

# Preventing Dog Barking



Barking is something that dogs naturally do, but frequent barking or whining can be very disturbing for neighbours. Often this occurs when owners are away from the house and are not even aware of a problem.

The owners of noisy dogs can face legal action if a nuisance is proved and the noise is not reduced.

## Why Dogs Bark

Dogs, by their nature are pack animals and need the security of a family group. Pet dogs see their owners as a substitute pack and can get distressed if left alone for significant periods. The main reasons why a dog barks are;

- Loneliness (often called 'separation anxiety')
- Boredom or frustration
- Attention seeking
- Defending their territory
- Medical problems

If there has been a complaint about your dog, firstly think about why he is barking. Only then will you be able to identify a solution that works.

## Steps to Prevent Barking

### 1. Reward Silence

The way you respond to your dog when he barks unnecessarily will affect his future behaviour. Your dog sees you as the pack leader, so he behaves how he thinks you want him to behave. If you make it clear to him that barking is not acceptable, then he should stop.

If the dog barks unnecessarily, do not pet or touch your dog, pick him up, feed him a treat or his dinner, open the door for him or give him anything else he might want while he is barking. Have him be quiet before you give him what he wants. Otherwise, he has you emotionally blackmailed and he will use it every time. Every time your dog barks when it is not appropriate, you should give the "Quiet Command".

Each time your dog is quiet when he would normally bark, make sure you praise him vocally, with a treat and/or a pat or a scratch. This is so he learns that you like having silence in your house.

### 2. Make sure your dog is part of the family

Unacceptable behaviour such as inappropriate barking is never improved by isolating your dog in the back yard or garden. He will feel more secure and a part of things inside the house and will be less likely to bark.

### 3. Provide plenty of exercise

A tired dog is a good dog because then he is sleeping instead of barking or being destructive. Each type of dog needs a different level of exercise based on its breed and age, but on average dogs need 30 to 60 minutes hard exercise every day. Seek advice from your vet about how much exercise your dogs should be getting or go to the other sources of advice identified in this leaflet.

## **4. Dealing with Loneliness**

### **Time Outs**

Before you leave your dog alone do not spend so much time with him that, when it comes time for you to run errands or go to work, he is over-anxious at the thought of you leaving him. Deliberately ignore him for 20 to 30 minutes at least three times a day. Pretend he is not there. Do not pet him, say anything to him or make direct eye contact and just move away should he try to paw you, nudge you or crawl in your lap. Make sure your whole family participates in the time out periods or they will be ineffective.

### **Time buffers**

Dogs are often at their most destructive and vocal for a period after you have left in the morning because the dog is stressed at having to spend the day alone, and for a period before you come home in the evening. Time buffers teach the dog to settle down for the day and to remain unemotional when you first return home.

Fifteen minutes before you need to leave the house in the morning, put your dog wherever he is to spend the day and ignore him. Correct any barking or destructive behaviour but do not play with or talk to him. When it is time for you to leave, just leave. You are teaching your dog is to settle in for the day and not get over emotional when you say good-bye. Vary the times at which you come home. When you arrive, leave your dog in his day confinement for fifteen minutes before greeting him. If your dog is loose in the house, do not touch him, make direct eye contact or talk to him for 15 minutes before greeting him. Correct any barking behaviour, but nothing more.

### **Set Ups.**

A set-up is where you would do everything you would normally do if you were leaving for the day. After leaving wait just outside the door waiting to see what your dog will do. If your dog starts howling or barking, you can quickly go back to the house and correct him with the "Quiet Command". Then immediately leave again and stand outside the door. Do not hit, slap, punch, kick or hold your dog's mouth shut in the hope that he will stop barking. Punishment such as this will only teach your dog to fear you and will do nothing to solve your barking problems.

### **Preventing Separation Anxiety.**

Toys and chews or a radio left on a low volume will help to keep your dog occupied.

Make sure your dog is comfortable. Leave fresh water, make sure his bed is comfortable, not in a draft or direct sunlight and ensure the room is well ventilated and not too hot or cold. If you away during hours of darkness, leave a light on or use a time activated night light.

If your dog barks in response to things happening outside, try leaving him somewhere he cannot see or hear these things happening.

If you have to leave your dog for very long periods, see if you can get someone to come in to exercise him or provide some company.

If your dog is destructive in the house while you are gone, this is no excuse for leaving him outdoors. Keep him indoors inside a dog crate instead.

If you must leave your dog outside, place the kennel as far as possible away from areas where there is a lot of noise or activity. Make sure the area is secure to stop the dog from escaping. Provide water and adequate bedding.

## 5. Professional Dog Trainers

We would always encourage you to take your dog to a professional dog trainer. They will not only be able to help provide advice on controlling noise from your dog, but will help with all other forms of behaviour and help you to understand the needs and motivations of your dog better.

## Other Sources of Advice

- Specific advice about dog noise (all found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

“Is Your Dog Barking Too Much” DEFRA leaflet,  
Resolving Neighbour Disputes

- General advice about dog welfare

The Dogs Trust <http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/>

RSPCA <http://www.rspca.org.uk/home>

Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors (APBC) [www.apbc.org.uk](http://www.apbc.org.uk)

Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) [www.apdt.co.uk](http://www.apdt.co.uk)

- Local Services

South Derbyshire District Council Safer Neighbourhood Wardens [www.south-derbys.gov.uk/environment/](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk/environment/)

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**Tel: 01283 595795**

**[customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk)**

**[www.south-derbys.gov.uk](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk)**

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如果你需要这份文件的中文翻译·或者需要传译员的帮助·请联系我们。这些数据也备有大字体印本、盲人点字和录音带，欢迎索取。

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**[customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk)**