



## Behaviour Issues:

### Jumping

Your dog is excited to see you and jumps up to prove how happy he is to see you. An owner may find this cute and a form of affection but when your dog knocks over a child or someone elderly causing injury it is no longer cute.

### Tips to Stop Jumping:

- 1) **Ignore the Jumping** - if the dog is not getting your attention which is the sole purpose of this behavior it will stop very quickly. Do not push the dog down or yell at it to "stop" as this only gives the attention he is seeking and he is even more likely to jump the next time.
- 2) **Use a Leash and "Off" Command** - keep a leash at the front door and upon entering put the leash on your dog. Put your foot on the leash to restrict movement and calmly say "Off". Once all paws are on the floor or in sitting position, praise, pet and reinforce this behavior with a treat.
- 3) **Involve Family Members and Friends** - enlist family and friends to ring the doorbell or knock on the door and before answering the door put a leash on your dog. If he is about to jump up, step on the leash close to where he's standing and say "Off" and once all four legs are on the floor be sure to praise and pat him.
- 4) **Improve "Sit" Command** - if a dog is sitting he can't jump. Practice the "sit" command at the door and on walks while no one is around and be sure to reward. When someone does come to the door your dog will be more like to respond to the "sit" command. Ask guests not to pet your dog until he is either standing on all fours or sitting.
- 5) **Use Quick Turns** - when already leashed and your dog is about to lunge forward to jump on someone, quickly turn around and walk in the opposite direction for a few steps, and then walk back towards them. If the dog repeats jumping turnaround and repeat the steps as this will reinforce this behavior is unacceptable.
- 6) **Be Consistent** - don't allow your dog to jump up during play time and not when he is greeting you. This will only confuse your dog. Always use "Off" and then praise and reward.

Dogs need structure, consistency, our patience and love and soon the jumping-up behavior will stop.

### **Begging:**

It's hard to resist looking into your puppy/dog's innocent eyes knowing they would be so happy to receive the smallest morsel of your food. Once you give in you have established that it is acceptable for your dog to beg and you have set yourself up for years of this repetitive behavior. In a dog's mind "it works, therefore I beg." You really aren't doing your dog any favours and this can lead to stomach issues as they can't digest all foods that humans can, obesity which in turn can cause many health issue and the simple fact that not everyone thinks a begging dog is cute, in fact many consider it a nuisance.

### **Tips to Stop Begging**

- 1) Never feed your dog from the table and be sure to inform children and guests of this rule. If this can't be done, put your dog in a crate, in another room or outside.
- 2) Ignore the begging. If successful, reward your dog with praise and a treat after you have finished eating.
- 3) If your dog continues to beg, drool or jump up, have him "sit" or "down" in a special spot for the remainder of the meal.
- 4) Feed your dog at the same time you are about to eat so he is occupied and feed in a separate location.
- 5) Give your dog a bone or a treat ball filled with peanut butter or cheese to enjoy during your meal.
- 6) Never give in to begging after you've indicated "No". This will reinforce that begging is never allowed.
- 7) Exercise your dog before a meal as he may be inclined to sleep if he's tired.
- 8) If you must feed your dog some leftovers, put in his dish and never feed from the table.
- 9) Teach what is acceptable. Hold a treat in a closed hand and don't open when your dog nudges for it or begs. When he is calm open your hand and say "take it". Your dog will learn that waiting for the command is acceptable behavior.

Never punish a dog for begging. A dog wouldn't understand why he was being punished and would wind up confused. Punishment teaches a dog nothing except how to avoid the punisher.

## **Barking:**

A dog barks for many different reasons. Barking is not their way of aggravating or annoying you; it is their means of communicating with you. Once you figure out what is prompting your dog to bark you may address it appropriately.

## **Types of Barking**

**Alerting:** This type barking alerts owners to the presence of danger or a suspicious stranger. It is a more rapid bark as the stranger approaches. An aggressive bark is low pitch and may include growling. This could indicate fear.

After the dog has alerted us to an "intruder," we need a way to signal the dog after one or two barks that she was a good dog for warning us, but now we will take control. Often the command "Enough" will accomplish that goal.

Remember: Do not inadvertently reinforce barking by giving verbal or physical reassurance to a barking dog.

To teach "Enough," set up a situation in which your puppy will bark, but not excessively; knock on the door, for instance. After one or two barks, stop knocking and make a sound or distraction that will get her to switch her attention to you. If she stops barking, immediately say "Enough" and reward her with a treat and praise.

If she does not stop barking, put that delicious treat right in front of her nose. When she stops barking for a second or two say "Enough," wait a few more seconds and if she is quiet, give her the treat and praise.

Timing is critical - she must be quiet when you give her the treat or she will think she is being rewarded for continuing to bark. Be sure to say "Enough" when she is quiet, not when she is barking. Later, as she associates "Enough" with being quiet, you can use it as a command to stop barking.

**Attention-seeking:** The dog wants you to focus your attention entirely on them. It is very important to ignore this barking as it may become very insistent and hard to ignore.

Dogs will be happy with any attention they receive, be it negative or positive. A stern "No" from you is still attention, so the puppy/dog got what she wanted and you reinforced the behavior. It is best to just ignore this type of barking, as hard as that may be.

Sometimes, the use of a remote correction is helpful in controlling this type of barking. Coins in an empty soda can, foghorns, or other noisemakers can be used to startle the dog while she is barking.

When she is startled, she stops barking, and at that point, you can give her a substitute for barking - a toy, a walk. Just make sure she stops barking before you give the substitute or the dog will perceive it as a reward for barking.

**Excitement:** This type of bark is often short and sharp. These barks are common if the dog gets too excited with the game. Often a time-out is in order.

If your dog barks excessively during play, it is best to let her calm down and slow down the game. If she continues to bark, stop playing until she has settled down.

**Self-identification:** You may hear this when your dog seems to be answering other dogs he hears barking in the neighborhood. It is his way of saying, "I am over here."

This type of barking is quite instinctive and can sometimes be difficult to control, especially in a household of multiple dogs. Often there is an instigator dog and all other dogs join in. This type of barking may be controlled using a similar approach to alert/warning barks, i.e., obedience and relaxation methods with a substitute behavior offered, like playing with a toy.

**Bored:** When a dog is bored it simply needs an outlet for their energy and a more stimulating environment.

Dogs who bark when they are bored may be similar to dogs seeking attention or those that are lonely. Dogs who are bored need something to do besides barking. We need to give them a more stimulating environment and usually a lot more exercise. A tired dog is less likely to be bored. Toys such as Kongs and Buster Cubes that can be filled with treats can get your dog's brain, as well as his body, working.

**Lonely or Anxious:** Your dog could be experiencing separation anxiety. The barking can become self-reinforcing as he becomes more stimulated and anxious. Anxious barks tend to get higher in pitch as the dog becomes more upset.

Dogs who bark when they are alone may be showing a symptom of their separation anxiety. As we mentioned, these dogs are in the midst of a vicious circle - the more lonely they are, the more they bark, the more upset they get, the more they bark, the barking gets them more upset and they bark more - and the cycle continues.

We need to work with the dog on the underlying behavior of separation anxiety. We can do this several ways. As in alert/warning barking, we need to be able to teach the dog simple obedience and how to relax. Then we can work on the problem of the separation anxiety.

We can start out by leaving or acting like we are leaving for a short time - and before the dog starts getting nervous and barking (this may be one second at first), we come back. This way, we are not rewarding barking, but rewarding relaxation and silence.

We gradually extend the time we are gone and return before the dog gets anxious. If your dog is anxious even if you leave the room, then you will need to start by just taking several steps away from her while she remains relaxed. While going through this behavior modification, you cannot go too slow - you can go too fast.

We often need to change our habits too. Often the dog starts getting nervous when we go through our routine of leaving. Maybe you are like me, and the last thing you do

before you leave is put on your shoes and pick up the keys. Vary this and put on your shoes and pick up your keys - but do not leave. Go to the couch and read a book.

If you only play the radio on weekends when you are home, turn it on during your workdays. As hard as it may be, set your alarm on weekends, get up, but stay home. Continue these changes in routine until your dog does not pay attention to your cues anymore. It is also very important to not give your dog a lot of attention when you leave.

When you are gone, make sure your dog is comfortable - light, warmth, a radio playing, toys. If your dog is outside, a doghouse may help her feel more secure. Some indoor dogs will be more content if they can watch what is going on outside, be it traffic or chipmunks. Others may be more anxious if they can look out and do better with the drapes closed. You will need to decide what makes your dog less anxious. Make sure you give your dog a lot of exercise a half hour or so before you leave. As with boredom, tired dogs are less likely to become anxious.

If your dog happens to not only bark, but destroy things while you are gone, a crate may be necessary. Never punish your dog when you come home and find something chewed or torn. If you do, your dog will soon associate your return with being punished. That is going to make her even more anxious.

If you videotape these destructive dogs, you may see the dog is anxious when the owner leaves but anxiety also increases just before the owner's usual time of return, when the dog becomes anxious about the owner's impending return and punishment.

Just as you should not punish your dog on your return, do not give her a lot of attention either - then your returning home will not be such a big deal to her. Instead, come in the door, say "Hello" and go about a household task. Once your dog has settled down and is quiet, then you can spend some quality time with her.

Initially, while you are working on behavior modification it may be helpful to get a neighbor or pet sitter to come in once or several times during the day. This will help break up the long hours the dog has without you.

Finally, if the separation anxiety is severe, medications are often needed during the behavior modification process. Medication alone will not solve the problem, but it can be a useful adjunct to the process. Consult with your veterinarian to determine which medication would be most appropriate.

**Startle:** This occurs in response to an unfamiliar or sudden sound or movement. As with an alert/warning bark

We can best curb startled barking using the similar techniques for alert/warning barks. Teaching "Enough" will really help in this situation. If a certain sound consistently startles your dog, record that sound. Start by playing it back very softly so your dog will remain relaxed when she hears it. If she remains quiet, then reward her. Over days and weeks, gradually increase the volume until she is no longer startled into barking when she hears it.

## Tips to Control Undesirable Barking

- 1) Have the dog lie down and "stay"
- 2) Do not shout "No". The dog will think you are barking too and will enjoy the fact you have joined in. Choose a word like "enough" and use it consistently.
- 3) Be patient as changing behavior may take a great deal of time.
- 4) Reward for good behavior. Positive reinforcement is much more powerful and establishes a good bond with your dog. Occasionally give a special treat and eventually just a good pat as a reward.
- 5) Do not hug or talk soothingly as your dog may think there is something to be alarmed at and may bark even more the next time.
- 6) Be in control of the situation.

Control the situation. As much as possible, set up situations to use as training. Practice in short, frequent sessions, generally 5-10 minutes each.

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