Dog Commands Chart

Twenty everyday cues, the word to say, a hand signal described in plain words, and what the finished behavior looks like.
One word per cue, said once, and the same word from everyone in the house.

FILLABLE PDF — TYPE ON A COMPUTER OR TABLET, OR PRINT AND FILL IT IN BY HAND.

DOG'S NAME _____ MARKER WORD (E.G. "YES!") _____ RELEASE WORD _____

THE 20 CUES

COMMAND	SAY IT	HAND SIGNAL	DONE WHEN
Sit	"sit"	Upward scoop of a flat hand	The rear lands the moment you ask
Down	"down"	Flat hand lowered to the floor	Elbows and hips settle on the floor and stay
Stand	"stand"	Flat hand moved forward	Rises to a square stand and waits there
Stay	"stay"	Still hand, palm out	Holds through time, distance and distraction
Wait	"wait"	A brief palm-back	Pauses at a door until you say the release word
Come	Name + "come"	Open arms and a crouch	Turns and comes the first time you call
Look at Me	"look" or "watch"	A finger to your eye	Glances at your face the moment you ask
Touch	"touch"	An offered flat palm	Trots over to bump your palm with the nose
Leave It	"leave it"	No separate signal	Turns away from the item without help
Drop It	"drop"	An offered trade	Lets go of the toy the moment you ask
Off	"off"	A step back and a turn away	Greets people with all four feet down
Heel	"heel" or "with me"	A pat at your hip	Walks at your side on a loose leash
Place	"place" or "mat"	A point to the mat	Goes to the mat and relaxes there
Settle	"settle"	A slow, low hand	The body goes soft and heavy on the mat
Quiet	"quiet"	A soft hand moved down	One word buys a moment of silence
Back Up	"back"	A small hand toward the dog	Reverses a step or two
Spin	"spin"	A small finger circle	Follows your hand through a full turn
Shake	"shake"	An offered open hand	Lifts a paw into your hand
Crate Up	"crate" or "kennel"	A point into the crate	Walks in without help and settles
Emergency Recall	A unique safety word	None: voice only	The word sends your dog running to you

OUR HOUSEHOLD'S CUES (WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS SO EVERYONE MATCHES)

COMMAND	OUR WORD	OUR SIGNAL	NOTES

How to practice: three to five minutes, a few times a day, ending on a win. Mark the moment and pay within about a second. Save the emergency word for real emergencies and pay it big, every time. AVSAB recommends reward-based training only.

THE FULL VERSION: DOG TRAINING COMMANDS GUIDE · ON ETSY: NEWDOGCO.ETSY.COM

Sources: AVSAB (humane dog training position statement); AKC (command how-tos); VCA Animal Hospitals; Karen Pryor Academy; Cornell University (stay vs. wait); Sophia Yin, CattleDog Publishing (emergency recall).