



Raw Feeding

Beginner's guide to raw feeding.

WHAT IS RAW FEEDING?

Raw feeding is when your dog's diet is made up of purely raw meat, organ meat and bones. Nothing in the diet is processed. Dogs are carnivores and this is what they would eat in the wild.

FROM WHAT AGE CAN MY DOG BE RAW FED?

Your dog can start a raw diet as soon as it starts weaning right up until they are seniors.

HOW DO I INTRODUCE A RAW DIET?

There is no need to slowly change the diet, you can do it straight away. You may find they have loose stools or are constipated for a day or so but it will settle quickly.

However I always recommend introducing 1 different protein at a time e.g lamb for around 10 days, then duck for 10 days, then beef for 10 days etc. This will give you long enough to establish if that particular protein is suitable for your dog.

WHAT IF MY DOG'S TUMMY DOESN'T SETTLE DOWN?

Some dogs are intolerant to certain proteins. For example an intolerance to chicken is extremely common. If your dog's tummy doesn't settle after 2-3 days change to a different protein.

Some dogs can only eat 1 protein. I have a friend with a Staffordshire bull terrier with lots of health issues and the only protein she can tolerate is horse. Thankfully as raw feeding is so popular now it is easy to find.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I FEED MY DOG?

This is a good visual. Go By the age and weight of your dog but be aware it is just a guideline. If your dog looks like it is losing weight up the daily intake or if your dog looks like it is putting on weight lower the intake.

7-10 weeks	8 - 10% of bodyweight
10-16 weeks	7.5 - 8.5% of bodyweight
16-20 weeks	6.5 - 7.5% of bodyweight
20-24 weeks	5.5 - 6.5% of bodyweight
24-36 weeks	4.5 - 5.5% of bodyweight
36-56 weeks	3.5 - 4.5% of bodyweight
56-68 weeks	3.5%
68 weeks plus	is adult maintenance at 2-3%

If your dog keeps losing weight you may need to try a different protein or different brand.

AM I/IS MY DOG/ARE MY CHILDREN AT RISK OF SALMONELLA, E. COLI ETC FROM RAW FEEDING?

This is a question I commonly get asked and the answer is not at all.....as long as you practise safe hygiene.

1. Wash your hands thoroughly after handling raw food or your dog's bowl.
2. Don't allow your children to touch the dog's bowl/food. If they do, wash their hands thoroughly.
3. Wash your dog's bowl daily.
4. If using puzzle toys, kongs etc to raw feed wash them after every use.
5. Wash surfaces thoroughly after preparing raw food.
6. Keep your dog's raw food away from your food.
7. A dog's stomach is extremely strong so it is highly unlikely they will be ill from raw feeding unless they have an intolerance.

WHAT IS A COMPLETE RAW DIET?

A complete raw diet is when you buy pre-made raw so you don't have to add anything. I use Just Natural but there are lots of other brands available.

It consists of 80/10/10.

80% meat.

10% organ meat.

10% bone.

DO I HAVE TO ADD VEG?

It isn't needed but if you want to it won't do any harm, however please don't add onion or green potato as it is toxic to dogs.

I add carrot/parsnip peeling or grated broccoli stalk to Vinnie's as it would just be thrown away anyway.

DO I HAVE TO SOURCE IT ALL MYSELF SEPARATELY AND PUT IT TOGETHER?

No. Lots of companies offer 'complete'. This means you only need to weigh up the correct portion size and feed it to your dog.

To check the nutritional value of a 'complete' look it up on www.allaboutdogfood.co.uk. This is an unbiased website that will give you a percentage rating based on nutritional value.

CAN I DO D.I.Y RAW FEEDING?

Yes of course, just go by the 80/10/10 rule. It doesn't have to be precise everyday but it should balance out over the week.

When doing D.I.Y do lots of research so you get it right.

CAN I FEED MY DOG RAW BONES?

Yes, to an extent.

Weight bearing bones such as knuckle or shoulder are extremely hard and can damage a dog's teeth so meaty ribs, meaty chicken wings, chicken carcass are recommended.

Brachycephalic (Pugs, French Bull Dogs etc) dogs may struggle with bones due to their jaw shape. It is recommended that part of their diet is minced into a 'complete'.

ALWAYS supervise your dog when they have a bone.

WHY CAN'T I GIVE MY DOG COOKED BONES?

Cooked bones cannot be given to dogs as they can splinter as the cooking process makes the bone extremely brittle.

CAN I GIVE MY DOG RAW FISH?

Yes but make sure it is frozen for at least 7 days to kill any parasites.

CAN I GIVE MY DOG RAW MEAT FROM THE SUPERMARKET?

Yes but make sure it is frozen for at least 14 days to kill any parasites.

CAN RAW FOOD BE REFROZEN?

Yes. I defrost Vinnie's, portion it up into plastic containers then put it back in the freezer. When I am ready to use it I put it in the fridge 12 hours before to defrost. In hot weather he eats it straight from the freezer.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH BENEFITS?

Everything you can think of! Your dog will thrive on raw and your vet bills will be much cheaper long term.

IS RAW FEEDING EXPENSIVE?

No. It costs me around £20 to feed Vinnie for 3 weeks. He weighs 16kg so this will obviously change depending on the weight of your dog.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RAW FEEDING?

There are loads or really great Facebook groups, such as Raw Feeding UK you can get information from.

Dr. Nick Thomson is a holistic vet and he does various seminars/webinars etc. He is the person that persuaded me to change Vinnie to a raw diet.

It is always worth contacting your local raw feeding shop. The staff will have a whole wealth of knowledge and should be able to answer all of the questions you have.