



DOGGIE DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY
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STOPPING UNWANTED BARKING

Here are a few simple guidelines that you can use to help stop unwanted types of barking. Note that this is just for general cases and specific issues may require a more directed treatment plan.

Remember any type of behavior, be it good or bad, that is given positive reinforcement will help to make that behavior permanent. An example of this is never to pet a dog that barks excessively to calm him or her. This type of attention will help reinforce this undesired behavior rather than helping eliminate it.

First, follow the LEADERSHIP EXERCISES (either given by the trainer or available on our website). This will help establish you as the pack leader and help teach the dog what behaviors are acceptable and allowed.

Then, there are a few DON'T'S:

- DO NOT encourage barking in any way, shape, or form if you wish to eliminate it.
- DO NOT use any form of physical punishment to correct barking (i.e.: hitting the dog).
- DO NOT make a big deal about the barking. Even though it may be an undesirable behavior to you, keep calm and in control. Yelling at the dog doesn't help the situation.

The next thing is when the dog barks in order to gain attention or at another animal or object, begin by ignoring the dog completely until the barking stops. How long this takes varies from dog to dog and may pick up in intensity but you must remain firm and patient. Once the dog stops, praise and reward the dog (either by treat or petting) for being quiet.

If the dog does not stop, try diverting the dog's attention away from the situation onto something more positive such as a treat or toy and have him or her earn it by performing at least two obedience commands (so you aren't praising the dog for the barking).

Also, always make sure to reward any time when the dog doesn't bark and shows the correct behavior to help make that behavior permanent. Always be consistent and persistent with the training.

Lastly, setup situations so you can practice teaching the dog the correct behavior. To help with this, go out around something that makes the dog bark and establish a threshold. The threshold is the distance between the dog and what is making he or she bark, where the dog notices but doesn't react and you can get the dog's attention back onto you.

Reward the dog for offering the correct behavior when they pay attention to you and are not barking. Work some simple obedience commands as well to help keep the dog's attention on you.

When in doubt or if there are issues, increase the threshold to keep the dog's attention on you during the training. Vary this distance at each training session but gradually decrease the distance a little at a time and increase the reward for the dog as he or she offers the correct behavior.

If while reducing the threshold, the dog starts barking and you can't get the dog's attention back onto you, increase the threshold until you have success and start again from there.

USING THE “QUIET COMMAND” FOR BARKING

Here are a few simple steps that you can use to help establish a command to have the dog stop barking using “Quiet”. Note that this is just for general cases and specific issues may require a more directed treatment plan.

When the dog barks, show him or her a treat and say “Quiet”, then wait for the dog to stop barking. Only say the command once and be patient as it may take a few minutes for the dog to stop.

When the dog stops barking, say “Good Quiet” and reward the dog with a treat. Repeat these steps each time until the dog stops barking immediately at least 90% of the time when the “Quiet” command is given.

Note that petting or a verbal praise can be used if there is no immediate access to treats but try and use treats exclusively in the beginning to help establish a positive association with the command.

Consistency is the key and with time and patience, your dog can learn to cease unwanted barking.

If you have questions or need a more specific treatment plan, please contact us.