

## My dog barks too much—What can I do?



Barking is a normal way for dogs to express themselves. It is a part of their language. However, excessive barking is generally a *symptom* of other, less-obvious issues. There are many ways to reduce barking to an acceptable level (it is as unreasonable to expect them to \*never\* bark as it would be to expect you to never speak!) At the heart of these methods is understanding why your dog is barking, addressing the cause(s), and in some cases, teaching your dog a preferred behavior.

Excessive barking is almost always the result of stress (+/- a genetic predisposition for vocalizing). It is usually a symptom of underlying emotional turmoil such as:

- fear/anxiety
- loneliness
- excitement
- frustration
- boredom
- over arousal

Steps to reduce barking:

1. Veterinary exam of your dog to rule out physical problems.
2. Be sure you are not encouraging him to bark. If the only way he ever gets your attention is by barking (even negative attention, such as “No”) then he’ll keep barking!
3. Be sure his basic needs for food, water, shelter, safety, exercise, sleep, mental stimulation and social interaction are met.

My dog barks when...	I think he’s barking because...	I can change the environment by...	I could train him to do... instead

Things to know:

- If your dog has been barking for weeks/months/years, it will take time to change this habit. Be patient. Keeping a log of how much your dog barks will help you see progress!
- Don’t yell at your dog for barking. It rarely helps, and he may think you’re barking with him!
- You can speed up the process by working with a credentialed trainer versed in behavior issues/modification. (contact me by email for trainer suggestions)

*Why can’t I just use a bark collar/squirt bottle/ultrasonic device etc. to get my dog to stop barking?*  
Punishment methods which suppress barking may seem like miraculous “quick fixes”, but are at best a “band-aid” for the problem (which may express itself in other ways, such as hyperactivity, stress behaviors, health issues, etc.) and at worst, can increase aggression and other behavior problems. They do not address the cause of your dog’s barking, and can result in new, undesired behaviors. It is entirely possible to reduce barking without these devices, with a little effort, consistency and attention to your dog’s needs.

***Pro Trainer Super Tip! Reward your dog often for offered good/calm/quiet behavior!***

## ***Resources***

### **Websites:**

[http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/tips/how\\_to\\_stop\\_barking.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/animals/dogs/tips/how_to_stop_barking.html)  
<http://www.vetstreet.com/care/dog-barking>  
<http://dogs.about.com/od/dogtraining/qt/barkingdogs.htm>  
<http://www.clickertraining.com/how-to-stop-unwanted-barking>  
<https://positively.com/dog-behavior/nuisance-behaviors/barking/>  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/ways-to-stop-fido-from-barking/>  
<http://www.clickertraining.com/how-to-keep-your-dog-calm-when-the-doorbell-rings>

### **Helpful books in the Los Alamos County Library:**

- Love Has No Age Limit : welcoming an adopted dog into your home, *by Patricia McConnell*
- Decoding your dog : the ultimate experts explain common dog behaviors and reveal how to prevent or change unwanted ones
- A Guide to Living With and Training a Fearful Dog, *by Debbie Jacobs*
- Before and After Getting your Dog: the positive approach to raising a happy, healthy and well-behaved dog *by Ian Dunbar* also available as a free ebook at <http://www.dogstardaily.com/free-downloads>
- Top tips from top trainers : 1001 practical tips and techniques for successful dog care and training

**Great book on all causes and treatments:** Barking: The Sound of a Language *by Turid Rugaas*

### **Free Videos:**

A series of videos on all types of barking and training solutions

<http://dogmantics.com/reactivity-and-barking/>

Behaviour Change: Stop Barking Faster than a Speeding Bullet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NX-Dtd1ppZI>

Even dog trainers get annoyed—Stop Barking! (teach your dog to quiet on command)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fo0UVCuJyp4&feature=youtu.be>

How to TEACH ANY DOG to STOP BARKING Humanely, Effectively, and Naturally!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFZ003dY8cU&list=PLe-YT9ZciLAABen0HGEGsMVNZF\\_4ymOFE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFZ003dY8cU&list=PLe-YT9ZciLAABen0HGEGsMVNZF_4ymOFE)

Teach your dog to go to bed when the doorbell rings

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJ1PhT9v\\_0E&app=desktop](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJ1PhT9v_0E&app=desktop)

Reducing dog barking and jumping at fences

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDdy2vdhFRo>

Capturing Calmness- how to train calmness in dogs- dog training

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wesm2OpE\\_2c&app=desktop](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wesm2OpE_2c&app=desktop)