

Why dogs bark?

Barking is a normal method of communication for a dog. Dogs bark for many specific reasons. Understanding why they are barking is the first step to a quieter household. Some of the reasons may include: confinement, lack of exercise, fear/alarm, protection, greetings/play, and who's training who?

- **Confinement:** Some dogs that are left alone or confined for long periods of time are likely to bark because they may feel anxious or sad. Dogs are pack animals and need to be around people and/or other dogs. Extended periods of time without social interaction will cause a dog to bark because they are simply unhappy.
- **Lack of exercise:** This may lead to pent up energy, frustration, boredom, which may cause excessive barking. A well exercised dog will sleep more and is less likely to bark when you are away.
- **Fear/Alarm:** Some dogs will bark when startled. This may include, people, and unfamiliar objects. This type of barking may take place any where, not just at home.
- **Protection:** When dogs consider a house/yard their territory they will bark at any people or animals that try to approach. This can cause excessive barking which can increase in volume and intensity as the perceived threat comes closer.
- **Greetings/Play:** Dogs tend to bark when they are greeting new people or animals due to excitement. The bark is a very happy bark accompanied by an erratic wagging tail and sometimes jumping.
- **Who's training who?** Dogs often bark when they demand something; such as going outside, play, food, or attention. All it takes is one bark! If a person gives them what they want after a bark, the dog immediately learns barking will increase their chances of receiving what they want.



To get your dog to bark less takes a lot of time, effort, practice, and consistency. With proper training and techniques a quieter household is in your near future.

Here are some tips for you to start controlling your dog's barking.

- Always speak in a calm but firm tone of voice. Shouting will stimulate a dog to bark more because they tend to think you're joining in.
- It is extremely important to train your dog to understand the meaning of "quiet." Most dogs don't know what you want when you're yelling at them to stop barking.
- To teach your dog the meaning of "quiet" you need to catch the quiet behavior, label it and reward it.



For help with overcoming any behavior problems contact:

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