

What to Do About Your Dog's Barking Before Trying an Anti-bark Collar

There are basically three ways of decreasing problem barking. One is to manage your dog's environment so that she isn't exposed to the things she likes to bark at. The second is to enrich your dog's world so she has something to do other than bark. The third is to change your dog's behavior so that she no longer barks in response to these events. Sometimes all three techniques are needed.

Manage Your Dog's Environment - Limit exposure to those things your dog barks at

- Find a way to block your dog's view of the street, alley or neighboring yard where she is directing her barking. Put a tarp on your fence so your dog can't see through it, or put up a secondary fence inside the first that blocks your dog's access to the area where she barks.
- Keep your dog in the house, but make sure she has an opportunity to relieve herself every 4-6 hours.
- Cover windows or limit your dog's access to rooms from which she can see things outside to bark at.
- Keep your dog in a dog-proofed, temperature-moderated garage, making sure you have removed any chemicals or other items that can harm her.



Enrich Your Dog's Life - Implement activities that your dog can do instead of bark

- If your dog is barking because she's "bored," give her something else to do, such as play with any of several interactive toys you fill with your dog's favorite treats.
- If your dog spends long hours alone, hire a dog walker.
- Spend more quality time with your dog yourself.



Change Your Dog's Behavior - Use these techniques to change your dog's barking behavior in response to certain events. *To be effective, you must catch your dog in the act or just before she starts barking and you must catch her every time she barks. If you cannot be consistent or time your intervention correctly, it is unlikely these techniques will change your dog's behavior.*

- If your dog is barking due to fear, expose her to what she's afraid of a little bit at a time, while giving her something she likes such as a treat, a toy or petting. You may need professional help learning how to do this effectively. In the meantime, don't let your dog be in contact with what she is fearful of, except in the gradual doses that you control.
- Reward your dog with a special treat when she **isn't** barking in the places or situations where she would normally bark, such as when people come to the door or walk by your house.
- Teach your dog to sit quietly to get attention rather than bark for attention.
- Teach your dog to ring a bell with her paw or step on a doggie doorbell pad rather than bark to be let inside.
- Teach your dog to come to you and sit quietly for a special treat rather than race around the house or yard, or run to the door or window to bark.
- Discourage barking by squirting your dog with a water bottle or making a loud noise. When your dog is quiet, immediately give her something else to do, such as lie down quietly in return for a treat.
- Discourage barking by giving your dog a brief (2-3 minutes) "time out" by confining her someplace boring where she doesn't want to be, such as a dog-proofed bathroom. After you let her out, reward your dog for being quiet in the situation she previously was barking.



For immediate access to more help and information, visit

www.barkinghelp.com