

Rectifying nuisance barking

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; it is their way of communicating with people. However, if your dog forms the habit of barking at the slightest external provocation, this behaviour becomes unacceptable.



In this brochure are some suggestions to help you to reduce the barking nuisance your dog may be causing. While all of them can be remarkably successful, you should not expect miraculous results overnight.

The longer your dog has been learning the barking behaviour, the longer it will take for them to change their ways.

Why dogs bark

Dogs usually bark because they:

- 🐾 have separation anxiety
- 🐾 identified a threat
- 🐾 are bored
- 🐾 are stimulated by something they see



Remove the motivation

Dogs get satisfaction from barking and this can cause it to continue unnecessarily.

Removing the motivation (or the opportunity) for the dog to bark constantly at something is in most cases the most effective way to reduce the nuisance.

Some examples of how to achieve this (based on a specific behaviour):

Barking at cats or other animals at night

- 🐾 Put the dog somewhere else on your property where the cats do not go
- 🐾 Close the dog inside at night or when you are not home
- 🐾 Use a barking silencer or anti-barking collar to correct this behaviour when nobody is present



Barking at people, dogs or cars passing by

- 🐾 Put the dog somewhere else on the property where they cannot see the passers-by
- 🐾 Block the visibility by covering the gate or fence with something that prevents the dog from seeing out, such as weed mat or brush fencing
- 🐾 Close the curtain the dog is looking through
- 🐾 Put the dog in another room of the house



Keep your dog occupied

Giving your dog something to do prevents boredom, which could cause it to bark at everything it sees.

Some useful things you could do:

- 🐾 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 various places, e.g.—



- 🐾 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 must jump and work for it
- 🐾 in a treat ball (peanut butter inside something the dog can't chew up is fantastic)

- 🐾 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
- 🐾 Take your dog to work with you, if appropriate

Keep your dog tired

Make sure your dog is getting sufficient physical and mental exercise every day. A tired dog is a quiet dog, and one who is less likely to be bored or frustrated.

Depending on their breed, age, and health, your dog may require several long walks, as well as a good game of chasing a ball or playing with toys.



'Anti-barking' devices

There are some great electronic devices available on the market which are designed for use during the initial training of your dog – when you are unable to be there to help control excessive barking.

These devices are recommended for use as a means to prevent nuisance barking where other methods have failed:

- 🐾 Barking silencers
- 🐾 Anti-barking collars



Whether it is your dog or the neighbour's dog, these anti-barking devices will help you regain the peace and quiet that has been disrupted by nuisance barking. These training devices automatically detect and stop barking without causing any pain or discomfort to your dog.

Barking silencers

These are devices that has been proven highly effective in maintaining peace for your neighbours, while providing training for your dog when you are not home.

Like the anti-barking collars, there are many brands to choose from and each have different options. You can choose one to suit your budget and lifestyle.

These devices are also known by other names or trademarks:

- 🐾 Bark Box
- 🐾 Sonic Box
- 🐾 Dog Silencer
- 🐾 Bark Breaker



How it works

When the barking silencer detects barking, it immediately sends a special, high-pitched sound heard only by the dog. Dogs find this sound extremely annoying – similar to fingernails on a chalkboard!

Most dogs learn pretty quickly that if they are quiet, they will not have to hear this irritating sound anymore. Using this proven method, dogs are safely and humanely discouraged from barking.

You can relax while the barking silencer quietly trains your dog, your neighbour's dog or even multiple dogs!

Where to use it

The barking silencer can be used near any barking dog. You can use it indoors and outdoors – even near your neighbour's dog. When purchasing one of these devices, ensure that it is classed as 'water resistant'; however, we recommend when installing one to add protection by using either silicone around the joints, and/or putting it inside a protective container, like an empty milk bottle, to ensure it is protected from excessive rain.

Be sure that the signal can still get 'out' of the container or cover.



No shock technology

The humane training technique of the barking silencer uses an age-old principle, which is to train dogs to associate their barking with something irritating.



Unlike anti-barking collars, which can only be used on one dog at a time, the barking silencer can be used virtually anywhere, without having to ask permission from your neighbours, and it is very effective for use on multiple dogs at the same time.

The barking silencer will train dogs to stop nuisance barking (boredom and attention-seeking barking) but is designed to have no effect on instinctual or protective barking.

Seeing results

The barking silencer is a training device. If within the first few days you notice your dog barking at the unit, or barking more than usual, this is simply part of the learning process in which the dog associates its barking with the sound it hears coming from the device.

Some dog owners report seeing results within a few days, but most will see results in 2-3 weeks.

Sounds travelling through walls and floors

The sounds emitted by the barking silencer will not travel through solid objects, such as walls or floors.

If using indoors, make sure to put the device in the same room as the dog.



Anti-barking collars

To prevent things from reaching a stage where enforcement action is required to abate the nuisance barking and to solve the barking as soon as it arises, consider using an anti-barking collar.

These collars are a tried and proven method of enabling you to re-train your dog. There are many brands to choose from and each have different options. You can choose one to suit your budget and lifestyle.

The most common types of anti-bark collars are:

Citronella spray collars



Each time your dog barks, the electronic bark-sensing unit releases a brisk citronella spray in front of your dog's 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 dog's nasal passage. Through this harmless, conditioned reflex, the citronella discourages and reinforces to your dog that barking is unpleasant.

The sensing unit, depending on the collar you have, holds approximately 18-25 sprays. Citronella is a 100% natural spray; it is safe for all dogs, people and the environment.

Citronella can be used safely on all healthy dogs.

Electronic vibration 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 various selectable ranges consisting of various incrementing levels of correction, depending on the collar you have.

The collars are often activated by a combination of sound and vibration. This means a neighbour's dog barking or loud sound cannot activate the collar by mistake.



Other training tips

- ❃ Do not yell at your dog to be quiet – to them it just sounds like you are barking along with them
- ❃ Keep your training sessions positive and upbeat
- ❃ Be consistent so you do not confuse your dog. Everyone in your family must apply the training methods every time your dog barks inappropriately. You cannot let your dog get away with inappropriate barking sometimes and not others
- ❃ Have a training session with your dog every day
- ❃ Never leave your dog outside unsupervised all day and night
- ❃ Try a dog appeasing pheromone to calm your dog – more information can be found on the internet or from your local pet store / veterinarian
- ❃ 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 most important one! BE CONSISTENT!**



Visit our website to view further information at:

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/licencesregulations/dogsandanimals/caringforyourdog/Pages/barkingprevention.aspx>