How to get your dog to stop barking.

Ways to control your dogs barking.

Here’s a list of techniques that can help stop your dog from barking. While all of them can be very successful, you shouldn’t expect miraculous results overnight. The longer your dog has been practicing the barking behaviour, the longer it will take for them to change their ways.

Some of these training techniques require you to have an idea as to why your dog barks. We can help you get some insight into what is behind the bark.

Why dogs bark

Dogs usually bark because they:

- Have separation anxiety
- Identify a threat
- Are bored
- Are stimulated by something they see.

Always remember to keep these tips in mind while training:

- **Don’t yell** at your dog to be quiet – it just sounds like you’re barking along with them.
- Keep your training sessions positive and upbeat.
- **Be consistent** so you don’t confuse your dog. Everyone in your family must apply the training methods every time your dog barks inappropriately. You can’t let your dog get away with inappropriate barking some times and not others.

Train your dog not to bark

Teach your dog to bark only to alert you and to then stop barking afterwards. If your dog barks at everything that moves, use short reprimand words.

If you do the same every time your dog does something wrong, it will soon understand. Praise your dog as soon as it stops barking.

Do not console a barking dog. This will reward or reinforce barking.

Consult your vet or an animal behaviour specialist if you are having trouble training your dog to not bark.
Remove the motivation

Your dog gets some kind of reward when they bark. Otherwise, they wouldn’t do it. Figure out what your dog gets out of barking and remove it. Don’t give your dog the opportunity to continue the barking behaviour.

*Example: Barking at a passer-by:*

If your dog barks at people or animals passing by the living room window, manage their behaviour by closing the curtains or putting your dog in another room.

- If your dog barks at passers-by when they are in the yard, bring them into the house. Never leave your dog outside unsupervised all day and night.

**Minimise sight stimulus**

Do not leave your dog home alone where it can see the footpath or anybody passing by. Either confine your dog to the backyard or in a way that it is unable to see things to bark at. You can use shade cloth or brush stick fencing to block off any sight stimulus.

**Desensitise your dog to the stimulus**

Gradually get your dog accustomed to whatever is causing it to bark. Start with the stimulus (the thing that makes them bark) at a distance. It must be far enough away that your dog doesn’t bark when they see it. Feed your dog lots of good treats. Move the stimulus a little closer (perhaps as little as a few inches to start) and feed treats. If the stimulus moves out of sight, stop giving your dog treats. You want your dog to learn that the appearance of the stimulus leads to good things (treats!).

*Example: Barking at dogs:*

- Have a friend with a dog stand out of sight or far enough away so your dog won’t bark at the other dog.
- As your friend comes into view, start feeding your dog lots of very yummy treats.
- Stop feeding your dog treats as soon as your friend and their dog disappears.
- Repeat the process multiple times.
- Remember not to try to progress too quickly as it may take days or weeks before your dog can pay attention to you and the treats without barking at the other dog.
**Teach your dog the “Quiet” command.**

It may sound nonsensical, but the first step of this technique is to teach your dog to bark on command. Give your dog the command to “Speak”, wait for your dog to bark two or three times, and then stick a tasty treat in front of their nose. When they stop barking to sniff the treat, praise them and give them the treat. Repeat until your dog starts barking as soon as you say “Speak”.

Once your dog can reliably bark on command, teach them the “Quiet” command. In a calm environment with no distractions, tell them to “Speak”. When your dog starts barking, say “Quiet” and stick a treat in front of their nose. Praise them for being quiet and give them the treat.

*Example: Someone at the door –*

- When the doorbell rings, your dog alerts you to the presence of an “intruder” by barking wildly.
- Once you’ve taught your dog the “Quiet” command in a calm environment, practice in increasingly distracting situations until your dog can immediately stop barking when asked to, even when that “intruder” arrives at the door.

**Ask your dog for an incompatible behaviour.**

When your dog starts barking, ask them to do something that’s incompatible with barking. Teaching your dog to react to barking stimuli with something that inhibits it from barking, such as lying down on their bed.

*Example: Someone at the door –*

- Toss a treat on your dogs mat and tell them “Go to your place”
- When your dog is reliably going to their mat to earn a treat, up the ante by opening a door while they are on their mat, if your dog gets up close the door immediately.
- Repeat until your dog stays on their mat while the door opens.
- Then increase the difficulty by having someone ring the doorbell while your dog is on their mat, reward if your dog stays in place.
**Keep your dog occupied**

Giving your dog something to do prevents boredom and barking at everything it sees.

- Exercise your dog regularly.
- Rotate and restrict toys your dog can play with at one time. Easy access to all toys will easily lead to boredom.
- Place treats in different places:
  - around the lawn so your dog can sniff it out
  - in a sandpit, if you have one, so your dog can dig the treats out
  - hanging on a rope’s end so your dog has to jump and work for it
  - in a treat ball.
- Get your dog to play with other dogs. This will help your dog learn the difference between safe and threatening situations (when barking is helpful).
- Ask a friend or a dog sitter to look after your dog.

**Keep your dog tired.**

Make sure your dog is getting sufficient physical and mental exercise every day. A tired dog is a good dog and one who is less likely to bark from boredom or frustration. Depending on their breed, age, and health, your dog may require several long walks as well as a good game of chasing the ball and playing with toys.

Visit our website to view this information at:

[http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/licencesregulations/dogsandanimals/caringforyourdog/Pages/barkingprevention.aspx](http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/licencesregulations/dogsandanimals/caringforyourdog/Pages/barkingprevention.aspx)
Barking Behaviour

We all have the right to live with a pet. However we are responsible for making sure that our companion is not a nuisance to others. Imagine, for a moment what your neighbours must feel when they are subjected to incessant noise from a dog: elderly people who have a rest during the day, students who need to concentrate to prepare for exams, even someone home due to illness. Barking is a natural form of behaviour for a dog. A dog that barks to give warning of an intruder or a danger, or to communicate joy to their master, is simply expressing their emotional state.

HOWEVER, if your dog forms the habit of barking at the slightest external provocation, this behaviour becomes unacceptable.

There are different levels of nuisance behaviour depending on the breed, personality, age and history of the dog. These problems can sometimes grow so serious that an owner has no other option but to get rid of their dog.

To prevent things from reaching this stage, and solve the problems as soon as they arise, consider using an Anti-Bark collar. These collars are a tried and proven method of enabling you to retrain your dog.

Electronic Collars

When your dog barks, a static correction is emitted at the lowest level you have set. If the behaviour continues the corrections will increase with each successive bark. There are 3 selectable ranges; each range consists of 6 incrementing levels of correction. Giving a total of 18 levels. The collars we use are activated by a combination of sound and vibration. This means a neighbours dog barking or loud sound cannot activate the collar by mistake.

The collar also has a SAFETY TIME OUT, if your dog barks 15 times consecutively within a 1-minute period the unit will disable sensors and remain inactive for 3 minutes, then reset itself to the original setting.

Citronella Collars

Each time your dog barks, the electronic bark-sensing unit releases a brisk, citronella spray in front of your dogs nose. This effect is sufficient to startle your dog and interrupt its undesirable behaviour. The smell of the citronella which is unpleasant to dogs then begins to irritate the dogs nasal passage. Through this harmless conditioned reflex the citronella discourages and reinforces to your dog that barking is unpleasant.

The sensing unit holds approximately 18-25 sprays. Citronella is a 100% natural spray, safe for all dogs, people and the environment. Citronella can be used safely on all healthy dogs.
TRAINING TIPS

In order to make it become part of their normal environment, let your dog get used to wearing the collar for a few days before ever activating it. Let them see you with the transmitter in your hand. This way when you do activate the collar, your dog won’t associate the correction with the collar or you; as they have seen you with it and worn it before with no consequences.

During training the collar is switched on and ready to go.

If the dog is not already wearing the collar, put it on at least 20 minutes prior to commencing a training session.

Organise at least two to three training sessions a day of no more than 10 to 15 minutes a time, so that neither of you lose your concentration or patience.

If there is a specific behaviour you are trying to stop, create the situation where you know your dog is going to react. This gives you the ability to control the situation.

Always use the lowest stimulation level as possible. If your dog shows no reaction increase the stimulation to the next level.

If training in new locations, be aware your dog may become distracted, you may need to reinforce your commands with the remote collar more often as a result.

Always reward your dog for good behaviour. This will reinforce the good behaviour faster and the dog will want to please you more. Would you work for nothing!

Always end a training session on a positive result and try to play with your dog so they feel good.

The biggest one! BE CONSISTANT!