

A healthy weight enhances their quality of life

Obesity reduces a dog's life expectancy by an average of 2 years

Why is a healthy weight so important for our dogs?

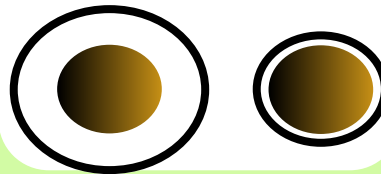
Obesity increases the risk of other diseases, such as arthritis, heart disease and cancer

Obesity is a chronic disease, permanently affecting metabolism

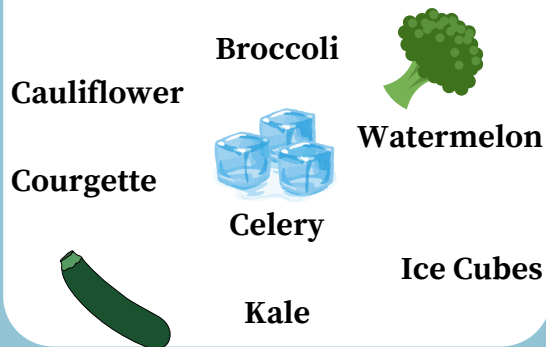
Some insurance companies won't pay out for obesity related claims

Healthy Hacks to make it super easy!!

Use a smaller bowl so that it looks more full.
(the Delboeuf illusion)

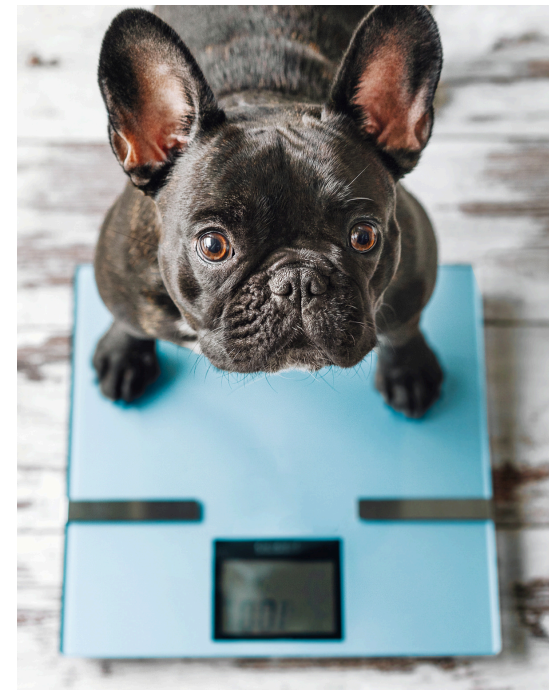


Choose treats from "Free foods" that don't count towards calories (think leaves and flowers, and avoid too many seeds and roots like carrots and peanut butter)



A "fussy" dog is often just full: don't persuade them to eat more. Remove their bowl after 20 minutes, and give them fresh food at their next meal.

Getting into shape!



Based on Podgy Dogs and Fat Cats, a vet-led course by Animal Love. Scan the QR Code to learn more:



www.animallovepetfirstaid.co.uk

Produced by Heather's Walkies

Step 1: Calculate your dog's Body Condition Score (BCS)

If this seems tricky, you're not alone: a recent study found that 48% of dog guardians selected the wrong score, often opting for a lower one. And with 65% of dogs overweight, this body shape has become our new 'normal'. So get some help from someone impartial, like your vet.

BODY CONDITION SCORE - MEDIUM DOG



TOO THIN					
 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance No discernible body fat Obvious loss of muscle mass 	 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible No palpable fat No bony prominences visible from a distance Minimal loss of muscle mass 	 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible; pelvic bones becoming prominent Obvious waist and abdominal tuck 			
IDEAL					
 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering Waist easily noted when viewed from above Abdominal tuck evident 	 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable without excess fat covering Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side 	<th colspan="3">OVERWEIGHT</th>	OVERWEIGHT		
 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable with slight excess of fat covering Waist is discernible when viewed from above but is not prominent Abdominal tuck apparent 	<th colspan="3">OBESE</th>	OBESE			
 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat cover Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail Waist absent or barely visible Abdominal tuck may be absent 	 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover or palpable only with significant pressure Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail Waist absent No abdominal tuck Obvious abdominal distension may be present 	 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine, and base of tail Waist and abdominal tuck absent Fat deposits on neck and limbs Obvious abdominal distension 			



Rib Tip:

When feeling for the ribs, use a flat hand with a light touch. They should feel like the knuckles on the back of your flat hand.



Too thin
Not enough coverage



Overweight
Too much coverage



Just right!
BCS 4/5

Different Shaped Dog?

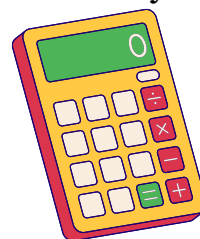
Royal Canin has produced pictures for small, large and giant breeds. There's even one for cats.



Step 2: Calculate your dog's ideal body weight & Maintenance Energy Requirement (daily calories)

Skip the maths, and do this online by scanning the QR code.

It is really important to correctly select intact, neutered, or inactive/obese. If your dog has ever been overweight in the past, then select this last one, which reflects their slower metabolism, even if they're currently active and at their ideal weight.



<https://vetcalculators.com/calories.html>



Step 3: Treats!

Treats can form up to 10% of your dog's diet without affecting their nutrition, so prepare for this by reducing their calories by 10%. Make sure you check the calories before you give treats: gravy bones are about 14kCal, but Dentastix are a whopping 78kCal! For an easy option, just use their daily kibble.

Step 4: Weigh out the day's food



Measuring by eye is often inaccurate, and measuring cups can overestimate by up to 80%. Use kitchen scales to weigh food instead. Check the packaging for kCal/100g; if unavailable, search online or contact the manufacturer. Avoid relying on the recommended portion sizes, as they do not consider your dog's specific needs (intact/neutered/etc) and could be biased towards making higher sales.