

Why Dogs Bark and What You Can Do About It

Dogs bark because it is the only way they know how to verbally communicate. Some dogs bark at the drop of a hat, which can be good if they are guard dogs, but most people tend to get annoyed with a dog that barks incessantly. There are many reasons why a dog will bark obsessively and fortunately you won't have to remove your dog's vocal chords to get him to stop barking nonstop, there are ways to get your dog to calm down.

Some dogs bark because they are bored. Barking becomes a self soothing activity that also keeps them entertained, barking is fun! Put yourself in your dog's position, if you're cooped at home alone all day with no one to talk to, surely you wouldn't be too happy either.

Some dogs bark at objects or sounds they perceive as threatening. It could be another dog, a loud noise or even thunder. Some dogs just bark to get your attention.

Territorial dogs bark if they sense anything in their territory. This is a great talent if you want a guard dog, but many people just want a mellow family pet and may find this frustrating.

Deaf dogs and dogs who are elderly can't hear themselves bark and this can make them prone to incessant barking. These dogs can be taught the command to be quiet through hand gestures or with the use of a flash light. Aging dogs also sometimes develop senile dementia which can be helped with medication, so if your formerly quiet dog starts barking for no apparent reason you should have him checked by the vet in order to rule out any medical problems.

If you own more than one dog you should train each dog not to bark at the doorbell. Training two or more dogs at the same time can be very difficult, especially if you're not a qualified trainer.

Now that you know a few reasons why dogs bark we will examine how to train your dog to not bark. You will have to arm yourself with infinite patience and self control as this can be a challenging task.

The most important thing to remember is never to lose your patience and shout at the dog, you will essentially be barking back at your dog and this will never help teach him to be quiet. Dogs sense stress easily and being stressful yourself won't be conducive to making your dog calm.

When your dog barks, ignore him, don't look at him or talk to him or anything, act as if he doesn't exist. As soon as he stops barking praise him profusely or offer him a treat. The dog will eventually learn that being quiet gets your attention and is a good thing.

If your dog barks at certain objects you can desensitize him by gradually moving the object closer. You will have to do this in steps and whenever the dog doesn't bark, praise and offer a treat.

Teaching your dog a quiet command is also very important. You will have to do this when he barks and then offer him a treat without letting him eat it. He will stop barking to sniff the treat, give the command quiet then praise him and give him the treat. In time, your dog will learn to be quiet when you use the quiet command.

If your dog barks when the doorbell rings, send him to another room or his crate. When he eventually starts going to the room or crate that on his own, offer him a treat and lots of praise. Your dog will eventually start going to his designated spot when he hears the doorbell in anticipation of a reward instead of barking. Taking your dog on daily walks and keeping him mentally stimulated should also make him less prone to obsessive barking. If your dog barks because he is bored or frustrated, some exercise will do him (and you) a lot of good!

From Nicole and Chazhound, the [dog bed](#)