

*Be sure your dog is getting plenty of exercise and attention. Dogs often bark because they are bored or not getting enough activity.*

## Good dog or nuisance?

Determine for yourself whether your dog is a good companion, a good watchdog, or a neighborhood nuisance, by answering the following:

### Does your dog bark excessively when...

- He is left alone?
- Another dog barks?
- The kids next door come out to play?
- He is outside and wants to come inside?
- The neighbors leave or return home?
- You come home?
- Garbage collectors or cars pass by?
- He hears a siren?

If your answer is “yes” to any of these questions, your dog could be a neighborhood noise nuisance. Excessive barking can be extremely annoying to neighbors as well as to those who live with a noisy dog. A constant barker is more likely to be ignored if there is an intruder, since he seems to “cry wolf” all the time.

## Is your dog violating the law?

Clark County Code 8.11.060(1) defines animal noise nuisance as “Any domesticated animal that howls, yelps, whines, barks or makes other oral noises, in such a manner as to disturb any person or neighborhood to an unreasonable degree.” Violations carry a fine of \$100, double for each subsequent offense up to \$400, and ordering the animal removed from Clark County. City ordinances enforced by Clark County Animal Protection and Control have similar language.

## Water Training Method

This method works for most dogs and is simple to use.

### Follow these guidelines:

- First, be consistent and persistent. The dog will not learn if he is corrected one time and not the next. For this reason, plan to teach when you can be home most of the day.
- Fill a plant mister or water pistol with water. When the dog barks, immediately give him one or two squirts of water while the dog is barking and say “Quiet!” Squirt while the dog is barking, otherwise he will be confused if you wait until he stops barking.
- If the dog backs away, repeat saying “Quiet” as you move towards him and give him one more squirt of water.
- Repeat each time the dog barks needlessly. With this conditioning experience your dog will soon learn to expect a squirt of water when you shout “Quiet!” Once he has made this association, you will not need to squirt him again.

**For more pet information,  
visit [www.clark.wa.gov/pets](http://www.clark.wa.gov/pets)**



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For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office  
Voice 564.397.2322 / Relay 711 or 800.833.6388  
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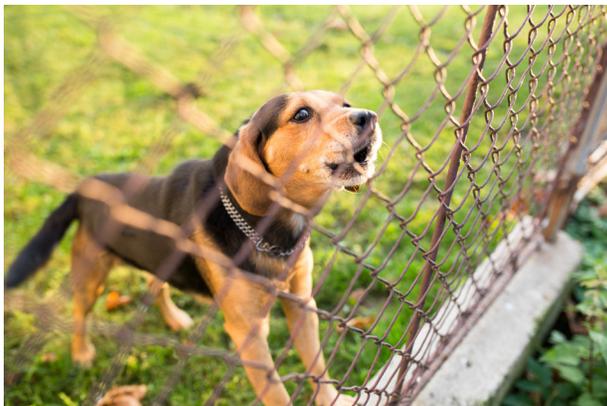
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# BARKING!



**A guide to  
making your  
canine a better  
citizen**



Dogs bark just as people talk. It is normal. Just as some people talk too much, some dogs bark too much. However, in cases of habitual, excessive or continual barking to an unreasonable degree, this can be very disturbing to your neighbors and may constitute a violation of the law.

Be a good neighbor and a reasonable pet owner, and control your dog's excessive barking or barking at inappropriate times. This problem can be corrected with loving training and effective humane strategies.

The first thing you need to do is determine when and for how long your dog barks, and what is causing him to bark. You may need to do some detective work to obtain this information, especially if the barking occurs when you are not home. Ask your neighbors, drive or walk around the block and watch and listen for a while, or start an audio or video recorder when you leave for work. Hopefully, you will be able to discover which of the common problems discussed in this brochure is the cause of your dog's barking.

## If your dog...

### ... barks when nobody is home

Try leaving a radio on when you go out. Get the dog used to being in a closed room or the basement by using the following method:

- Tell him to be a good dog and close the door. When the dog starts to bark or howl, burst into the room and scold him, "Quiet!" Then leave and wait to see if the dog barks again. If he does, repeat the commands with more force.
- Try to convince him that you will always be there to scold him if he barks. Increase the amount of time you leave the dog alone until he is comfortable when you leave for long periods of time.

### ... barks at any little noise

These dogs need special attention. Set up a situation where you know he will bark. For example, the arrival of the mail carrier, cars passing by, or the presence of another animal. When he begins to bark tell him firmly, "Quiet!" Until he understands the command, slap a rolled newspaper on your hand, not the dog, to reinforce the command.

### ... barks during the night

Feed your dog late in the evening so he will be drowsy and sleep through most of the night. If possible, it is best to bring your pet inside for the night.

### If these methods don't work

Consider contacting a reputable obedience training school. A trained dog will stop barking on command. Obedience school will also help to control your dog in other situations.

*Remember you are teaching, not punishing.*



## Tips for dog owners

- Find out why your dog barks.
- Correct the behavior immediately and consistently. If you correct your dog once and not the next time, he will never learn.
- Be patient. Breaking the barking habit takes time, but with love, patience, and understanding, you should be able to complete the training in two to three weeks.
- Tell your pet "good dog" when he obeys your commands or barks for a trained reason.
- Refrain from hitting or hurting your dog. This is not an effective replacement for the water treatment method. Hitting your dog will probably make it impossible for you to ever train your dog without professional help.
- Consider setting up an audio or video recorder while you are away to see if your dog barks and how much.
- Talk with your veterinarian if there are medical issues that may cause barking.