



Template: Dog Food Ingredient Quality Checklist

Generated: 4/29/2026

Based on Article: "The Connection Between Ingredient Quality and Nutrition"

Website: <https://therenownedhound.com>

A practical checklist to evaluate the quality of dog food ingredients and ensure it meets your dog's nutritional needs.

Checklist Items:

- 1. Check the First Ingredient**
Look for whole meat (like chicken or beef) as the first ingredient on the label. This indicates a higher quality protein source.
Reference Section: [Why Ingredient Quality Matters More Than Most Labels Suggest](#)
- 2. Identify Added Preservatives**
Review the ingredient list for artificial preservatives such as BHA or BHT. Choose options that are preservative-free or minimally processed.
Reference Section: [What High-Quality Ingredients Actually Contribute to a Dog's Diet](#)
- 3. Assess Processing Level**
Be aware that higher processing often leads to lower nutritional value. Look for foods that are gently prepared to retain nutrients.
Reference Section: [Why Ingredient Quality Matters More Than Most Labels Suggest](#)
- 4. Evaluate Source of Fats**
Check that the fats listed are named sources, like salmon oil or chicken fat, rather than vague terms like 'animal fat'. Named sources are better for health.
Reference Section: [What High-Quality Ingredients Actually Contribute to a Dog's Diet](#)
- 5. Look for Simple Carbohydrates**
Ensure the carbohydrate sources are simple and recognizable, like sweet potatoes or brown rice, which provide digestible energy.
Reference Section: [What High-Quality Ingredients Actually Contribute to a Dog's Diet](#)
- 6. Avoid Artificial Fillers**
Steer clear of dog foods with an excess of unnamed meals or low-nutrient fillers that dilute the nutritional value.
Reference Section: [What High-Quality Ingredients Actually Contribute to a Dog's Diet](#)
- 7. Understand Nutrient Bioavailability**
Recognize that different ingredients can affect the absorption of nutrients. Choose foods that have been shown to have high bioavailability.
Reference Section: [What High-Quality Ingredients Actually Contribute to a Dog's Diet](#)

8. Check for Transparency in Ingredient Names

Ensure that all ingredients are clearly named instead of vague descriptions. This promotes better understanding of what your dog is consuming.

Reference Section: [How to Read a Dog Food Label Without Getting Misled](#)

9. Research Brand Credibility

Look into the brand's reputation regarding ingredient sourcing and processing methods. Trustworthy brands typically prioritize high-quality ingredients.

Reference Section: [How to Read a Dog Food Label Without Getting Misled](#)