

Why Do Dogs Bark?

When your dog barks, it can be a very frustrating experience. A barking dog can be annoying, inappropriate and even frightening. Worse, it can often cause problems with neighbours or landlords, and in extreme cases it can mean that a dog needs to be re-homed.

If you're a dog owner, it's important to understand that your dog is barking in order to communicate with you. Generally, there are four different types of bark, and you should be able to tell the difference between them. These four types are: warning, alarm, playful and need. Spending time with your pet, and bonding with him, will help you as an owner to distinguish between them and understand how best to respond. For example, if your dog makes a continuous, fast barking noise, he may be trying to warn you about something. Maybe there's someone at the door, or he's heard a noise he doesn't recognise. A large, drawn out bark at a high pitch tends to mean that your dog is in need of something. Perhaps he's hungry, lonely, or needs to go outside.

Occasional barking is completely normal, but sometimes it can be associated with behavioural problems, or even separation anxiety. It's important for you as a pet owner to try and understand what your dog is trying to communicate with his barking. If you think it may be a result of a behavioural problem, we recommend speaking to your vet. In these cases, behavioural therapy can be the best way forward.

You may decide that your dog is barking for completely normal reasons, but feel that it's still causing a problem. If this is the case for you, don't worry. There are ways to take control of your dog's barking. Bark control products are very effective and work much quicker than behavioural training. More importantly, they're completely safe to use. There are different products available, but they all use an unpleasant (but non-harmful) stimulation to stop your dog barking. This is done automatically, using a device on your dog's collar. When the sensor detects that barking has begun, it springs into action to deliver a reminder to your dog, and interrupt him mid-bark. This will train your dog not to bark at all!

If you're thinking about using a Bark Control system, you have four main options to choose from:

- **Ultrasonic stimulation.** This kind of system produces an annoying high frequency sound that will distract your dog from barking. The noise is not audible by humans.
- **Spray stimulation.** A collar using spray stimulation will spray forward a mist to interrupt barking.
- **Vibration stimulation.** This kind of anti-bark collar uses a low frequency vibration on the underside of your dog's neck, not far from his 'voice box'.
- **Static stimulation.** This is one of the most used systems. It uses a safe pulse of static electricity between two skin contacts on the underside of the neck.

There are two other options that work brilliantly when the barking problem is limited to a particular area. You could choose an ultrasonic device; designed for either outside or indoor use. These work independently of your dog, and will not need to be attached to his collar. An added benefit of the Outdoor Dog Control Unit is that it can stop your neighbour's dogs from barking too!

Bark Control systems are suitable for use for most dogs, both large or small. Spray, ultrasonic and vibration systems can be used in any situation, but electronic collars that deliver static stimulation do have a few exceptions.

They shouldn't be used for dogs who are:

- Under six months of age,
- Pregnant or nursing,
- Suffering from health problems such as heart disease,
- Unable to respond appropriately due to injury, illness, age or senility,
- Suffering from separation anxiety or similar anxiety related disorders,
- Known for aggressive tendencies.

If you're finding yourself frustrated with your dog's barking, a Barking Control system is likely to be the solution to your problems. Introduce a system slowly, following the instructions that come with it, and harmony will be restored between you and your pet!