

How to stop a Barking Buddy

BARK! BARK! BARK!

Someone is walking past the house, Rowf the Dog is barking and it doesn't look like Rowf intends to stop anytime soon.

The owner starts yelling:

"Shut Up! Shut Up! Stop Barking You Furry Freak!"

WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!

Rowf is barking even more ferociously now. Why not?, as far as Rowf can tell, his owner is barking his head off as well. After all it's effective, the person walking past the house kept on going, Rowf and his owners barking must have seen him off..

How do we stop Rowf from barking?

First try and find out why Rowf is barking...

This should be the first thing to attain, you might be able to:

- Remove the source of the barking.
 - Keep Rowf confined to areas where he can't see or hear the problem. Rowf is barking because he wants to get out of where you have confined him.
 - The last thing to do is to let him out because he's barking, calm Rowf first, wait until he's quiet for a few minutes, then let him out, otherwise you have just reinforced his bad behaviour.
 - Leave things to occupy him, favorite toy, etc. Rotate the toys for change. Rowf is barking because we left him home alone.
 - Train Rowf to not bark. You need to put in a fair bit of time and effort here, put him in a room with something to amuse him, toy, etc and when Rowf starts barking, come in and tell him something like "No!", or "Stop!", point an accusing finger at him, use your best withering glare, but mainly reinforce a word that gives Rowf the idea you want him to stop barking. Praise him when he does. Give poor old Rowf a chance to understand what you are on about, it may take a while to see an improvement.
- Leave a radio on for company when you leave home. Rowf barks at everyone, everything, anytime, anywhere.
- Search for causes of rowf's barking anxiety. Does he get enough exercise? Is he bored? Hungry? Wants more attention? Give him more attention, but only when you say so. There might be a few reasons, try to solve as many as you can, it can only improve things.
- When solving the problem, identify the cause and take the appropriate action
- Don't hit/frighten/kick/scream/foam at the mouth at Rowf because he's hungry or bored.

Dogs bark, some more than others, some breeds more than others, but usually for a reason. A satisfied Barking Buddy is more likely to respond to your entreaties for peace!

Consult your Vet if you think you need to take further action. Don't do anything you are not completely sure about, and take everything easy, dogs respond to kindness better than to threats and violence same as you!