

Growling Behavior

Perhaps your dog growls at unfamiliar people, children, or other dogs. Maybe he growls at you when you try to clip his nails, take his food away, or even pet him while he's resting. No one likes it when a dog growls, especially if it's accompanied by the dog baring teeth, but should you punish your dog for growling to make him stop? The answer is *absolutely not*. Growling is a communication signal, and your dog's way of telling you that something is making him uncomfortable. The only thing your dog will learn from being punished for growling is not to growl. The next time he's put in a situation that has made him uncomfortable in the past, he may not growl but will still be uncomfortable. This will lead you to believe that everything is okay when it's really not. The outcome is a dog that simply does not growl before he attacks because you've put a stop to his warning signal.

Again growling is your dog's way of warning you about something that is making him uncomfortable. Growling can lead to very aggressive behavior such as biting, so here's what you should do:

1. First, identify all situations in which your dog growls.
2. Do not put your dog in those situations.
3. Do not search the internet for advice.
4. Contact a professional, such as a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist (CAAB or ACAAB), a board certified veterinary behaviorist (DACVB), or a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT) for help.

Do not try to fix any aggressive behavior on your own. Ultimately someone will get hurt.

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