

# A SOUND & BEGINNING

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## How do I get my dog to stop barking at other dogs while we're out walking? Don't Correct. Re-Direct!

We use a training protocol called the “**Substitution Routine**” when the dog is engaging in any undesirable behavior, to prevent and/or eliminate that behavior. This is written for **BARKING** but it is the same training whether it's for barking, jumping up, or anything you don't want your dog to continue doing.

NOTE: We use the words “**react or reacting**” as a general term to mean the same thing as barking, or jumping up, etc.

When a dog “**reacts**” it is usually in response to a specific environmental “**trigger**”, which could be the sight of an oncoming dog, a doorbell ringing, or the UPS delivery truck!

Whatever the dog perceives as scary, threatening, uncomfortable, or overly stimulating is the “**trigger**”.

A man wearing a baseball cap, a woman with an umbrella, a child screaming and running, or guests coming for a visit can all be “**triggers**”.

**Barking** (which is the undesirable behavior) is the **reaction** the dog does in response to the **trigger**.

### What is the Substitution Routine?

It is a string of obedience behaviors you choose that can be done one after the other.

- The routine can consist of as little as 1 or as many as 5.
- They must be ones your dog can do reliably.
- Sit, down, watch me, touch, shake, are some examples.
- The important thing is that the dog can **EASILY** do them **WITHOUT** failing.

The string of behaviors you choose will be your **substitution routine**.

Example: ask dog for a SIT = C/T (**click and treat\***)

ask for a WATCH ME = C/T

TOUCH = C/T

*\*Please refer to the section: “**Four Easy Steps to Clicker Training**”*

Training the **substitution routine**:

- You will reward **EVERY** time and for **EVERY** behavior that you have asked for.
- Repeating in any combination builds a positive association for this new routine.
- Practice 3-5 times a day for 3-5 minutes.
- Practice when your dog is in a relaxed but attentive and focused state.
- Practice at calm times so that whenever your dog reacts he will be able to turn off the **reaction** and go into the **action** of the **substitution routine**.

## How to use the “Substitution Routine”

The **routine** is done so the dog can learn to **substitute** a different behavior other than the **barking**. You will need to remove your dog from the **trigger** before he has a chance to **react** but if need be you will remove your dog during the time he is **reacting** by redirecting.

- If your dog is reacting while out walking and you know he is too far into the **zone** (meaning he is beyond being able to cope or even respond to your voice), just turn away in the opposite direction, and walk calmly but firmly while saying nothing. Your dog will probably still be barking, but he eventually will move closer to you and as soon as you feel the leash slack and the barking stops even momentarily, click and treat and begin the **substitution routine**.
- If your dog is reacting in the home, try calling your dog to you and if he comes, praise, reward, and move him away quickly while using your happy voice. Most dogs are too distracted to comply but this will work if your dog isn't in the zone.
- In the home: If you know that he is usually too excited to comply, keep a leash attached that is light enough to drag. If he doesn't come when you call, pick it up without saying anything and walk him away to do the routine.
- Do NOT leave your dog on a leash unsupervised. Remove it when done training.
- Do NOT do a tug-of-war with the leash. Just hold it securely at your hips while you turn in the opposite direction allowing your dog to follow so you can work the **routine**.
- Ideally increasing distance BEFORE your dog starts reacting is better than removing him afterwards. Preventing the barking is always better because your dog does not have a chance to practice getting better at it.
- Pay attention to your dog's comfort level. If you see your dog getting stressed or nervous, that is the time to increase distance and do the **routine**. This gets rid of the buildup of pressure or tension so he doesn't feel the need to react.

### Applying the routine once you have redirected your dog:

Ask your dog to do the **substitution routine**, repeating the string of behaviors in no specific order, quickly and in rapid succession.

Example: Begin by asking for a SIT – then C/T (**click and treat\***)

Then immediately ask for a WATCH ME - C/T

Ask for another SIT - C/T

TOUCH - C/T

Continue the **routine** for **ONE-TWO FULL MINUTES**.

After the “**trigger**” is gone, or when your dog is focused on you, say something like “all done”, or “free”, to indicate the end of the session.

Then **try again** \* by continuing on with your walk.

If your dog starts barking again, redirect and do the routine.

Repeat the **routine** as many times as necessary so your dog learns that reacting doesn't get him what he wants. Only calm behavior and focus on you will earn him the ability to move forward on the walk. You are training him to associate the new **routine** as the choice you want your dog to pick rather than what he is choosing now.

BE PRO-ACTIVE: Whenever possible it is always best to prevent the barking by allowing your dog more space and to do the routine BEFORE he barks. If he doesn't respond to the first behavior you ask for then you are TOO close to the trigger. If you move farther away from the trigger and he listens but will NOT take a treat -- you are still TOO CLOSE.

In the early stages of training, you will probably need to have your dog quite a distance away so he can focus on what you are asking for. Over time you can gradually move closer and closer to the trigger when your dog is more comfortable and more interested in you than anything else.

With practice you will be able to tell when your dog is not as concerned about the trigger and begins to look to you for the opportunity to do the **routine**. Remember the first treat does not appear until your dog has completed the first behavior you asked for. Then the treats can remain in your hands. Once you have completed the **routine** the treats are put away until needed.

Take time to learn this together. It works!

#### **Summing it up:**

1. Increase distance
2. Do the Substitution Routine
3. Decrease distance slowly and in small increments
4. Repeat as many times as necessary

***Please note:** For some behaviors you may not want to allow your dog to **try again**: If your dog is jumping on grandma it wouldn't be safe to allow him to go back and try again. In those situations, after you have done the "routine", bring your dog to his safe place and give him a special chew toy or bone to keep him busy.*

*By following this program, you are training your dog to have a better behavior.*

*If it is an aggression problem such as between two dogs in the home environment, you still allow the dog to try again but attach a leash or work in a secured area such as behind a gated doorway.*

*Do not pull on the leash when the dog moves forward.*

*The leash needs to be kept loose but not long enough to reach the trigger.*

*This keeps everything safe while allowing your dog the opportunity to learn.*

*If you always just remove the dog, he does not have the ability to learn a more appropriate response. Allowing your dog to practice the new routine is the way he learns to stop practicing the undesirable behavior and begin to offer a more appropriate response.*

**Click and Treat:** We use the sound of a *clicker* or the word *yes* to let the dog know that at that very moment in time, what they just did is going to earn them a reward. Since dogs are more likely to repeat behaviors that are rewarding, this is the foundation for training.

**Four Easy Steps to Clicker Training!**  
***A Positively Easy way to Obedience Train your Dog***

- 1. CAPTURE**
- 2. MARK**
- 3. REWARD / PRAISE**
- 4. RELEASE**

**CAPTURE -**

Lure or cue your dog to do a behavior such as **SIT**.  
Once your dog arrives in that position you would

**MARK -**

Click as soon as your dog's hind end touches the floor.  
(the word YES can be used in place of the Click)

**REWARD / PRAISE**

Now that you've "Marked" the behavior you want,  
In this case, your dog has arrived in the **SIT** position.  
You would now give your dog a treat and lots of praise.  
Then you quickly

**RELEASE**

By saying your release cue, which could be "All Done" or "Okay" or "Free"

The Click marked the moment in time when your dog earned their reward.  
You are trying to get your dog to stay there until you release, but until that happens, it is proper to always reward once you have marked any behavior. Even if it's accidental!!

CLICK = TREAT

YES = TREAT

ALWAYS!!!!

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For more information or to contact a behavioral trainer:

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