



Guide Dogs for the Blind

Body Condition Scoring (BCS) Guidelines

BCS 3 or Lower

- Too thin for any dog.
- Start weight gain plan as per veterinarian.

BCS 4

- Good for dogs in Training, Puppy Raising Program (both training and breeder evaluation), Career Changes, and Studs.
- Avoid weight loss.

BCS 5

- Good for dogs in Training, Puppy Raising Program (both training and breeder evaluation), Career Changes, Studs, and Broods.
- Avoid weight gain.

BCS 6

- Mild weight loss advised, (except if Brood nursing puppies 0-3 weeks of age).

BCS 7 and above

- Significant weight loss needed.
- Start weight loss plan as per veterinarian.
- Generally, not eligible for formal training until BCS is less than 7, unless veterinarian approves otherwise.



Guide Dogs for the Blind



Nestlé PURINA

BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN

1 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.



1

2 Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.

3 Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.



3

IDEAL

4 Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.

5 Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.



5

TOO HEAVY

6 Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.

7 Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.

8 Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.

9 Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.



7



9

The BODY CONDITION SYSTEM was developed at the Nestlé Purina Pet Care Center and has been validated as documented in the following publications:

Mawby D, Bartges JW, Moyers T, et. al. Comparison of body fat estimates by dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and deuterium oxide dilution in client owned dogs. *Compendium* 2001; 23 (9A): 70

Laflamme DP. Development and Validation of a Body Condition Score System for Dogs. *Canine Practice* July/August 1997; 22:10-15

Kealy, et. al. Effects of Diet Restriction on Life Span and Age-Related Changes in Dogs. *JAVMA* 2002; 220:1315-1320

Call 1-800-222-VETS (8387), weekdays, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT



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