

□ 5 Commands Every Lab Should Know

A Quick-Start Guide for New Labrador Owners

By Fran Harper | The Calm Lab

Why These 5 Commands First?

Labrador Retrievers are eager to please, high-energy, and smart — but without the right foundation, that energy becomes chaos. These five commands aren't just tricks; they're the foundation of a calm, obedient, happy dog.

Master these and you'll solve 80% of the behavior problems that frustrate most Lab owners.

Command 1: SIT

Why it matters: The "sit" is your pause button. It stops jumping, calms excitement, and creates impulse control.

1. Hold a treat at your Lab's nose
2. Slowly move it up and over their head
3. Their bottom naturally drops as they look up
4. Say "Sit" the moment their butt touches the ground

5. Reward immediately with the treat + praise

Pro tip: Practice 5-10 times per session, 3 sessions per day. Labs learn fast but need repetition to make it automatic.

Command 2: STAY

Why it matters: This is the safety command. It keeps your Lab in place when doors open, cars pass, or distractions appear.

1. Start with your Lab in "sit"
2. Open your palm toward them (stop signal)
3. Say "Stay" in a firm, calm voice
4. Take one step back
5. Return and reward if they held position
6. Gradually increase distance and duration

Pro tip: Don't reward if they break. Just reset and try again. Labs figure out the rules quickly.

Command 3: COME (Recall)

Why it matters: This could save your dog's life. A reliable recall means freedom — off-leash walks, dog parks, emergency situations.

1. Use a happy, excited tone (not stern)
2. Say "Come!" + pat your legs or kneel down
3. Back up a few steps (movement triggers chase instinct)

4. When they reach you, celebrate like they won the lottery
5. Give a high-value reward (best treats only for recall)

The #1 mistake: Never call your Lab to punish them. They'll learn "come" means something bad happens and will start avoiding you.

Command 4: LEAVE IT

Why it matters: Labs are vacuum cleaners. Socks, trash, dead animals, toxic food — they'll eat anything. "Leave it" is your emergency brake.

1. Hold a treat in your closed fist
2. Let your Lab sniff, lick, paw at it
3. Say "Leave it" once, wait for them to back off
4. The moment they look away or sit, reward with a BETTER treat from your other hand
5. Repeat until they ignore the fist entirely

Command 5: DOWN (Lie Down)

Why it matters: This is the ultimate calm command. A dog lying down can't jump, pull, or get into trouble.

1. Start with your Lab in "sit"
2. Hold a treat at their nose, then slowly lower it to the ground
3. Slide it forward along the floor (they'll follow into a lying position)

4. Say "Down" when their elbows touch the floor
5. Reward and praise

Your 30-Day Training Calendar

Week	Focus	Daily Goal
1	Sit + Stay	3 sessions, 10 mins each
2	Come + Leave It	3 sessions, 10 mins each
3	Down + combinations	3 sessions, 10 mins each
4	Proofing (distractions)	3 sessions, 10 mins each

Total daily investment: 10 minutes × 3 sessions = 30 minutes

What you get in 30 days: A dog that listens, calms on command, and behaves in any situation

Troubleshooting Common Problems

"My Lab only listens when I have treats"

→ Start phasing out treats randomly. Reward every 3rd or 4th success. Keep praise and affection consistent.

"My Lab gets too excited to focus"

→ Train after exercise (a tired Lab is a focused Lab). Start in quiet rooms before adding distractions.

"My adult Lab seems untrainable"

→ False. Labs are lifelong learners. Adult Labs often train faster than puppies because they have longer attention spans.

The Secret Most Dog Owners Miss

These 5 commands aren't just about obedience. They're about **relationship**.

Every time you train with your Lab, you're building:

- Trust (they look to you for guidance)
- Communication (you learn their signals, they learn yours)
- Confidence (a trained dog is a secure dog)
- Bonding (working together creates loyalty)

Want the Complete System?

This guide gives you the foundation. But what about:

- Stopping leash pulling for good?
- Ending destructive chewing?
- Calming jumping when guests arrive?
- Crate training without crying?
- Potty training in record time?
- Advanced tricks and agility?

The Calm Lab: A Complete Guide covers all 12 chapters of Labrador training — 90 pages of step-by-step instructions.

Instant download. 60-day guarantee.

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