



Older Dogs **COOKBOOK**

Sacha Packer



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@balancedcanine

Hello! My name is Sacha and this is Little Man, my 13 year old mixed breed pound dog, I am a walking cliché when it comes to how I started working professionally with dogs! I grew up with dogs, obsessed about them, and couldn't wait to get my own as an adult and get involved in everything dog! I initially trained as a soft tissue therapist working with older and performance dogs, it was at this time I came to realise that so many dogs were living on highly processed unhealthy diets and I wanted to change that! I trained in canine nutrition and it became my absolute passion and so, here we are!

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older dogs need the best

It was once thought that older dogs needed low-protein diets because their kidneys would struggle with higher amounts, however, these diets can lead to muscle atrophy and potentially, the eventual mobility downfall of older dogs. I would have to question whether a life spent consuming a highly processed diet with low-quality protein and a lack of moisture in these diets actually leads to older dogs having kidney challenges.

Thankfully, as the years go, we learn more and more about how species-appropriate nutrition is beneficial to dogs, why did we ever doubt this?

Pet parents trust dog food manufacturers and the people who get trained by them i.e. our Vets and their teams, however, kibble manufacturers are there to run a business and make income and that is not derived from you making and feeding your dog a species-appropriate diet.

I am encouraged that more and more Vets are pushing back on this system and are taking part in post-grad education to learn more about how to formulate fresh food diets for dogs including dogs with medical challenges.

Before we get to the recipes, it is important to learn what type of nutritional factors we believe are important for older dogs...

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Protein: As dogs age, they may require more protein to maintain muscle mass and immune function. However, the quality of the protein is also important, and high-quality animal-based proteins are generally more digestible and provide a more balanced amino acid profile. Aim for protein content of at least 25% on a dry matter basis.

Dry dog foods are often made up of mostly cheap protein from non-meat sources i.e. pea protein and grains.

Calories: Older dogs may become less active and have slower metabolisms, which can lead to weight gain if they continue to eat the same amount of food as when they were younger. Adjusting their calorie intake can help prevent excess weight gain and maintain a healthy body condition.

Nutrient density: Older dogs may require more nutrient-dense foods to help ensure that they are getting all of the essential vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients they need. This can be achieved by feeding a diet that is rich in high-quality animal-based proteins and supplemented with vitamins and minerals as needed.

Joint health: Older dogs may be more prone to joint stiffness and arthritis, so feeding a diet that is supplemented with joint-supportive nutrients such as glucosamine, chondroitin, and omega-3 fatty acids can help support joint health and mobility.

older dogs need the best

Dental health: As dogs age, they may be more prone to dental issues, so feeding a diet that promotes dental health, such as consuming edible bones or in lieu of this, supplements that can help break down dental build-up is ideal.

Hydration: Older dogs may be more prone to dehydration, so feeding a moisture-rich diet such as a fresh food diet can be beneficial. Adding electrolytes to the diet in the form of healthy nutrition such as coconut water, banana, avocado, etc. can also be helpful.

Digestive Enzymes: It is possible for older dogs to produce fewer digestive enzymes as they age. Enzymes are proteins that help to break down food into smaller, more easily digestible components. As dog's age, their bodies may produce fewer digestive enzymes, which can make it harder for them to digest certain types of food therefore adding a digestive enzyme containing food or supplement can be helpful.

Cooked Foods: Whilst we are big fans of the raw diet, we are an advocate for "fresh food feeding" which covers both raw and cooked healthy foods. Cooked foods can be very beneficial for older dogs as they are easier to digest. When we refer to cooked foods, we are not referring to ultra-processed dry food (kibble) diets.

Please note, our recipes are **not** intended for dogs who require special diets for medical challenges, we recommend you have a phone consult with Bentons Road Vet Clinic or Mont Albert Veterinary Surgery (Victoria, Australia) who are integrative / holistic vets.

balancing a diet

There is not just one way to feed a dog a healthy diet, just like in humans, there are many different formats of diets such as paleo, vegetarian, vegan, flexitarian, keto, etc.

Balance has never meant that an animal (human or dog) should consume a specific amount of nutrients per meal as an absolute minimum but this is how many pet parents think dogs should be fed because this is how dry food (kibble) is formulated to ensure its' highly processed end product meets the absolute basic nutritional requirements to keep a dog alive (not thrive), they largely do this with synthetic nutrients.

Whilst the recipes in this cookbook are complete and balanced to either AAFCO or FEDIAF guidelines (to keep your Vet happy), balancing will occur with natural ingredients, not synthetics and we will go above and beyond the minimums but not exceed the maximums.

Because each ingredient's individual nutritional profile goes towards the balancing act, there are no substitutes for ingredients, however, if you are simply using these ingredients as inspiration, then change whatever you like!

how much to feed

Older dogs often become overweight because their pet parents follow feeding guidelines without realising they should adjust their dog's intake if they become overweight or underweight.

The general rule is that you should feed your dog whatever amount it takes to maintain their weight at a nice lean muscular body condition. Is your dog overweight? Learn how to tell [here](#).

Overweight dogs die younger, struggle with their mobility, and are more prone to disease and depressive-like disorders.

Overweight dogs should have a vet visit, full bloods (health screening profile) run including a thyroid panel to ensure there is no medical reason why they are struggling to lose weight.

- Learn more about how much to feed your dog [here](#).
- Download our weight loss guide [here](#).

ingredients

You will notice that we use ingredients that appear across different recipes, this helps keep your costs down and keep things simple.

You may wonder why we use certain ingredients, so let me walk you through some...

- Cooked Sweet Potatoes - Fibre & anti-oxidants
- Eggs - vitamin D & Choline
- Canned Salmon - Vitamin D & omega-3
- Lamb Liver - Copper, B2, B12 & Choline
- Banana - Digestive enzyme & happy tummy
- Frozen peas that you have boiled - Zinc
- Hempseeds - Manganese & omega-3
- Pumpkin seeds - Vitamin E
- Chia Seeds - Fibre & omega-3
- Iodized salt - Iodine & Chlorine
- Eggshells - Calcium
- Canned Oysters (smoked is fine) - Copper, Manganese & Zinc

Bones are not used in these recipes as they are too challenging to work out the individual nutritional profiles, we use calcium substitutes instead, however this does not mean you cannot feed your senior dog bones, they're great for the oldies!

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Turkey & Sweet Potato

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

The only ingredients in this recipe you will cook are the sweet potatoes and peas.

Ingredients

- 500g Turkey Mince
- 200 Cooked Sweet Potatoes
- 2 Large Eggs
- 50g Canned Salmon
- 50g Lamb Liver or 17g of ground dried lamb liver treats
- 40g Banana
- 20g Frozen peas that you have boiled
- 15g Hempseeds
- 15g Pumpkin seeds that you have ground
- 10g Chia seeds that you soak in a little water for at least 20 mins
- 4g of Iodized salt
- 1 Eggshell that you have ground



Batch Size
1,010 grams



Balance
FEDIAF - Adult Dog



Turkey Cooked Meatloaf

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

Cook at 180C for 30 minutes and then drain any liquid and cook for a further 30 mins or until done - all ovens are different.



Ingredients

- 500g Turkey Mince
- 115g Quick Oats
- 75g Carrots
- 75g Broccoli
- 20g Parsley
- 50g Canned Salmon
- 1 Large Egg
- 20g Bone Meal powder (food grade)
- 17g Chia seeds that you soak in a little water for at least 20 minutes
- 10g Wheatgrass powder
- 4.5g of Iodized salt



Batch Size
986 grams



Balance
AAFCO - Adult Dog

Weight Loss Chicken

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

The only ingredients will cook in this recipe is the spinach and cauliflower.



Ingredients

- 500g Chicken Mince
- 1 Large Egg
- 50g Canned Salmon
- 50g Frozen Chopped Spinach that you have boiled
- 50g Cooked Cauliflower
- 50g Chicken Liver
- 50g Canned Oysters (smoked is fine)
- 17g Chia seeds that you soak in a little water for at least 20 minutes
- 1 Eggshell that you have ground
- 2g of Iodized salt



Batch Size
823 grams



Balance
AAFCO - Adult Dog

Healthy Fats & Digestion - Cooked Recipe

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

The only ingredients will cook in this recipe is the spinach and cauliflower.



Ingredients

- 500g Chicken Mince
- 200g Lentils
- 2 Large Eggs
- 50g Lamb Liver or 17g of ground dried lamb liver treats
- 40g Apples
- 40g Avocado (they are safe)
- 40g Pineapple (canned is fine)
- 35g Chia seeds that you soak in a little water for at least 20 minutes
- 50g Canned Salmon
- 20g Frozen peas that you boil
- 10g Pumpkin seeds that you ground
- 1 Egg Shell that you ground
- 2g of Iodized salt



Batch Size
1,095 grams



Balance
FEDIAF - Adult Dog

Colourful Beef

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

The only ingredients will cook in this recipe are the mushrooms and this is to break down their tough cell wall.



Ingredients

- 500g Beef Mince (90% lean)
- 2 Large Eggs
- 50g Lamb Liver or 17g of ground dried lamb liver treats
- 40g Radishes
- 40g Cooked Mushrooms
- 40g Tomato
- 40g Mixed Berries (frozen is fine)
- 40g Avocado (they are safe)
- 20g Frozen peas that you boil
- 10g Chia seeds that you soak in a little water for at least 20 minutes
- 10g Hempseeds
- 4g Hempseed oil
- 1 Egg Shell that you ground
- 5g Cinnamon powder
- 3g of Iodized salt
- 2g Cod Liver oil



Batch Size
910 grams



Balance
FEDIAF - Adult Dog

Beef & Healthy Fats

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

The recipe contains both avocado and garlic which unfortunately many people think are unsafe for dogs but science have proven are safe and healthy!



Ingredients

- 500g Beef Mince (90% lean)
- 2 Large Eggs
- 54g Avocado (they are safe)
- 50g Beef Liver or 17g of dried Beed liver treats that you have ground
- 45g Goats Cheese
- 14g Unsweetened Coconut Cream
- 10g Hempseed oil
- 10g Chia seeds that you have soaked in a little water for at least 20 minutes.
- 1 Egg Shell that you ground
- 6g Psyllium Husks
- 1 Clove of Garlic (they are safe)
- 5g of Iodized salt
- 2g Cod Liver oil
- 1g Wheatgrass powder



Batch Size
1,007 grams



Balance
FEDIAF - Adult Dog

Pork & Mackerel

Instructions

The easiest way to prepare your ingredients is to simply pop them in a blender/food processor but you can also use a mortar and pestle / coffee grinder / spice grinder.

Pork often gets a bad rap, however it's a lovely protein!



Ingredients

- 500g Pork (it is safe raw)
- 2 Large Eggs
- 80g Canned Mackerel
- 60g Beef Liver or 17g of dried Beef liver treats that you have ground
- 50g Avocado (they are safe)
- 40g Cauliflower
- 40g Broccoli
- 34g Pumpkin seeds that you have ground
- 30g Carrots
- 20g Frozen Peas that you have boiled
- 11g of Flaxseeds that you have ground
- 1 Egg Shell that you ground
- 4g of Iodized salt



Batch Size
1,055 grams



Balance
FEDIAF - Adult Dog

supplements

There are some great supplements that we recommend for older dogs:

- Antinol Rapid - a high-quality omega-3 supplement that is also for the treatment and prevention of arthritis.
- Digestive Enzymes - Gut Protect from Canine Ceuticals is a lovely product.
- Probiotics - There are a number on the market, we produce one called Gut Dust
- Mushroom Complexes - Fantastic for immunity, the Mushroom Elixir from Canine Ceuticals is a product we use and recommend.
- Bone Broth - A lovely whole foods booster for gut and joint health, we offer a bone broth powder here.

more resources

Join us at our [fresh food feeding.group](#)

Check out our [Patreon platform](#) with over 50 recipes

Learn how to put together a balanced home-cooked diet for your dog with our [easy starter guide](#)