



Template: Senior Dog Nutrition Checklist

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Based on Article: "Aging Gracefully: Nutrition for Senior Dogs"

A practical checklist for ensuring optimal nutrition for senior dogs, focusing on tailored dietary needs and health maintenance.

Checklist Items:

- ☐ **1. Assess Lean Mass**
Track your dog's body condition and muscle over time. Increase protein percentage if you notice muscle decline.
Reference Section: Understanding Senior Dog Nutritional Needs
- ☐ **2. Adjust Protein Levels**
Prioritize high-quality, digestible proteins to slow muscle loss and support immune function. Adjust protein levels according to your dog's weight and condition.
Reference Section: How to adjust protein and calories for senior dog nutrition
- ☐ **3. Control Caloric Intake**
Reformulate your dog's meals to reduce calorie density while retaining high protein content. Use measured servings to prevent weight gain.
Reference Section: Understanding Senior Dog Nutritional Needs
- ☐ **4. Include Joint-Support Nutrients**
Add omega-3 fatty acids (EPA/DHA) and glucosamine in each serving to support joint health and cognitive function.
Reference Section: Which supplements and ingredients aid joint health and cognition
- ☐ **5. Opt for Senior-Specific Food**
Replace standard kibble with a senior-specific formula that has high-quality protein and controlled calories. Start transitioning with gentle, high-protein snacks.
Reference Section: How to adjust protein and calories for senior dog nutrition
- ☐ **6. Implement Smaller, Frequent Meals**
Feed smaller, more frequent meals to reduce gastric load and improve intake, especially if your dog has dental issues.
Reference Section: Understanding Senior Dog Nutritional Needs
- ☐ **7. Monitor Stool Quality**
Check your dog's stool quality regularly. Firm and shaped stools indicate tolerance, while loose stools may require adjustments.
Reference Section: Designing the Right Diet: Practical Meal Plans

☐ **8. Track Weight and Body Score Weekly**

Weigh your dog and assess body condition weekly. Adjust calorie intake by $\pm 10\%$ depending on weight gain or loss.

Reference Section: Managing Weight, Muscle, and Mobility

☐ **9. Transition Food Gradually**

Follow a step-by-step transition schedule when changing to a new diet to avoid digestive upset.

Reference Section: Designing the Right Diet: Practical Meal Plans