



Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA

Excessive Barking

- Barking is natural, normal dog behavior. Dogs bark to communicate as well as to release pent-up energy. To solve these underlying problems that are the cause of excessive barking, increase your dog's exercise routine. Take her for long walks and runs. Find some doggie friends for her to play with (social exercise). Teach her obedience commands to give her mental stimulation. Bring her into your home -- make her part of your family.
- Some dogs really love to bark. Some like to chew, while others dig. If your dog is a barker, set aside a time and place where she can bark to her heart's content. Find an isolated field or beach, and engage her in a bark-a-thon. Encourage her to bark. Bark back at her. Praise her for barking.
- Confine her indoors until you've solved the problem. If she does bark, it will be less disturbing to your neighbors.
- If she is barking in response to a stimulus (doorbell, someone walking by the home), you can try to desensitize her by ringing the doorbell repeatedly and praising her for not barking. You can also try to block the stimulus from the dog's view, by closing the window blinds for example.
- Teach her not only the command "be quiet", but also the command "speak." These two commands give you both the "on" and "off" switch to her barking behavior. See the flyer titled *Obedience Training* for detailed directions on teaching these obedience commands.

For more info, call our free Behavior Helpline (650/340-7022 x783 or, for Spanish, x786) or consider a low-cost consultation. To make a consultation appointment, call 650/340-7022 x667. The PHS/SPCA Behavior Department, like many shelter programs, is funded by donations.