

# BODY CONDITION SCORE GUIDE

Assessing your pet's body condition score with this 9-point scale can help determine if your pet is under, over or at their ideal body condition. It focuses on the look and feel of your pet, not just their weight. Check out the different scores and descriptions below and let us know which score you feel best matches your pet.

## 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



2

- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible
- No palpable fat
- Some bony prominences visible from a distance
- Minimal loss of muscle mass



3

- Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat
- Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible; pelvic bones becoming prominent
- Obvious waist and abdominal tuck

## IDEAL



4

- Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering
- Waist easily noted when 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



6

- Ribs palpable with slight excess of fat covering
- Waist is discernible when viewed from above but is not prominent
- Abdominal tuck apparent

## ABOVE IDEAL

## OVERWEIGHT



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 maybe absent



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 distension 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 distension

## OBESE

### Benefits of an Ideal Weight

- **Increased life expectancy** – Studies reveal dogs with an ideal weight could live up to 2.5 years longer.<sup>1</sup>
- **Decreased risk of health issues** – Pets that are above an ideal weight have a higher risk of developing associated diseases and conditions like diabetes mellitus, joint disease, heart disease and more.<sup>2,3</sup>
- **Improved quality of life** – Pets with an ideal weight can experience increased energy and playfulness, improved mobility and joint health, and much more.

### A Few Extra Pounds May Mean More Than You Think



1. Teng KT et al. Strong associations of 9-point body condition scoring with survival and life span in cats. J Feline Med Surg 2018;1-9. 2. Scarlett JM and Donoghue S. Obesity in cats: Prevalence and prognosis. Vet Clin Nutr 1996; 3:128-132. 3. German A.J. et al. Obesity, its associated disorders and the role of inflammatory adipokines in companion animals. Vet J; 185:4-9. Adapted from Laflamme D. Development and validation of a body condition score system for dogs: a clinical tool. Canine practice volume 25 N° 5-6, 1997.