



## 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

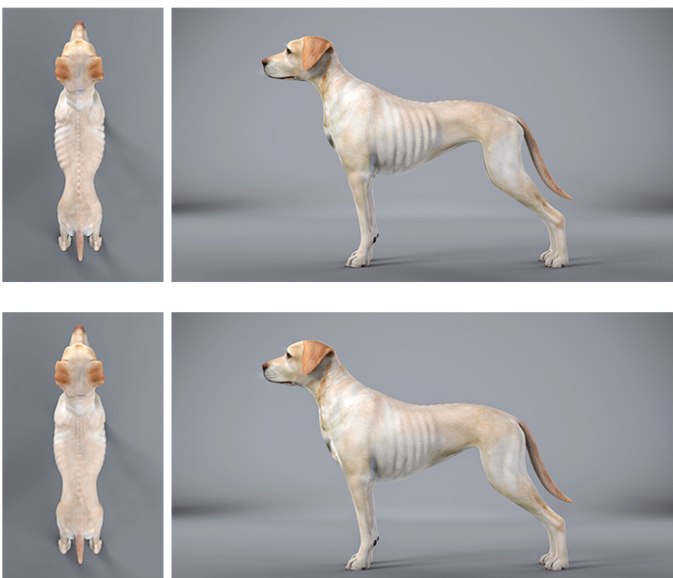
- Mild weight loss advised, (except if Brood nursing puppies 0-3 weeks of age).

### 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.

# BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

## TOO THIN



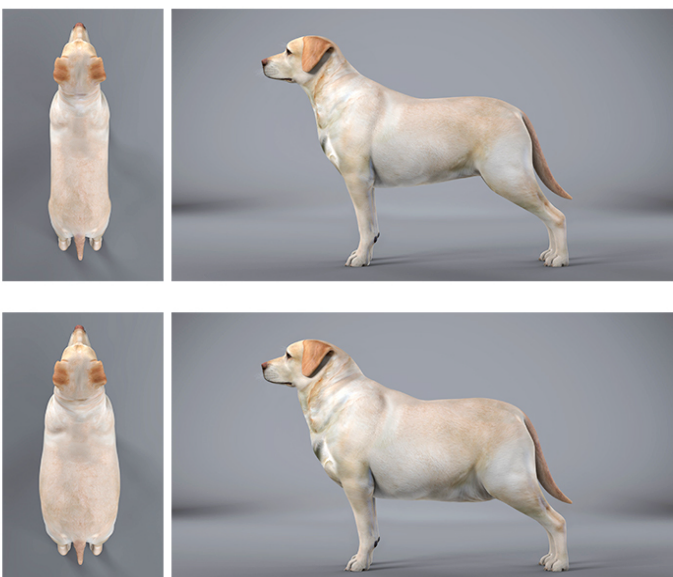
- 1** Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance; no discernible body fat; obvious loss of muscle mass.
- 2** Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones easily visible; no palpable fat; some evidence of other bony prominence; minimal loss of muscle mass.
- 3** Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat; tops of lumbar vertebrae visible; pelvic bones becoming prominent; obvious waist and abdominal tuck.

## 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 the side.

## 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.