



# Labrador Retriever Club of Greater Boston

## Beginning Retriever Training

### *Training Principles*

1. Training should be fun, for your dog and yourself.
2. Keep an upbeat attitude. Stay calm, keep your temper. Quit, if you can't – it's not fair to your dog.
3. Train regularly. A short 10 minute training session is better than none.
4. Train with a purpose. Know what you want to work on.
5. Be fair to your dog. Don't ask him to do something he is not prepared for.
6. Don't bore your dog. Keep progressing. If you push too far, back up (see Rule 5).
7. There's always "only one more xxx", but know when to stop. Stop when your dog wants more, not when he's exhausted.
8. Keep enthusiasm high. Always end on a high note, even if that means you need to simplify.
9. If you run into an issue, don't keep trying. Simplify, then rebuild.
10. Fast for slow dogs, slow for fast dogs.
11. Work on one concept at a time.
12. Identify problems quickly and don't let them become habits.
13. Be consistent in your standards. Don't let the dog get by with something today and punish it tomorrow.
14. Don't nag your dog. You're the boss; show it.
15. Keep praise meaningful and don't overdo it. But pile it on when deserved.
16. Correct for lack of effort, not lack of knowledge/skill/experience.
17. If you use helpers, discuss in advance what you want them to do and how you will communicate with them.
18. Establish routines. Set up a holding blind, be consistent with how you leave the blind, how you send your dog, etc.
19. Remember you're a team. Work on your own skills as much as on your dog's skills so you won't let your team mate down.
20. Training is not competition. Don't show off or try to be a hero. Use the time wisely.
21. Set yourself realistic goals. Not every dog will be a field champion, not every handler has the time, money, capability to train at the highest level.

### **KEEP YOUR TRAINING BALANCED!!**

Obedience – excitement. Push – relax. Land – water. Marks – blinds. Singles – Multiples. Etc.