

PICK OF THE LITTER



DOG TRAINING

EXCESSIVE BARKING

Territorial Barking

This behavior is often exhibited to alert the owner or family of a presence in the home or yard that is unfamiliar or new. Dog owners often see this barking behavior when a knock is heard at the front door, when a person is seen from a window, or when an animal is seen near the yard.

- **Quiet Living Quarters**
Place your dog's sleeping or living quarters away from the front of the house or yard
- **Attend to Barking**
 - 1) in a relaxed manner, approach your dog to determine the reason for barking (make it obvious *to your dog* that you are looking to determine the *reason* for the barking)
 - 2) say the word “enough” and encourage your dog to move away from the distraction (with a toy or food treat)
 - 3) ask your dog for a few simple behaviors and reward with treats or playtime
 - 4) with practice, your dog will begin responding well to the word “enough” - at that point, you can switch to only using praise to reward your dog
- **Desensitization**
Identify the events that cause your dog to bark. Gradually expose your dog to these events and reward behaviors that are incompatible with barking (sit, stay, go get a toy, come, etc.)
- **Recommended Product**
For those dogs whose barking is more problematic, I recommend using a Citronella Anti-Bark Collar, which is designed to deliver a harmless, but highly effective, burst of citronella spray to interrupt and stop barking.

Attention Barking

This behavior is one of many that dogs performed to get their owner's to pay attention to them. It is particularly troublesome because well intended efforts to stop the barking (speaking in a harsh tone, grabbing your dog's muzzle and even eye contact) often reinforce the behavior.

- **Better Behavior**
Teach your dog more polite ideas for getting your attention. Ask your dog sit or lie down before the barking begins, and then reward with your attention.
- **Ignore Barking**
When your dog barks at you to get your attention, don't say a word. Instead, turn your back and avoid eye contact to make it clear to your dog that barking absolutely does not work to get your attention. When the barking ceases, return to your dog and ask for a "sit" before the barking begins again. And, remember, consistency is the key to making this work.
- **Teach "Speak"**
Teach your dog to bark on cue by using the command “speak” just before your dog starts to bark and then reward with a treat. In the future, the only barks that are rewarded are ones that are performed on cue.