

Conquering Dog Barking

Is your dog barking too much?

It is quite normal for dogs to bark – it is their natural method of communication. However when a dog barks for a long time it can be annoying for neighbours, disturb the owners sleep, and be stressful for the dog.



In extreme circumstances it can even lead to the local authority serving noise abatement notice.

So what should you do if your dog barks a lot?

The first step is to try to find out why your dog is barking so that you can tackle barking at the root cause.

If your dog only barks when you are out then it might be useful to set up a video camera to record your dog's behaviour when he is left alone.

The following are some of the reasons why your dog might bark.

- Frustration at seeing people or animals outside the house that he cannot reach
- Anxiety because the dog cannot cope with being left alone. Dogs are naturally social animals and it is not normal for them to be left alone for long periods of time.
- Fear where the dog is frightened of something such as an unexpected noise in the home.
- Boredom where the dog has nothing else to do
- Attention – in this case the dog will bark for no apparent reason but stop when the owner gives him attention
- Illness or injury can also be a cause of barking
- As dogs age their hearing can change causing them to bark more.

What You Can Do To Reduce Barking

1. Leave your dog in a quiet room or make him a den where he can feel safe and is not disturbed by outside noises
2. Take him for a long walk – tired dogs are less inclined to bark
3. Give him a toy such a kong or a long lasting chew that will keep him occupied.
4. Take him to the vet and make sure there is no underlying illness or pain causing him to bark.

Things to Avoid

1. Don't punish your dog for barking it might make him more anxious and inclined to bark more.
2. Don't use devices such as anti-bark collars – they can sometimes make the barking worse.
3. Don't shout at your dog when he barks from the dogs point of view it might seem as though you are joining in with him.

If you have tried these things and the barking continues then it might be worth consulting a professional dog trainer for help.