



A lot of dogs like to bark and most of the time they're trying to tell us something. Sometimes, however, constant barking or whining of a dog can be disturbing and annoying for your neighbours.

The first thing to do is to try to work out why your dog is barking. If you can remove the cause, he might stop.

As each case is different, we can only make suggestions which we hope will be useful. However, for accurate advice you might need to contact a reputable behaviour specialist.



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## HOW TO DEAL WITH BARKING DOGS



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## WHY DOGS BARK

### EXCITED

He might bark when visitors call, when you get his lead for a walk or when you make dinner.

- If he is excited because the rest of his day is so boring and quiet, try introducing some interesting activities into his routine.
- Try obedience training.
- Remember – don't shout at him to stop barking as he might think that you are excited and are joining in. This could make him bark even more.

### FRUSTRATED

Perhaps he's seen a cat in the garden or he can hear another dog barking.

- Exercise your dog before you leave him. This way he should be contented.
- If you're going out, close the curtains and put a radio or TV on or place the dog in a room where he cannot see outside.
- Do not leave your dog out in the garden just because it is a nice sunny day. Dogs which bark in the house will bark twice as much if they are left out in the garden.
- Try getting him used to sounds which might be disturbing him by recording them and playing them back at low volumes.
- Unneutered male dogs can smell a bitch in season up to six miles away. If this is contributing to the problem, consider the possibility of castration.



### BORED

He might bark when he has nothing to do. Bored dogs will bark when you are in the house as well as when they're left alone.

- Don't leave him alone for long periods of time.
- If you are at work all day, maybe a neighbour, friend or relative could come in to let your dog out or consider getting a dog walker.

### ATTENTION SEEKING

He might bark for attention and stop as soon as you speak or look at him.

- This can often arise if your dog has inadvertently trained you to give him attention, so now you'll need to teach him that there are times when he cannot have attention.
- Start by training a good 'down-stay' using a hand-signal e.g. the flat palm of your hand moving downwards toward the floor.

- Once he knows what this means, hide some treats in your pocket and get a book. Open the book, hold it in one hand and walk around the room pretending to read it, with your other hand out in the 'down-stay' signal. Count to ten and if your dog is still quiet, put the book down, remove the hand signal and go to your dog to praise and reward with a treat. If not, wait until he is quiet before rewarding.
- Repeat this many times, slowly increasing the amount of time you ask him to lay quietly. Then start again, without the book but still not looking at your dog and just using the hand-signal.
- Some types of excessive attention seeking can be due to anxiety issues, in which case you may need to seek the advice of a qualified behaviourist.

### SCARED

He might bark at strangers, dogs in certain situations.

- If your dog is scared of certain things or situations, making him face his fears is the worse thing to do. Instead, try to avoid them and ask your vet to refer you to a behaviourist who can help your dog to safely get over his fears.

### LONELINESS

He might seem anxious before you leave him and start barking as soon as you are out of sight.

- This type of problem can be serious and difficult to fix. Useful information can be found on coping alone and beating boredom on the Dogs Trust website [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)
- If this only happens at night when he is shut away to sleep by himself, consider letting him sleep in sight and sound of the family (e.g. on the landing with a baby gate) or in the bedroom with a family member.