

Excessive barking tips and training



Excessive barking! *“How do I stop it?”*

First it is important to understand that it is very natural for a dog to bark, as it is a very important way for your dog to communicate to you; however when the barking starts to be prolonged and causing a nuisance to your neighbour it's time to find a solution.

What causes my dog to bark?

Dogs will bark for a variety of different reasons and it is important to determine what is causing your dog to bark and whether their behavioural needs are being adequately met.

1. **Boredom**- dogs that are left in backyards all day with little or nothing to do will resort to barking out of boredom. Exercise is a great way to relieve this. By taking your dog for a walk in the morning before leaving for work will help take the dogs mind off your absence thus reducing its anxiety level. Also leaving chew toys or a fresh bone will keep your dog preoccupied for some part of the day.
2. **Territorial**- dogs will often bark when there is a threat to their territory and will often get louder as the threat becomes closer. This form of barking is very natural and only last as long as the threat is perceived, however, if this becomes a nuisance try limiting what your dog can see by closing curtains or blinds if your dog is kept indoors or boarding off chain wire fences to limit what the dog can see.
3. **Excitement**- when you arrive home from work your dog will often jump up and bark at you out of excitement. This is often confused, and people see this as a way of the dog showing affection, however, this is not the case. The dog is most likely expressing to you that they have been lonely and bored all day and has been building up until you arrive home. It's very important to ignore your dog at this stage avoid all eye contact and wait until your dog is completely calm before you show it attention. Over time your dog will realise that it must remain calm and not bark before it receives your affection.

Training your dog not to bark is possible and the two most common words to use is “Speak” and “Quiet”.

1. Try and find a way to entice your dog to bark. Your dog may bark if you tease it with its food bowl or its favourite toy.
2. After a little encouragement your dog does bark, praise it and repeat the word “Speak”.
3. It's important to repeat this process until such time as your dog associates the word “Speak” to the act of barking.
4. Only reward your dog when it has barked after hearing the command “Speak”.
5. Now your dog will bark on the command word “Speak”, it is now time to introduce the command “Quiet”.
6. While you have your dog barking under command introduce the word “Quiet” and remember only reward your dog after it has ceased barking.
7. Repeat this process until your dog associates the two command words with the actions.
8. Now when your dog is barking you may use the command “Quiet” and when your dog ceases barking reward your dog with praise.
9. Now it is possible to issue your friendly neighbours with this command word and get them to use it in your absence when your dog barks.

Finally, please remember there is a lot of useful information out there on the internet and you could also consult your local vet or dog obedience club for any further advice.



1 = green

2 = red

3 = tan

4 = yellow

5 = brown

6 = pink

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Dear Neighbour,

You may not be aware, but your dog is barking in a manner that is causing some disturbance.

As I was uncertain as to how to deal with this, I contacted the local Council for advice on how to find an effective solution. The Council has suggested that I contact you first, to allow you the opportunity to resolve the situation. They also suggest that I keep a "Bark Diary" for at least seven days to include a weekend.

I have kept a brief bark diary; I hope this helps you investigate the problem barking.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Brief description of what happened</i>
		
		
		
		
		
		
		

If you have any questions regarding this letter or need some advice, please contact your local Council and ask for a Compliance Officer to contact you.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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