
BARKING PREVENTION AND TIPS ON STOPPING NUISANCE BARKING

Because most people today buy a dog for protection as well as a companion it is important that we understand the distinct differences between a good guard dog and a nuisance barker. Allowing your dog to bark at just anything it likes, is not the way to teach it to be “a good watch dog”.

NUISANCE BARKING

A dog that barks at birds, noises, the neighbours and passing pedestrians, other dogs etc is not a good watchdog. A dog like this is similar to a car alarm that keeps going off for no reason and it will be annoying to your neighbours.



A GOOD WATCH DOG

A good watchdog is a dog that only barks when someone attempts to enter your property or there is imminent danger (house on fire, a stranger in the yard etc.)

Good barking habits can be trained into your dog easily providing you are clear about exactly what you want your dog to bark at. It will teach you to respond to your dogs bark because it will then be a warning, not some frivolous reason.

BARKING PREVENTION AT THE PUPPY STAGE

A young pup that barks at people or noises etc, is a good indication that you have a budding nuisance barker developing. This is the sign of a nervous pup that worries about everything. A well adjusted pup will not usually start barking until somewhere between 8 to 12 months of age.

If you have a pup that is starting to bark at everything that moves, discipline it by growling “bad” or “bah” at the precise moment it starts. Praise it as soon as it responds. Clapping your hands or throwing an object such as a can of pebbles onto the ground (not at the pup) and at the same time growling your reprimand word should cease any premature barking. A puppy that persists even after your reprimand will need some socialising. Try a Puppy Pre School or seek professional help.

TIPS ON CURING NUISANCE BARKING



When you are home and your dog is outside barking, firstly go out and reprimand (YELL “BAH” or “BAD”). The reason you use the words we have suggested is so the dog will learn these words are directly at it, not at whatever it is barking at. Also the reason for yelling is you will get over the top of what the dog is doing. If you use the “bad” or “bah” word every time your dog does something wrong it will soon catch on. Be sure to praise your dog as soon as it stops what it is doing wrong. Monitor the barking and only reprimand for those things that you do not constitute a good watchdog. I.e. Birds, noise, the neighbours and passing pedestrians, other dogs etc.

WHEN YOU ARE OUT

Because dogs are pack animals they can become stressed when the pack leaves without them (when you or your family leave the house.) Some of the reasons can be:

- ☹ Separation Anxiety: This is usually identifiable by barking as soon as you leave. You will need to sneak back and catch the dog barking and reprimand the way mentioned in tips on curing nuisance barking.

- ☹ Boredom: This is usually identifiable in the fact that your dog will bark, dig and chew. To help fill some of your dog's day, buy a large bone and chain it to a tree or post (the bone, not the dog,) the idea being that it cannot bury it. Also consider a 'dog walking service.'
- ☹ Apprehensive/Fearful: This is usually found in the nervous, confidence-lacking dog that barks out of the fear of the unknown and the fact that it is on its own and its behaviour goes unchecked. Try sneaking back and catching the dog in the act. Sometimes locking the dog up can help.
- ☹ Territorial: This type is normally the dominant, confident type and as a rule is not the worst culprit of nuisance barking but if you have problems with this type of dog you will need to seek professional help.

GENERAL TIPS ON GOOD DOG MANAGEMENT

1. De-sex your dog at an early age. (But it is never too late)
2. Register your dog with your local Council as soon as it becomes eligible. (Three months old)
3. Never console a frightened, aggressive or barking dog. Reprimand for undesirable behaviour and only praise good behaviour.
4. Do not allow your dog to bark at those things that are not a threat to your security. Passing pedestrians, postmen, neighbours, straying dogs, birds, etc. Remember the car alarm. Only praise your dog when it barks at the right things.
5. Be a responsible Dog Owner. And remember, 'A good watch dog makes for a happy neighbourhood.'
6. Seek professional help if your dog is too difficult for you to handle. Do not feel you have failed. Humans are human trainers. It takes special skills to be able to train dogs successfully.
7. Always walk your dog on a lead and pick up all droppings. Pooper scoopers are available from Animal Control Services as well as Auckland City Council offices.
8. Wherever possible, confine your dog at night, to reduce any annoyance to your neighbours.



WHERE TO GO FOR HELP:

Animal Control Services Ltd
 Level 2
 24 Spring Street
 PONSONBY
 Email: acs@animal-control.co.nz
 PH: 09 360-0750
 FAX: 09 360-0761

Obedience Club listings may be obtained from:
 New Zealand Kennel Club
 Private Bag 50903
 PORIRUA 6220
 Email: nzkc@nzkc.org.nz
 PH: (04) 237 4489
 FAX: (04) 237 0721

Bark Busters Home Dog Training & Advisory Services, Auckland
 PH: Call Free 0800 167 710