



BARKING:

The Facts

While many people consider barking to be a normal behaviour, excessive barking is a behaviour problem and is often a sign that your dog is stressed - not to mention that it can cause great stress for YOU in public places with your dog, or if you live in a community where your neighbours can hear your dog bark too.

Dogs bark in a variety of situations:

- When their owners arrive home
 - When their owners leave home
 - When visitors come to the house
 - When they hear other dogs barking
 - When playing
 - To demand attention from their owner
 - When they want to go outside
 - When they want to be fed
 - When scared or startled
 - When getting their owners to play fetch
 - When fighting
 - At passersby or animals outside
- ...or for no obvious reason at all!*



If you have been telling your dog to stop barking, yet he continues or stops but immediately starts again, you are not getting through to him or getting to the root of what is causing him stress. Some other important facts to know about your dog's or puppy's barking:

- Dogs that bark at birds, dogs, people, falling leaves or clouds aren't watchdogs! They are nuisance barkers and are less likely to be taken notice of when a real threat is present.
- A quiet, intelligent watchdog is the dog intruders need to be wary of, as he is aware of anything out of the ordinary that could be perceived as a threat to your family pack—and will have your immediate attention.
- Barking at passersby that pose no threat to you IS considered nuisance barking.
- It's never too late to teach your dog to stop barking.
- As they reach maturity, most dogs will naturally protect their owners when needed and where necessary, but a puppy that barks without being stopped is a potential nuisance barker in the making.
- A puppy that barks at his owner when being corrected vocally needs training as soon as possible. He is challenging his owner's authority, and this could be the making of a dog that becomes more difficult to control as he matures.

Having your dog assessed by a professional to ascertain why he is barking should be the first step you take toward permanently changing his behaviour and turning him into a more relaxed, happy family member that will be more capable of sounding the alarm appropriately when a real emergency arises.

