

How to Develop Good Eaters

by Andrea Holsinger

Poor eaters are made not born. Dogs should eat a well-balanced diet. Table scraps and constant treats do not a balanced diet make. Many owners feel the feeding their dogs from the table or hand is a good way for them to express their love for their dog. If you really love your dog and you have his best interest in mind, then you will assist your dog in the development of good eating habits. If you insist on creating a dog that has poor eating behaviors this will affect your dog's good health for his entire life. Picky eaters are usually poorly nourished because these will only eat certain foods. In addition, your dog's weight is your responsibility. Mother nature equipped the dog to gorge with food any time the opportunity presents itself. The dog's environment in the wild prevents the dog from becoming overweight because the food supply is limited. Therefore, owners must control their dog's portions at meal time. One of the first indicators of illness is your dog's lack of interest in food. If you are feeding free choice, it will be hard to determine how much your dog is eating. Food should be fed at a scheduled time and should be measured.

With the responsibility of ownership goes the responsibility for the health and well being of your dog. Controlling your dog's diet and environment is in the best interest of your friend. The list of rules below will help you turn a poor eater into a good one and will help you establish good eating patterns.

1. Set up a regular feeding schedule and keep it, even on weekends.
2. Do not feed free choice.
3. Do not feed table scraps.
4. Do not feed anything between meals.
5. At feeding time, put down a measured amount of food and leave the room for 5 minutes. Return after 5 minutes and take up any left over food. Do not feed anything else until the next meal time no matter how much the dog begs. The dog will not starve.
6. The dog may not eat well for a few days but will be eating properly in a short time. The owner suffers more than the dog. Take a deep breath and go to bed to avoid giving into the begging beast!