



The Treat Budget

Keep the treats, lose the guilt: the 10% rule, swaps, and a daily tally

PETSLIKEMINE
WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

PET NAME _____	DAILY CALORIES _____	TREAT ALLOWANCE (ABOUT 10%) _____
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You do not have to stop treating. The rule is a budget, not a ban: treats up to about 10% of the day's calories, with the other 90% from balanced food. Treats blow diets so quietly because they are calorie-dense and nobody counts them. Keep the ritual, control the total, and the begging face stops winning. The Feeding Calculator already carves this 10% out for you.

WHY TREATS WRECK DIETS SO QUIETLY

- They are small but calorie-dense, and we hand them out without counting
- To a medium dog, three cubes of cheese is roughly a person eating two chocolate bars
- A single dental chew or a cube of cheese can be a big slice of a small dog's or a cat's day
- Given by four people who each think theirs is the only one, the whole day goes in treats

KEEP THE BONDING, LOSE THE CALORIES (SWAP IDEAS)

- Reward with a thrown ball, a proper fuss, a sniff-walk or a game: pets value the moment, not the gram
- Count a few pieces of their own kibble FROM the daily ration as the treats
- Swap a high-calorie chew for a low-calorie one, and read its calories like any other food
- Break treats smaller: they count the event, not the size, so a tiny piece lands just as well
- For dogs, a little carrot or a few green beans add crunch for almost no calories (budget them in)
- For cats, a food puzzle turns a small ration into satisfying work instead of an extra treat

WHAT COMMON TREATS REALLY COST

Rough guide only, because brands vary a lot: a dental chew is often 50 to 100+ kcal, a cube of cheese roughly 60 to 70 kcal, a small dog biscuit 30 to 40 kcal, a slice of cooked sausage 40 to 50 kcal, a typical cat treat 1 to 3 kcal each (they add up fast at a handful). A 10kg dog's whole day might be only around 400 to 500 kcal, so one chew can be a fifth of it. Check your own packs and write the real numbers below.

TODAY'S TREAT TALLY (TICK OFF AGAINST THE BUDGET)

DATE	TREAT GIVEN (AND BY WHOM)	CALORIES	RUNNING TOTAL VS BUDGET
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

THE GENTLE REFRAME

The begging face is biology, not a love-meter. Saying no to a treat is not being mean, it is the kinder long game: you are protecting the bits of your pet that want to keep running and jumping. Agree the budget and the swaps with everyone who feeds the pet, so the day's treats are not given five times over.

Written and reviewed by Dr Alastair Greenway MRCVS and Claire Greenway BVM&S MRCVS. This sheet explains and records. It does not diagnose or prescribe. Always follow your own vet's instructions.

How to use. Treats up to about 10% of the day's calories, swapped smaller and counted, with non-food rewards doing a lot of the work. Carve the 10% off before you split the meals. A wellbeing aid, not a substitute for veterinary advice.

TREATS: KEEP THEM, BUDGET THEM (ABOUT 10%)