



Template: Healthy Dog Treats Checklist

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Based on Article: "Healthy Dog Treats"

A practical checklist to ensure you choose healthy treats for your dog while managing calories and promoting overall health.

Checklist Items:

- ☐ **1. Estimate Daily Caloric Needs**
Convert your dog's weight to kilograms and use the formula $RER = 70 \times (kg^{0.75})$. Multiply by an activity factor based on your dog's lifestyle to find their daily calorie needs.
Reference Section: Why Treat Choice Matters: Health, Behavior & Nutrition
- ☐ **2. Allocate Treat Allowance**
Reserve approximately 10% of the total daily calories for treats and training rewards. This prevents weight gain while allowing for effective reinforcement.
Reference Section: Why Treat Choice Matters: Health, Behavior & Nutrition
- ☐ **3. Choose High-Quality Treats**
Select treats that have clearly named whole proteins as the first ingredient and avoid those with vague terms like 'meat meal.' Opt for single-ingredient jerky or baked snacks.
Reference Section: Key Ingredients to Look For (and Avoid)
- ☐ **4. Check Ingredient Labels**
Look for short ingredient lists with named proteins and functional nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids and glucosamine to support health.
Reference Section: Key Ingredients to Look For (and Avoid)
- ☐ **5. Limit Added Sugars and Preservatives**
Avoid treats with artificial preservatives such as BHA/BHT and added sugars. Instead, opt for items preserved with natural methods.
Reference Section: Key Ingredients to Look For (and Avoid)
- ☐ **6. Portion Control Treats**
Use small, low-calorie treats for training sessions to stay within the daily treat allowance. Consider using pieces of the dog's regular food as treats.
Reference Section: Why Treat Choice Matters: Health, Behavior & Nutrition
- ☐ **7. Balance Treats with Meals**
Consider treat-and-meal pairing ideas to maintain overall calorie balance. Ensure treats complement, rather than replace, a balanced meal.
Reference Section: How to pick treats that support weight management and dental care

☐ **8. Introduce Novel Proteins**

Rotate treats that provide novel proteins like fish or turkey to reduce the risk of allergies. This is especially important for dogs prone to sensitivities.

Reference Section: Swap suggestions for dogs with sensitivities

☐ **9. Keep Training Sessions Engaging**

Combine high-protein, low-calorie treats for training reinforcement while managing calorie intake. Use high-value treats occasionally within the caloric budget.

Reference Section: Practical rules for everyday decisions