

BARKING DOGS: WHAT DO YOU DO?

Why All The Racket?

Barking is one of the ways that dogs communicate. It can signify anything from playfulness to danger. Dogs also bark from situations that cause discomfort. Examples are:

- Chained to a fixed point without enough room to move
- Long periods of time alone without any attention
- Kept in a space which is too small
- Provoked (deliberately or unintentionally) by people or roaming dogs
- Lack of exercise
- Lack of socialization
- Sick or injured
- Hunger, thirst, or the wrong diet
- Stress
- Separated from their pack (you) or other family members



Barking excessively should not be part of a dog's life. **Barking** can be the signal of a distressed animal and chronic excessive barking is considered a nuisance. **Barking** continually may be interpreted as a sign of a poorly cared for and/or trained dog. **Barking** excessively may also be viewed as cruelty by some people.

Changing Barking Behaviors

Making situational changes, and investing a little time and training can eliminate most excessive barking. Examples are:

1. Provide enough space for your dog to move freely within your enclosed backyard.
2. Exercise your dog regularly and adequately for its breed and size.
3. Take your dog to a dog trainer, who specializes in barking dog problems, and/or go to obedience training and spend some time bonding.
4. Purchase a bark collar. There are different variations, so do some research and talk to the retailer who sells them.
5. Purchase a "Scarecrow Motion Activated Sprinkler". Retailers sell a few variations that work with a garden hose. When your dog gets near the "stimulation" that triggers his barking (e.g., fence line), the motion detector is activated and the dog is shot with a burst of water.
6. Hire a dog walker or take your dog to doggie daycare. This will give them regular exercise and socialization, which will help with any anxiety.
7. Make them part of the pack. Dogs are pack animals and when they are left outside all the time, they feel alienated from the pack and become vocal. They want and need your affection. Both you and your dog will benefit from time together.

Your Dog and The Law

Marion County Ordinance 1236 section 5 states the keeper of the dog commits a civil infraction if the keeper's dog(s) commits any of the following acts:

- Runs at large.
- Disturbs a person by prolonged or frequent noise.
- Scatters garbage.
- Trespasses on private property of others.
- Damages or destroys property of others.
- Chase vehicles on roadway.
- Female in heat at large.

Marion County Ordinance 1236 section 5 describes a disturbing dog noise as barking, whining, howling or similar sounds. If a dog(s) barks, whines, howls or makes similar sounds for more than fifteen minutes on at least three different days within a ten-day period or for more than five minutes during at least three different nights between 10:00pm and 7:00am within a ten-day period this is a violation of this ordinance. The fine for violating this law is \$250. There are many noise nuisance issues and dogs barking is just one kind. Marion County encourages neighbors to communicate with dog owners to resolve barking issues. Marion County offers **mediation assistance** to aid neighbors with solutions to dog barking issues, including Neighbor-2-Neighbor mediation. Their contact information is: 503-585-0651 or 503-375-6269, or via email at n2nmediation@gmail.com.



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