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### WHY DOGS BARK

In order to figure out how to get your dog to stop barking, we have to first find out why it's barking. Once we understand the reason, we can begin to address the behavior.

**Warning/Alert:** It is natural for a dog to bark when someone is at the door or when strangers pass the house or car. Many will bark if they sense some type of threat, proclaiming "I'm here protecting this place so don't mess with me." The sound of this bark is usually sharp, loud and authoritative. Honing this instinct with training can help protect your home and family.

**Anxiety:** Anxious barking often seems to be an act of self-soothing for many dogs. It is often high-pitched and sometimes accompanied by whining. This type of barking is common for dogs with separation anxiety.

**Playfulness/Excitement:** This type of barking is especially common in puppies and young dogs. Many dogs will bark while playing with people or other dogs. Even the sound of the bark tends to sound upbeat and possibly musical. Some dogs will bark excitedly when they know they are about to go for a walk or car ride.

**Attention Seeking:** When you hear this bark, you will usually know just what it means. This bark says "Hey! Hey! Look! Here I am!" Other dogs may whine and bark together to get attention, almost like the tone of a whining child.

**Boredom/Frustration:** The bark of a bored dog sounds like a dog that barks just to hear her own voice. Though it tends to be annoying, it is also kind of sad. Bored dogs often bark to release excess energy, and sometimes bark out of loneliness. They usually need an activity and perhaps even a companion.

### HOW TO STOP THE BARKING

- 🐾 Exercise! A tired dog is a good dog. Ensure that your dog is getting plenty of exercise.
- 🐾 Spend time with your dog (playing walking, grooming, brushing, training, etc.) so he doesn't feel the need to "demand" your attention.
- 🐾 Make sure your dog understands who the leader is by working on leadership exercises or following the "Say Please" protocol by making your dog earn everything he gets.
- 🐾 Give your dog a command that means "leave that alone" (i.e. "LEAVE IT")
- 🐾 Desensitize your dog to things that trigger barking. If he views people as "intruders", ask someone to walk by your home and reward for quiet behavior while he obeys a command.
- 🐾 Teach a "quiet" command. When the dog barks at something, allow 2-3 barks then interrupt him with a loud noise and say "Quiet" (or "Enough" or "Hush"). Quickly reward him while he is still quiet.