

“Tips On Keeping The Peace”

Barking dogs are annoying for their owners, neighbours and are top of the list of complaints to local councils. Barking dogs are the cause of many neighbourhood disputes which could be avoided.

- **Is your dog barking?**

At other dogs

To get your attention

At possums and other animals at night

When he is left alone – day or night

At passers by through the front fence

- **What can be done?**

Barking problems are best dealt with by identifying and dealing with the reason for the barking. Positive reinforcement training, together with a behavioural modification program is the most effective way to eliminate nuisance barking.

Shouting at your dog or using punishment methods to stop barking are generally not effective in the long term and may cause further stress to the dog and ultimately more barking.

Many people are afraid to tell their neighbours their dog's barking is annoying. It is far better to help your neighbour identify and remedy barking, than let the problem continue. Your neighbour may not be aware their dog is barking and causing a problem while they are away. If they are informed, they can do something about it.

- **What you can do?**

If your dog is barking, try to identify the cause. Appreciate that your dog's barking is annoying your neighbours.

If your dog is left alone during the day, feed breakfast in a Kong toy or treat ball, giving your dog some “work” to do while you are away. If you don't give them something to do and enrich their environment, dogs will become “self-employed” and practice nuisance behaviours such as barking, digging and chewing.

Look at how often you interact with your dog. Do you walk him daily? Do you play games and teach him tricks? Does he come inside and join in family activities? If your dog is not stimulated and feels isolated, he is more likely to bark.

Also, you may not realise it, but you could be contributing to your dog's barking problem by giving your dog attention while he is barking.

Paw Behaviour Pet Dog Training can assist in identifying and treating barking problems. Jennifer Wilcox at Paw Behaviour is a qualified behavioural dog trainer. Delta Society Australia's Instructors Course is a Certificate IV in Dog Behavioural Training and the only Certificate IV level pet dog training course in Australia accredited within the Australian Quality Training Framework. Call Paw Behaviour on 9776 1571 or 0414 637 568.