



HOW TO CHECK YOUR DOG'S SHAPE

- Stand behind your dog. Place both of your thumbs on either side of its backbone. Spread both hands across its rib cage. The ribs should be easy to feel under the coat without excessive fat covering. Like pens in a soft pencil case.
- Look at your dog from the side and from above - can you see the waist?
- Feel your dog's belly. Run your hand underneath from the end of the chest along the belly. It should follow an upwards curve and not droop downwards. This is known as the abdominal tuck.
- If your dog is too thin or too heavy, ask your local vet for advice. The vet will look for any underlying health problems as to why your pet may be too thin or too heavy. If there are no underlying health issues, a change of diet and lifestyle suitable for your individual dog may be suggested.
- Many vet practices run free weight management consultations led by the veterinary nurse who can check whether your pet is overweight or not. Give your local practice a call to see what services they provide. An increasing number of pet shops are also offering free weight checks.
- Once your pet is in ideal condition, continue to monitor its weight and body shape. If you think weight is creeping back on, take steps to ensure your pet is getting enough exercise, and you or anyone else in the family is not over feeding it.
- It can be a challenge for your pet to stay in peak physical condition, particularly if there are lifestyle changes. Humans often over indulge at Christmas or on holiday. The same will often apply to your pet. Be mindful of these lifestyle changes and try to keep your pet's routine as consistent as possible.