

DOG COMMANDS LIST

50 Essential Verbal Commands



50 Essential Dog Commands

Most owners stop at sit, stay, come, and down — and miss the commands that make dog ownership genuinely easy. This list gives you 50 commands organized in 3 skill tiers (basic, intermediate, advanced), the recommended teaching order, and the hand signal that pairs with each verbal cue. Choose the commands that matter for your lifestyle.

How to use this list

- **Don't try to teach all 50.** Most pet dogs need 10-15. Pick the ones that solve problems for your specific household.
- **Teach in order.** The list flows from prerequisite skills to advanced. Skipping the basics produces unreliable advanced behaviors.
- **Use hand signal first.** Dogs read body language faster than words. Teach the visual cue, then add the verbal command. Both work better together than either alone.
- **One command per session.** Don't introduce two new commands in the same training block. Master one, then move on.

Why 50?

50 covers everything from emergency safety commands (Leave it, Drop it, Wait at the curb) through everyday manners (Off, Place, Greet politely) to advanced lifestyle commands (Tuck, Find it, Speak/Quiet on cue). Most owners use 15-20; the rest are optional.

Want video demos for each command?

The Fast Dog Training program shows every command being taught from scratch. Used by 50,000+ owners.

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Tier 1: Basic (Master These First)

#	Command	Hand Signal	Use Case
1	Name	(eye contact)	Foundation of all attention training
2	Sit	Palm sweeps up	Greeting people, before meals
3	Down	Palm sweeps to floor	Calm settling, vet visits
4	Stay	Open palm forward	Holding position with distance
5	Come	Arms outstretched, sweep in	#1 safety command
6	Crate	Point to crate	Safe space, alone time
7	Heel	Pat left hip	Walking position
8	Off	Closed fist down	No jumping, off furniture
9	Leave it	Closed fist over item	Drop attention from food/objects
10	Drop it	Open palm flat	Release object from mouth
11	Wait	Open palm forward	Pause at thresholds (doors, cars)
12	Place / Mat	Point to mat	Send to designated spot
13	Look / Watch me	Finger to your eye	Refocus in distractions
14	OK / Free	Hand wave release	Release from a stay or place
15	Quiet	Finger to lips	Stop barking on cue

Tier 2: Intermediate (After Tier 1 Is Reliable)

#	Command	Use Case
16	Stand	Veterinary handling, grooming
17	Touch / Target	Foundation for hand signals, focus
18	Back up	Move backward in tight spaces
19	Spin / Twirl	Trick + teaching directional cues
20	Bow	Trick + flexibility
21	Shake / Paw	Greeting + paw handling
22	High five	Variation of paw
23	Roll over	Belly exposure trick
24	Find it	Scent search game (mental work)
25	Get it / Fetch	Retrieve and bring back
26	Speak	Bark on cue (taught before Quiet)
27	Tuck	Curl up at feet (restaurant manners)
28	Side	Right side heel (alternate position)
29	Around / Behind	Move behind handler
30	Through	Walk between/under objects
31	Up / On	Get on a designated surface
32	Settle / Relax	Calm down command
33	Greet	Polite hello to a stranger
34	Walk on	Resume walking after a stop
35	Slow / Easy	Reduce pace on leash

Tier 3: Advanced (Pick & Choose)

#	Command	Use Case
36	Heel off-leash	Walking position with no leash
37	Recall under distraction	Comes from squirrels, dogs, food
38	Long-down (15 min+)	Service / restaurant level calm
39	Wait at the curb	Auto-stop at every street crossing
40	Out / Auf (release a hold)	Schutzhund / protection sport
41	Voraus (send out)	Send dog forward 20+ feet
42	Search / Suchen	Scent search work
43	Stand for examination	AKC obedience, vet handling
44	Carry	Hold an object while moving
45	Hold (still)	Maintain object hold
46	Cover	Position behind handler (protection)
47	Watch (sustained focus)	Multi-second eye contact
48	Direction signals (left/right)	Agility, herding
49	Jump / Over	Hurdle, agility, fitness
50	Tunnel	Agility tunnel

Get the complete training program

Video demos for every command in this list, plus breed-specific guidance and lifetime access. Used by 50,000+ owners.

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