



My Puppy Is Barking When Confined What Should I Do?

Background

Puppies are biologically programmed to vocalize when separated from their dams. When they come to live with you, they learn that you are a source of food, comfort and other good things. It is natural, therefore, that they vocalize when physically separated from you.

Why we recommend confinement training rather than forcing puppies to “cry it out.”

Some trainers and training manuals recommend letting the puppy “cry it out.” This means letting the puppy vocalize for extended periods of time until they learn that it is pointless – no one is coming to provide relief. While many pups tire out or fall asleep, there is a risk of creating separation distress.

At The Cultured Canine, we’ve seen too many adult dogs experiencing trouble with confinement and separation to feel comfortable recommending the “cry it out” option. Instead, we prefer to prevent distress vocalization by exposing the puppy to confinement gradually and, only when they are *completely* comfortable when confined, leaving them on their own for gradually increasing periods of time. Is it a lot of work? Yes. Is it worth it? We think so.

This process usually takes only a few days when training puppies who are not pre-disposed to be anxious when confined and/or left alone and who have not *already* been left confined alone for periods longer than they can easily tolerate. For those pups, the process will take a bit longer.

Frequently Asked Questions

I work full time. How can I do this training?

- Take a vacation or at least a long weekend. Devote this time to training.
- Enlist the help of friends, neighbors and pet sitters. Teach them how to do the exercises.
- Board your puppy with us. Home alone training is a long term investment!

I was doing the exercises but the puppy began barking and whining. What now?

- You misjudged how long you could leave the puppy alone, out of your sight or how far away you can be.
- Wait until the puppy quiets for 10 seconds. Then let the puppy out of confinement with a minimum of fuss. Leave any special toys inside the confinement area. Pup can come out but toys stay in!
- Note what you think went wrong and try again, taking your notes into account.

How do I know if my puppy needs something and that’s why she’s barking?

- Do the exercises only when your puppy has eliminated, is not overly hungry and is well exercised.
- Always provide safe, interactive chew toys such as Kongs or Busy Buddy Twist n Treat.
- Always provide safe, comfy bedding to help your puppy relax during confinement.