

# Shop Smart.



## THE DOG OWNER'S GUIDE TO DOG FOOD LABELS

Go Sherlock Holmes on the dog food aisle and ensure your dog's has the healthful, nutritious diet they deserve! With these 4 tips, you'll be an expert ingredient list detective.

### 1 Look out for fillers.

Fillers are inexpensive ingredients with low nutritional value. They're used to make it seem you're getting more for your money than you are. Many are also allergenic.

**FILLERS INCLUDE:** Corn, soy, grains, peas, white potatoes, cellulose, and plant-based "husk," "pomace," "pulp," "fiber," "protein," "starch," "middlings," "flour"

### 2 Avoid mystery meat.

4D meat – which can be sourced from *any* animal, including roadkill and euthanized shelter animals – is often disguised with vague descriptors. Insist on a specifically named source.

**GOOD MEAT EXAMPLES:** "Chicken meat", "Turkey meal", "Duck liver", "Beef bone", "Lamb loin"

**BAD MEAT EXAMPLES:** "Animal fat," "Meat," "Bone Meal," "Poultry meat," "Animal By-Product"

### 3 Get wise to name games.

Ingredients mentioned in a name may make up significantly less of the recipe than they suggest. Be aware of naming conventions and verify ingredient content by looking at the ingredient list.

**25% RULE:** In foods with names that have a descriptor after the named ingredient (exp. "Beef *Dinner* for Dogs,") the named ingredient may account for as little as 25% of the total formula. If multiple ingredients are named (exp. Beef & Liver for Dogs) they must add up to 25% of the total formula (exp. 15% Beef & 10% Liver).

**3% RULE:** In foods with names that include the word "with," the ingredient following the word "with" must only account for 3% of the total formula.

**FLAVOR RULE:** In foods with names where ingredients are followed by the word "flavor" like "Beef Flavor Dog Food," there only needs to be a "detectable" amount of the ingredient, There could be less than .10%!

### 4 Steer clear of chemicals.

While not all synthesized chemicals are harmful, an unfortunate number - still in use - have been linked to adverse health effects. Most of these potentially harmful chemicals are used as coloring or as preservatives, so a good basic rule you can use to avoid them would be to steer clear of synthetic colors and preservatives altogether.

**ETHOXYQUIN:** Used as a preservative. Linked to thyroid, kidney, reproductive, and immune-related illness.

**BHA & BHT:** Used as a preservative. Banned for human use in many countries and linked to tumor growth and cancer.

**PROPYLENE GLYCOL (aka. PG):** Used to retain moisture. Toxic consumed in large amounts – not something you want your dog eating with every meal.

**PROPYL GALLATE (aka. Gallic Acid and Propyl Ester):** A "natural" preservative (obtained from the hydrolysis of tara pod tanins – what could be more natural, right?). Linked to liver disease and cancer.

**SODIUM NITRATE:** Used to preserve color. Linked to digestive cancers.

**BLUE 1:** Linked to kidney tumors, nerve damage, and allergic reaction.

**BLUE 2:** Linked to brain tumors.

**CITRUS RED 2:** Linked to urinary tumors.

**GREEN 3:** Linked to urinary and testicular tumors.

**RED 3:** Banned for use in cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, but somehow still allowed in food. FDA recognized as a thyroid carcinogen.

**RED 40:** Linked to immune system tumors, allergic reactions, and hyperactivity.

**YELLOW 5:** Often contaminated with carcinogens. Linked to allergic reactions, hyperactivity, and behavioral changes.

**YELLOW 6:** Often contaminated with carcinogens. Linked to allergic reactions, hyperactivity, and behavioral changes.

**CARAMEL COLOR:** Linked to cancer.

**MENADIIONE SODIUM BISULFITE COMPLEX (aka. Vitamin K3):** Controversial synthesized form of vitamin K. Linked to liver toxicity, weakened immunity, allergic reactions, and anemia.