

# Dog health - Weight

As a dog owner, you are responsible for maintaining your pet's correct weight. An individual dog's dietary needs depend on their age, lifestyle, how active they are and their state of health. By feeding your dog a sensible diet and ensuring they get enough exercise every day, your dog should stay at a healthy weight.

Ask your vet if you're not sure.

## Checking your dog's weight

### 1. Look at your dog from the side.

Their tummy needs to tuck up from their chest and not be level with, or hang below the chest. If you can easily see a dog's ribs they are probably underweight. However, in some breeds, including Greyhounds and Whippets, the dog's ribs show at a normal weight.

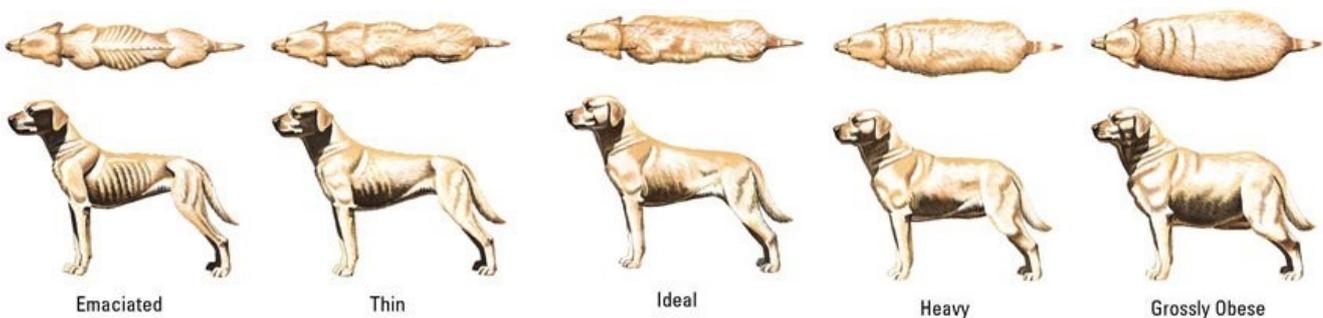
Breeds with heavy coats need closer scrutiny because you probably can't see ribs even when the dog is underweight, so try the next two steps for a closer look.

### 2. Look at your dog from above.

As you stand over them and look down, your dog needs to have a visibly tucked-in waist, but their hipbones shouldn't protrude too severely. If your dog looks like a barrel then they are probably overweight.

### 3. Feel your dog's sides for the ribs.

This test is especially important for heavily coated dogs. If you can not feel their ribs, they are probably overweight. If you can feel the ribs but they have a slight padding, then your dog may be just right. If the ribs are obvious and feel like they're covered with only the thinnest layer of skin, your dog may be underweight.



Obesity can cause many serious health problems in pets of any age. Too much weight stresses bones and joints, strains the heart and other internal organs — overweight dogs suffer much the same risks and consequences as overweight humans.

If they are overweight, cut down on in-between meal treats, take the food out of their evening meal to use for training and gradually increase your dog's exercise levels. Your vet can advise you on safe weight loss plans.