

The Grounded Trowel

Base Homemade Dog Food Recipe Blueprint

This master recipe serves as a balanced baseline for preparing wholesome, small-batch cooked meals for your dogs. It utilizes a highly digestible ratio of protein, healthy fats, carbohydrates, and vital minerals. Designed for versatility, you can easily substitute meats, grains, and dog-safe vegetables based on seasonal availability or dietary sensitivities.

Dietary Blueprint & Proportions

A healthy baseline canine diet balances high-quality muscle meat with nutrient-dense organs, digestible complex carbohydrates, and fibrous greens. This batch yields approximately 10 to 11 lbs of fresh food before liquid adjustments, ideal for dividing and freezing.

Master Ingredient Foundations & Substitutions

- **1. High-Quality Protein (6 lbs):** Ground turkey, ground beef, lean pork, or lamb. Choose the meat source that best fits your dog's dietary needs and allergies.
- **2. Calcium & Essential Minerals (6 teaspoons):** Dried, finely crushed eggshells. This acts as the essential balancing calcium source to counteract phosphorus levels in the meat.
- **3. Omega-3 & Essential Fatty Acids (8 oz):** Canned sardines packed in water or olive oil (do not drain if using high-quality oil). Provides crucial support for healthy skin and coat health.
- **4. Complex Carbohydrates & Grains (1 lb dry weight, cooked):** Dry lentils, brown rice, white rice, or pearled barley. Ensure all grains or legumes are cooked completely soft for optimal digestion.
- **5. Nutrient-Dense Root Vegetables (1 lb mixed):** Equal parts beets, carrots, parsnips, and sweet potatoes. Chop small or shred before cooking.
- **6. Fiber-Rich Leafy Greens (24 oz):** Fresh spinach, kale, or Swiss chard. Finely chopped to maximize nutrient absorption.

Step-by-Step Batch Preparation

- 1. Cook Grains/Legumes:** Thoroughly cook your selected complex carbohydrate source (lentils or rice) according to package instructions until very soft.
- 2. Brown the Meat:** In a large stockpot, brown your 6 lbs of chosen protein over medium heat. Do not drain the natural fats unless using highly greasy meat.
- 3. Incorporate Produce:** Add the finely chopped root vegetables and processed sardines into the pot. Simmer on low heat for 10-15 minutes until the vegetables soften.
- 4. Wilt the Greens:** Turn off the heat. Fold in the finely chopped leafy greens and cooked grains/lentils. The residual heat will wilt the greens perfectly while preserving sensitive nutrients.

5. Mineral Balance: Stir in the 6 teaspoons of finely crushed eggshells thoroughly, ensuring the calcium powder is evenly distributed across the entire batch.

6. Cool Completely: Let the food rest until it reaches room temperature before packaging.

Portioning, Safe Storage & Rotation

Because this recipe contains fresh fish oils and zero synthetic preservatives, proper handling is crucial to prevent oxidation of delicate fats. Divide the finished cooled batch into multi-day freezer bags or vacuum-seal pouches. Keep one container thawed in the refrigerator for immediate use (up to 4 days) and store the remaining portions safely in the freezer.

General Feeding Guideline: When combining home-cooked food with high-quality commercial kibble in a 50/50 split routine, a general starting point is to offer equal volume portions of kibble (morning) and fresh food mix (evening) tailored to your dog's target weight and energy level. Optional nutrient-rich additions like plain milk kefir or nutritional yeast can be sprinkled on top at serving time.

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