



All About the  
**Labrador  
Retriever**

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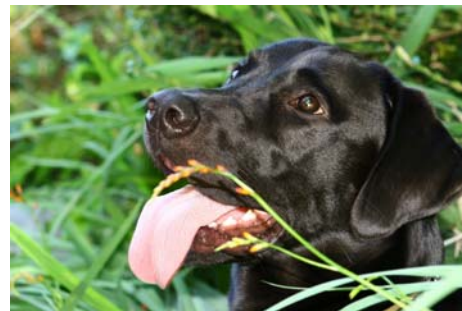
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# The Labrador Retriever

## About the Labrador Retriever

Labrador Retrievers are loving, people-oriented dogs. They love to play, especially around water. They can romp in winter climates because their coat and tail – a broad, otter-like appendage – both assist in repelling icy water and snow. They are not very happy in hot, humid weather. Labrador Retrievers are energetic and need daily exercise and play to keep them happy and healthy. They are well-formed, athletic dogs, ranging in size from medium and sleek to large with a stocky body.



Average Weight	55-90 pounds	Temperament	Gentle, loyal, playful
Average Height	21.5 – 24.5 inches	Good with Children?	Yes, loyal and protective
Coat	Double coat	Health Concerns	hip/elbow/hock/shoulder dysplasia ophthalmologic defects seizures skin allergies.

- [Toys for Your Labrador Retriever](#)
- [Treats for Your Labrador Retriever](#)

## Labrador Retrievers Characteristics

Originally bred as water retrievers, Labrador Retrievers have become pet and show dogs over the course of the last hundred years. They are lighthearted, loving, loyal dogs. Their greatest joy often seems to be in making their people happy. They are very people-oriented and need close companionship and human interaction. They have excellent social skills and interact happily with children and other dogs, if carefully introduced.

Labs have been the most popular registered American Kennel Club breed by a landslide for many years with good reason. Labrador Retrievers tend to act like puppies well into adulthood. Their fun-loving, high-spirited outlook on life is irresistible.

Labrador Retriever's have a typical life span of 10 – 14 years, although some have lived as long as 17 years. They tend to have a life style that is suitable for a family pet. Their double coats come in three colors: yellow (which can range from a yellowish tint to a fox-like red), chocolate, and black. Although some are called "silver," the AKC recognizes these dogs as a variant of chocolate. This active breed requires a medium size yard for play or frequent trips outside if kept in an apartment dwelling. They are frequently used as service dogs, gun dogs, trackers, and, naturally, as retrievers. As is common in many other full-size retrievers, labs are a reliable, trustworthy, and an easy going breed.



## Selecting Your Labrador Retriever Puppy

It is a matter of personal preference whether to adopt or rescue a Labrador Retriever. Another choice might be to select your Labrador Retriever from a reputable breeder.

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## A Few Words About Adoption

Look for a pet adoption shelter or rescue center in your community by utilizing your community resources, such as your library, newspaper, and any online information to gain some knowledge about the shelter before you go there. Ask questions at the center and talk with other people who may have used their services before. Find out as much as you can about the history of the pet you are considering. Know that some pets are up for adoption because they have been left behind due to divorce or families having to relocate – not all pets in shelters or rescue centers come from abused or neglectful situations. Pet adoption or rescue is less expensive than purchasing from a dog breeder. For families who face economic challenges, this option is worth considering. You will have the satisfaction of providing a home for a deserving pet.

## A Few Words About Breeders

Perhaps you prefer a Labrador Retriever that comes from a reputable breeder in order to raise your pet as a show dog or for breeding purposes. Breeders are very knowledgeable about the breed's overall health and characteristics. You can find dog breeders by looking in the newspaper, searching on the internet, or checking with your local vet. You need to make sure that the breeder is associated with the AKC. Dog breeders are usually very particular about the person wanting to purchase one of their dogs.

They may want to know what other animals are living in your home, if you have a yard for the dog to play in, or if there are any children living in your home. When visiting the breeder's facilities, you need to check to see that the dogs' living area is clean. If the mother and father of the puppy are onsite, it is advisable to ask to see them. The breeder should be able to provide a written health guarantee and all medical records. In addition, you should confirm that the breeder's preferences are what you are looking for in a pet. Some Labrador Retriever breeders concentrate their breeding on a particular characteristic of the Lab, such as the dog's temperament, hunting ability, or show dog qualities.

## How to Choose your Labrador Retriever

Choosing a dog can be a difficult decision because there are many different personalities and aesthetic qualities you may want to look for. Do you prefer to have the runt of the litter or the huskiest brute? While a tiny bit of white on the chest is acceptable, a brindled Lab cannot be shown successfully, which may influence choosing that particular puppy. You should always make sure to look for the following signs of a healthy dog:

- Bright and clear eyes
- Clean ears that are free of parasites
- Healthy coat and skin conditions
- Excellent history and lineage
- Make sure paw pads are soft and well taken care of

## Bringing Your Labrador Retriever Home

It is important to puppy-proof your home and be as prepared as possible to provide a safe and secure environment for your new friend. In an effort to



You'll need these basics before your Retriever comes home. Click the items below to go to CheapPetStore.com to find the best prices for online pet supplies.

- [Crate](#)
- [Crate Pad](#)
- [Dog Bed](#)
- [Food Dish](#)
- [Squeaky Toy](#)
- [Dry Food](#)
- [Collar](#)
- [Lead](#)
- [Puppy Pads](#)
- [Chew Toy](#)
- [Shampoo](#)
- [Brush](#)
- [Toothbrush](#)
- [Nail Trimmer](#)

### EXPERT TIP

#### Selecting a Crate

A dog should be able to stand and turn around inside a closed crate. If you have a Labrador Retriever puppy, consider the average height and weight of an adult Retriever and choose a crate based on those specifications. The average size of an adult Labrador Retriever is 15 lbs and 16 inches tall. Choose a sturdy steel or plastic crate for medium sized breeds such as the Labrador Retriever.

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prepare for the care of your new best friend, you should create a checklist and learn about the special needs of your pet. Make sure that your floors are free of clutter. This includes shoes and electric cords, as puppies like to chew. Use the rule "out of sight, out of mind" when introducing your puppy to his new environment.

You will need to purchase essentials to care for your pet, such as a good puppy food, a brush for grooming, toys for playtime, and crates or kennels for containment. Puppy pads and treats, or other training products, will come in handy as well. Some toys double as treat holders so that when playing games with your pet they have a fun way to get to their reward. Your pup will soon discover what you expect from him if you use a loving manner to convey your message. Labrador Retrievers are eager to please and respond well to positive reinforcement.

Being prepared is the most important aspect of introducing your new family member to his or her new environment. If you purchase books about your Lab, you will know the questions to ask the breeder and your vet. You can also read about your pet online or at your community library. Pay attention to the details of the information you gather for true success and your new family member will make a quick and happy adjustment to his new home.

### The Labrador Retriever Pup

Each stage of your pet's life is characterized by special needs. A puppy's life is full of learning experiences. Enjoy the time you spend with your puppy by using chew toys or balls to keep your puppy active and knowing that you can also use these toys also to train your pet. Puppies learn quickly and can develop bad habits if they are not properly corrected. Conversely, they can learn good habits if trained lovingly and at an early age.

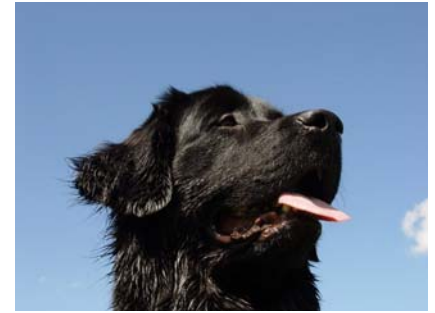
It is important to start your pup with a good health regimen. You need to keep accurate health and immunization records throughout the life of your pet. This will make it much easier for you to maintain proper health standards for your animal. You should be sure to introduce your Lab pup early to its vet and grooming process.

Of equal importance is a healthy diet for your pet. It is a good idea to follow your breeder's or vet's guidelines for all of your pet's nutritional needs. Puppy food has different nutrients than adult or senior foods. In addition, Labrador Retrievers tend to eat too much if they are given the opportunity. You need to be sure to feed your pet only the amount recommended by its veterinarian. Allergy sensitive animals require special dietary ingredients as well.

### The Labrador Adult

As your dog begins to age, his needs also begin to change. You should continue to keep your dog active and healthy. By changing its toys often, you can continue to keep your Lab interested in play. Sometimes adult dogs develop allergies. If your pet does develop allergies, you will see changes in his coat, skin, eyes, or ears. If you notice changes in the skin or fur, you may need to change their diet. If you suspect your dog has allergies, the best thing to do is take your dog to the vet. There are excellent remedies that will become an important part of your dog's routine.

As your dog ages, his nails, paw pads, coat, skin, eyes and ears need special attention. You should always make grooming a happy time for your dog. You should keep the coat clean and free of dander, fleas, and tangled or matted hair, along with keeping the nails trimmed, checking the pads on their paws frequently for spurs, and keeping tooth tartar under control. To monitor



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your adult pet's needs, you can be assured that you have the most efficient tools and supplies handy to keep your dog in good health.

## The Labrador Retriever Senior

When your pet climbs the hill into his senior years of 7 years or more, the Lab's needs will change again. Dietary changes are prevalent at this stage of life. You should notice that, as your Lab ages, its digestive system also changes. You need to make sure that your senior Labrador maintains a proper diet and receives proper nutrients by starting it on a daily regimen of vitamins. By keeping abreast of the latest in dental products, you will be able to provide the best tartar control products on the market today. There are bones, toys, and toothbrushes geared specifically to an older dog's health and happiness.

Labrador Retrievers are pre-disposed to certain health concerns like dysplasia in their hips, shoulders, and mid-leg joints. You should be aware of any changes in the gait of your senior. If your dog moves more slowly than usual or limps, it could be a sign of a joint problem. You may want to provide a more appropriate sleeping and lounging area for your pet, such as an orthopedic dog bed. Maintaining a regular exercise routine and proper diet may help to ward off aching hips and elbows in your Lab. You can help them manage aches and pains with the proper pet healthcare aids, knowledge, and care.

The disposition and temperament of a senior Lab can also change, especially if they feel stressed by active young children. They may show signs of irritability when eating or when encouraged to do something they would rather not do. Labrador Retrievers genuinely are loving animals and would not cause harm to their owner or family member. However, grumpy seniors have a way of making sure that you are aware when they are unhappy. It is important to know that senior animals tend to do things their own way and in their own time. With patience and understanding, you can care for your senior in a loving, gentle manner.

## Medical Considerations

Labrador Retrievers, like many pure-bred dogs, are prone to some common ailments. They can include:

- Hip dysplasia and joint ailments are common in Labrador Retrievers. Your Lab needs to be watched carefully for any symptoms such as limping, favoring certain joints, or dragging in their gait.
- Retinal dysplasia is an irregular development of the retina in growing dogs. Retinal atrophy and cataracts are also important to watch for when caring for your pet.
- Bloat, or gastric torsion, can occur in larger, deep-chested breeds such as Labradors. This very serious condition requires immediate medical attention. You need to discuss gastric torsion and its symptoms with your vet.

Obesity is a serious problem with Labs, because they will eat for entertainment as well as for hunger.

"Tail Drop" or "Swim Tail" can strike over-exercised Labrador Retrievers. The tail may not be held in the normal, nearly-horizontal position, and may swell. A visit to your pet's vet and rest for the dog is the recommended treatment for this condition.



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Items to suit your senior Labrador Retriever:

- [Vitamins](#)
- [Senior Formula Food](#)
- [Orthopedic Bed](#)
- [Dental Kit for Dogs](#)
- [Tartar control Tabs](#)



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- [Sportmix Dog Food](#)
- [Portable Le Bistro Waterer](#)
- [Joint Comfort Plus Formula](#)
- [PetSafe Radio Fence Plus Remote Trainer](#)
- [Leash Bag-Expandable](#)
- [Deluxe Dental Ring Dog Chew](#)
- [X-Large Biscuits](#)
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