

DOES YOUR DOG BARK?

Most dogs bark, often for very good reasons. But few things will alienate you from your neighbors more quickly than letting your dog bark excessively. Nuisance barking is usually defined as howling, yelping, or barking that is frequent or habitual.

Why do dogs bark?

Dogs bark to communicate.

Dogs, like people, are social animals. Scolding or yelling at your dog when it barks will not make it stop. In fact, your dog may interpret your yelling as participation in the “conversation.”

Dogs bark out of boredom.

A dog that is frustrated or bored may bark just for something to do.

Dogs bark to get attention.

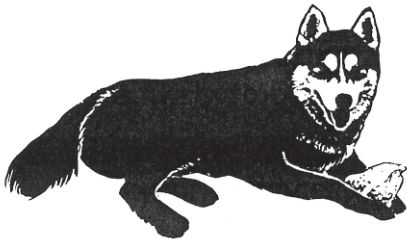
Because they are social animals, dogs crave attention. If the only attention a dog receives is punishment for barking, it will bark to receive even that attention.



How can I keep my dog from barking excessively?

Train your dog to bark only when appropriate.

Interrupt inappropriate barking by distracting the dog. Drop a plastic soda bottle full of pennies or rocks somewhere near it. When it stops barking, praise it in a pleasant voice by saying “Good dog, that’s enough.”



Spend time playing with your dog everyday.

Dogs that do not get enough interaction with people are more likely to bark out of boredom or to seek attention.

Give your dog chews and toys.

Keep your dog occupied when you can't be home.

You can prevent nuisance barking before it starts by making sure your dog is happy, healthy and well-trained. Contact a dog club in your area for information about training opportunities. You can find a local dog club at www.akc.org/dic/clubs/search/club_search.cfm



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