

FREE GUIDE · DOG TRAINING

Train Your Dog at Home

7 Essential Commands

A friendly, reward-based guide to teaching the commands every dog should know, fixing common problems like jumping and pulling, and keeping your dog's mind busy and happy.

7

essential commands, step by
step

5 min

training sessions, 2-3 a day

14

day training plan

How dogs learn best

Dogs repeat what gets rewarded. Reward-based training, using treats, praise, and play, is effective, builds trust, and makes training something your dog looks forward to.

The 5 golden rules of training

1. **Keep it short:** 5-minute sessions, 2–3 times a day, beat one long session
2. **Reward instantly:** within 1–2 seconds, so your dog knows exactly what earned it
3. **One word, one meaning:** everyone in the family uses the same cue words
4. **Start easy:** practice in a quiet room first, then add distractions slowly
5. **End on a win:** finish with something your dog does well

What you'll need

- ☐ Small, soft, tasty treats (pea-sized)
- ☐ A comfortable collar or harness
- ☐ A standard leash, about 1.8 m (6 ft)
- ☐ A favorite toy for play rewards
- ☐ Patience and a happy voice

Avoid

- ☐ Shouting, hitting, or harsh corrections
- ☐ Training when you're frustrated
- ☐ Repeating a cue many times
- ☐ Long sessions that bore your dog
- ☐ Rewarding the behavior you don't want

Tip: use part of your dog's daily food as training rewards, so treats don't add extra calories.

My dog's favorite rewards

Rank them: which treat, toy, or praise gets the most excitement?

Our family's cue words

Agree on one word for each command, and write them here.

The foundation commands

Teach these first, in this order. Each one builds on the last.

1. Name & look

ATTENTION

1. Say your dog's name once in a happy voice.
2. The moment they look at you, say "Yes!" and reward.
3. Repeat 10 times, then try from a little further away.

2. Sit

SELF-CONTROL

1. Hold a treat at your dog's nose, then move it slowly up and back.
2. As their bottom touches the floor, say "Yes!" and reward.
3. Add the word "Sit" once they do it reliably.

3. Down

CALM

1. From a sit, lower a treat slowly from the nose to the floor.
2. Slide it along the floor away from them.
3. Reward as soon as the elbows touch down.

4. Stay

PATIENCE

1. Ask for a sit, say "Stay," and wait 2 seconds.
2. Return to your dog and reward, then release with "OK!"
3. Slowly build time first, then distance, then distractions.

Teach a release word

Choose a word like "OK" or "Free" that means "you can move now." Use it to end every sit, down, and stay. It makes the commands clearer and helps your dog learn to wait.

If your dog isn't getting it

- ☐ Go back a step and make it easier
- ☐ Use a tastier treat
- ☐ Train in a quieter place
- ☐ Keep sessions shorter

Fading the treats

- ☐ First: reward every success
- ☐ Then: reward most successes
- ☐ Later: reward with praise, play, or a treat at random
- ☐ Always keep praise generous

The safety commands

These three can keep your dog safe outside and around the house. Practice them often, and always reward generously.

5. Come (recall)

SAFETY

1. Start indoors. Crouch down, say "Come!" happily, and back away.
2. Reward with a great treat and praise when they reach you.
3. Never call your dog to scold them.

6. Leave it

SAFETY

1. Hold a treat in a closed fist. Let your dog sniff.
2. When they back off, say "Yes!" and reward from the other hand.
3. Progress to treats on the floor, covered by your hand.

7. Loose-leash walking

WALKS

1. When the leash goes tight, stop and stand still.
2. When it loosens, say "Yes!" and walk on.
3. Reward often when your dog walks beside you.

Bonus: Drop it

TOYS & SAFETY

1. Offer a tasty treat near your dog's nose while they hold a toy.
2. As they let go, say "Drop it" and reward.
3. Give the toy back, so letting go pays off.

Common problem	Try this
Jumping on people	Turn away and ignore jumping; reward when all four paws are on the floor
Chewing things	Puppy-proof, offer chew toys, and swap the wrong item for a toy
Barking	Find the trigger, avoid shouting, and reward quiet moments

Puppies vs. adult dogs

- ☐ **Puppies:** very short sessions, plenty of sleep, and gentle socialization; redirect nipping to a toy
- ☐ **Adult and rescue dogs:** can learn at any age; give them time to settle in and build trust first
- ☐ **Seniors:** keep training gentle and fun, and adapt for stiff joints or poor eyesight

Brain games & daily needs

Many behavior problems come from boredom. A dog that gets enough exercise and mental stimulation is usually calmer and easier to train.

Find the treat

NOSE WORK

Hide treats around a room while your dog waits, then say "Find it!" Start easy and make the hiding spots harder over time.

Which hand?

THINKING

Hide a treat in one closed hand. Reward your dog when they nose or paw the correct hand.

Muffin tin puzzle

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Put treats in a few cups of a muffin tin and cover all the cups with tennis balls. Let your dog figure it out.

Name the toy

LEARNING

Say a toy's name each time you play with it. Later, ask your dog to "Get" it by name and reward success.

Daily care checklist

- ☐ Walks and play suited to age and breed
- ☐ Fresh water at all times
- ☐ Regular meals at set times
- ☐ A quiet, comfy place to rest
- ☐ Brushing and nail checks

Health basics

- ☐ Yearly vet check-ups
- ☐ Vaccinations kept up to date
- ☐ Flea, tick, and worm protection
- ☐ ID tag and microchip details current
- ☐ Ask your vet about any sudden behavior change

YOUR PLAN

Your 14-day training plan

Two or three 5-minute sessions a day. Keep practicing old commands as you add new ones.

Days	Focus	Done
1-2	Name & look, plus choose your release word	☐
3-4	Sit, then practice in different rooms	☐
5-6	Down, plus short stays of 2-5 seconds	☐
7-8	Come indoors, and play a game of Find the treat	☐
9-10	Leave it and Drop it	☐
11-12	Loose-leash walking in the yard or a quiet street	☐
13-14	Practice everything with mild distractions	☐

Track progress

- ☐ Which commands work in a quiet room?
- ☐ Which work with distractions?
- ☐ Which need more practice?

Get expert help if...

- ☐ Your dog growls, snaps, or bites
- ☐ Your dog seems very fearful or anxious
- ☐ Problems get worse despite training

Want more games and training? For a step-by-step course with 21 brain games and obedience lessons, see [Brain Training for Dogs](#) → (more on page 7).

YOUR NEXT STEP

Keep your dog learning

Once your dog knows the basics, the fun really starts. If you'd like a structured course packed with games that challenge your dog's mind and build good behavior, here's one we recommend looking at.

RECOMMENDED COURSE

Brain Training for Dogs

21 brain games

Games designed to challenge your dog's intelligence and focus.

Obedience lessons

Easy instructions for training everyday commands.

Reward-based

Positive, friendly training methods.

Learn at home

Online lessons you can follow at your own pace.

[See Brain Training for Dogs →](#)

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Happy training,

Uday Chandra

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