



Why do dogs Bark and how can we control the barking behavior?

Barking is a form of communication to other and their owners.

Reasons why Dogs bark:

Boredom- those who are left outside or alone all day with no mental or physical stimulation. Walks are essential for dogs to explore their surroundings, sniff, eliminate and just exercise.

Play Barking – Some dogs just get too excited when they are running around and having too much fun. There are breeds who are hardwired to bark. There are a few ways to handle this type of barking once your pup is over excited remove them from the play area to calm down for a few minutes. If its inside your home, place them in another room for a brief period of time. If your dog likes to carry toys in their mouth encourage them to carry a toy, you can't bark if something is in their mouth.

Demand Barking – Demand barking starts at a very young age and can become problematic very quickly if not addressed. The best way to handle this behavior is to ignore your dog completely, turn your back, walk away etc. Once your dog is quiet then say "good" and give attention. As you practice this wait longer to engage with your dog after you say "Good" so you dog doesn't learn to be quiet for a second and then bark again. The trick is not to look at your dog, yell at them to be quiet or have any conversation, if you do you are giving your dog "attention". This may be a tough behavior to break especially if your dog has done this for a while, hang in there and don't give up at times his behavior may get worse before it changes.

Alarm Barking- If your dog is barking and there is a sense of urgency or ferocity more than likely your dog is perceiving a threat. As a benevolent leader toward your dog you should always investigate, once you have determined it's nothing serious, redirect your dog to stop the barking and thank them for letting you know.

Greeting Barking- The doorbell rings and the dogs' barks like crazy, what to do ... I usually recommend recording your doorbell ring on your phone and when you're at home play the recording and don't answer the door in fact ignore the door completely, if your dog is quiet reward with a treat. I highly recommend all puppy owners to teach their dog that doorbell doesn't need to be barked at and it is a process to train this behavior. Have all guests ignore your dog when they come in until your dog is calm and then they can greet your dog. If your dog barks excitedly when you come in do the same, ignore crazy behavior until the dog calms down. When your dog barks at the door remain calm, you yelling at the dog will only make the situation worse. You may need to change the sound of your doorbell if your dog has a strong emotional response to it.

The solution to barking problems depends on understanding several factors:

When and where is it happening?

Why is happening? What is the specific trigger?

What is the dog getting out of barking? What is reinforcing behavior?

Teach the "Quiet" cue: When your dog is being quiet, say "quiet", then mark that behavior by saying Yes! and give a treat . **Practice this often** when your dog is quiet, once the barking starts say the word "quiet" in a calm voice and if they stop and look at you say Yes! and reward immediately.

Punishment doesn't work to curb this behavior: Using a shock collar, bark collar, squirt bottle only causes pain and fear and will fracture the human animal bond with your dog. Redirect and managing this behavior take time, training, and patience. Hiring a professional dog trainer to assist you will ensure that your dog learns with positive reinforcement to change their behavior.