



# BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

## ADULT

Feeding to ideal body condition provides real, long-term health benefits, and the chart below should be used to monitor your dog's body condition. Since every dog is different, modify your feeding amounts as needed to help your dog reach ideal body condition.



### Underfed Dog

Ribs are highly visible. Increase the amount you are feeding. After 2 or 3 weeks, compare again. Adjust until dog exhibits ideal body condition.



### Ideal Body Condition

Can feel and see outline of ribs. Dog has a waist when viewed from above. Belly is tucked up when viewed from the side. Maintain current feeding regimen.



### Overfed Dog

Dog has no waist when viewed from above. Belly is rounded when viewed from the side. Decrease amount you are feeding. After 2 or 3 weeks, compare again. Adjust as necessary.

### BENEFITS OF MAINTAINING IDEAL BODY CONDITION:

- Promotes a leaner, longer, healthier life
- Reduces potential for developing weight-related health conditions
- Reduces a dog's percentage of body fat for better health
- Helps maintain healthy blood sugar levels
- Helps maintain healthy blood pressure and heart rate



The Body Condition System was developed and tested at the Purina Pet Care Center, and has been documented in the following publications: Laflamme, DP. Body Condition Scoring and Weight Maintenance. *Proc N Am Vet Conf* Jan 16-21, 1993, Orlando FL, pp 290-291. Laflamme DP, Kealy RD, Schmidt DA. Estimation of Body Fat by Body Condition Score. *J Vet Int Med* 1994; 8:154. Laflamme DP, Kuhlman G, Lawler DF, Kealy RD, Schmidt DA. Obesity Management in Dogs. *J Vet Clin Nutr* 1994; 1:59-65.

# Guide•Dogs

FOR THE BLIND

USE THIS SHEET TO BODY SCORE YOUR PUPPY WHEN COMPLETING THE PROJECT RECORD BY CHOOSING THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PUPPY'S CURRENT BODY CONDITION

## Understanding Your Dog's Body Condition

### Too Thin

1 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.

2 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.

3 Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist.



### Ideal

4 Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.

5 Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed.



### Too Heavy

6 Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.

7 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 present.

8 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 Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.

