Large Breed 60+ Formula

Score 99

A

Dick Van Patten's Natural Balance Ultra Premium

Score 122

A+

Dick Van Patten's Duck and Potato

Score 106

A+

Foundations

Score 106

A+

Hund-n-Flocken Adult Dog (lamb) by Solid Gold

Score 93

B

lams Lamb Meal & Rice Formula Premium

Score 73

D

Innova Dog

Score 114

A+

**Fromm Adult Gold Score 107 A+

Innova Evo

Score 114

A+

Kirkland Signature Chicken, Rice, and Vegetables

Score 110

A+

Nutrisource Lamb and Rice

Score 87

B

Nutro Natural Choice Large Breed Puppy

Score 87

B

Pet Gold Adult with Lamb & Rice

Score 23

F

ProPlan Natural Turkey & Barley

Score 103

A+

Purina Beneful

Score 17

F

Purina Dog

Score 62

F

Purina Come-n-Get It

Score 16

F

Royal Canin Bulldog

Score 100

A+

Royal Canin Natural Blend Adult

Score 106

A+

Sensible Choice Chicken and Rice

Score 97

A

Science Diet Advanced Protein Senior 7+

Score 63

F

Science Diet for Large Breed Puppies

Score 69

F

Wellness Super5 Mix Chicken

Score 110

A+

Wolfking Adult Dog (bison) by Solid Gold

Score 97

A

There has also been MAJOR recalls on multiple brands of dog foods. Go to <http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/petfood.html> to get the latest information.