

The Barking Brief

Getting a Grip on Barking



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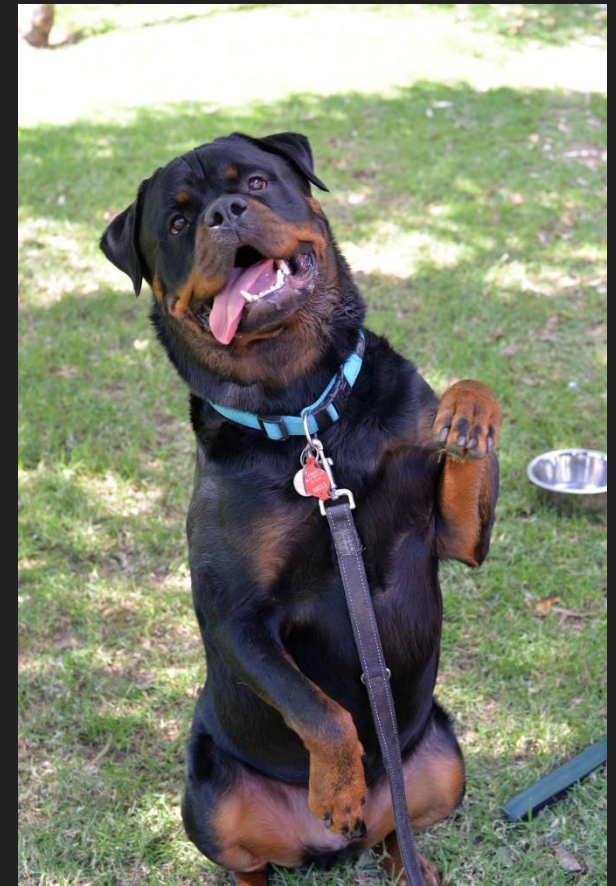
BSc (Animal Behaviour) (Hons); PCT-A; Cert IV (Training & Assessment)

Companion Animal Behaviour Consultant

Who am I?



- PhD Candidate
- Pet manners classes, Puppy pre schools & In home consultations
- Beach Education & Animal Management Officer – City of Charles Sturt Council
 - Very different to what I was used to!



'Gus'

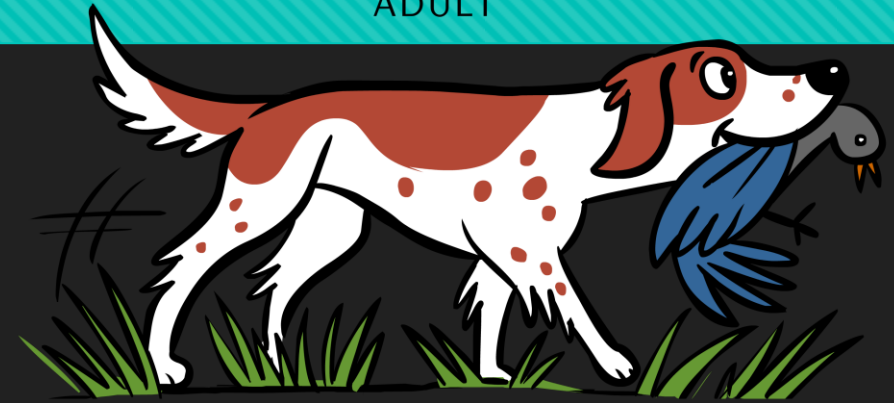
Why do dogs bark?



- Genetics: Dogs are bred for purpose
- Environment: What's going on?
- Previous Learning: Are they being rewarded?

- Is barking a 'bad' behaviour?

ADULT



PUPPY



Is all Barking Equal?



○ Types of Barking:

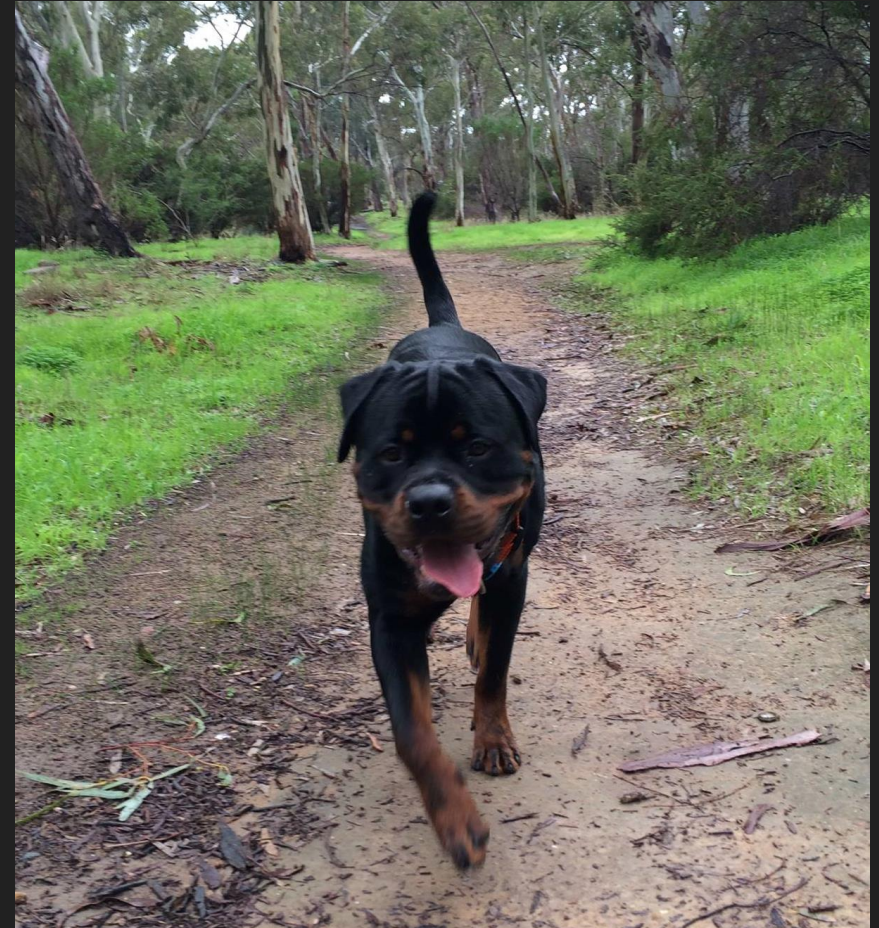
- On Patrol
- Boredom
- Attention seeking
- Senile
- Anxiety
- Play



What can be done?



- Increase exercise
- Increase mental enrichment
 - food dispensing toys
- Increase management strategies



What can be done?



○ Increase exercise

- Longer walks every day to help tire the dog out

○ Increase mental enrichment (food dispensing toys)

○ Increase management strategies



A tired dog is a good dog



- But is it?
- What happens when you increase exercise?



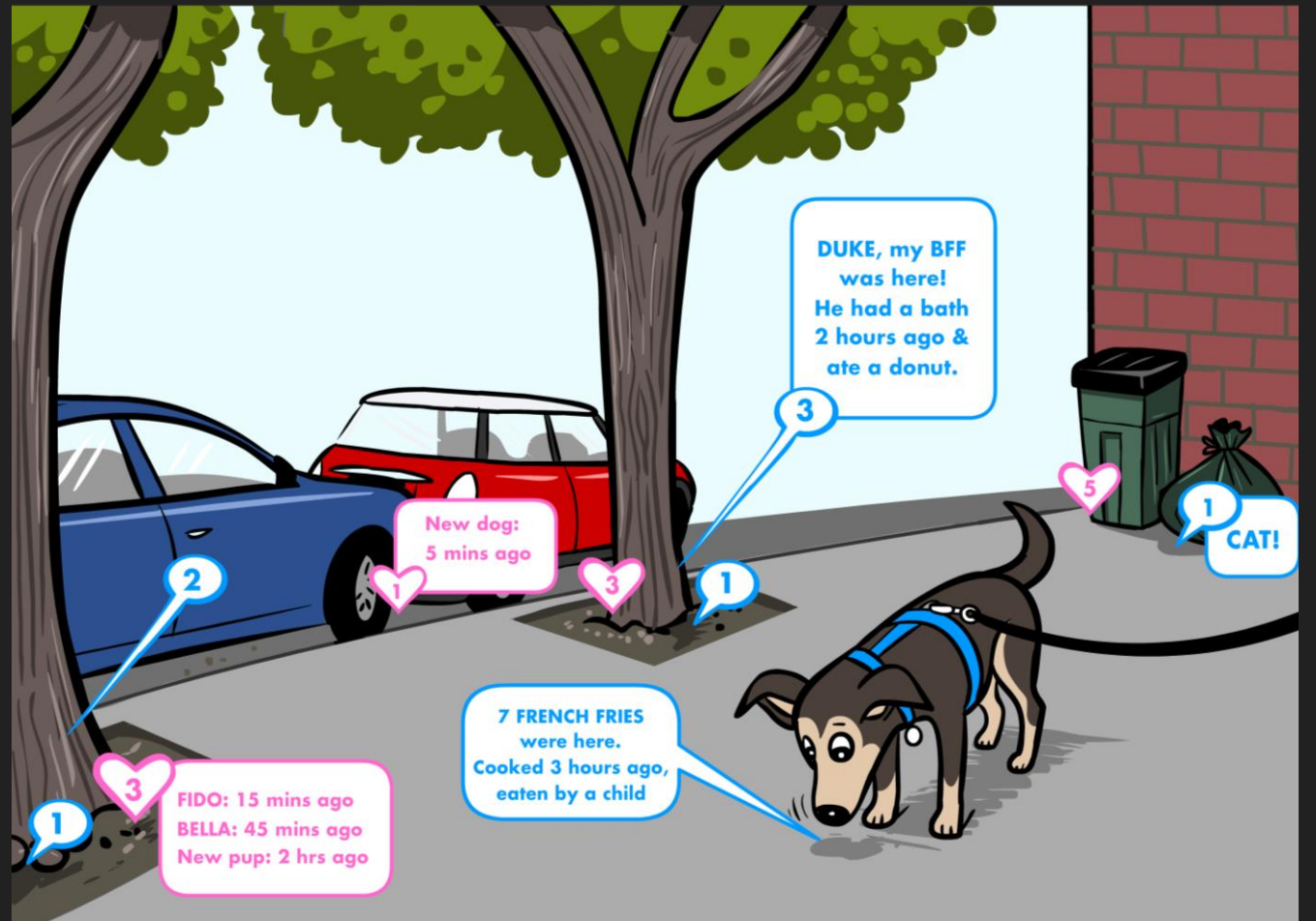
Is all exercise equal?



- Walks on lead
- Walks off lead
- Play with dogs
- Fetch
- Sniffari

Can you change it up?

Do you have to leave the house?



Play at home?



Suggest realistic changes

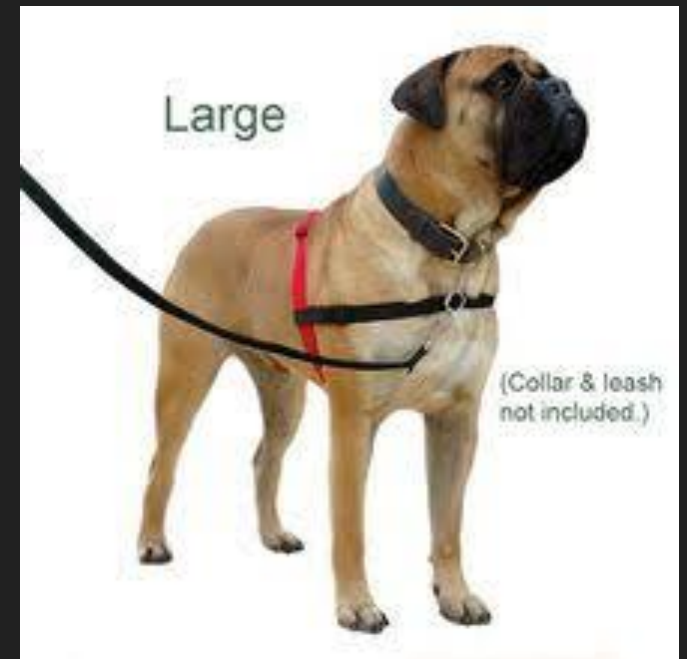


○ Try to make recommendations that the owner can achieve

- Varied types of exercise
- 2 walks are better than 1
- Better walking equipment?
 - RSPCA SA: Lead By Example

<http://www.rspcasa.org.au/the-issues/lead-by-example/>

○ Work with them and you'll get cooperation



<https://www.petexpertise.com/dog-training-article-choosing-a-no-pull-device-from-pet-expertise/>

What about the quick fix?



- Citronella, ultrasonic, vibration and electric shock collars
- Hushers

- May stop barking, but don't provide an alternative
- Habituation to the device (Wells, 2001)
- Other problem behaviours arise
- Punishment methods are a welfare concern

(Beerda et al, 1997; Schilder & van der Borg, 2003; Ziv, 2017)

- Not endorsed by RSPCA SA



Great resources for pet owners



○ Enrichment Toys: Pets Need a Life Too!

- <http://www.petsneedalifetoo.com/products/index.php>

○ Trainers: Force Free Trainers List

- <http://www.rspcasa.org.au/force-free-dog-trainers/>

○ Handouts: ‘What’s the Barking Deal?’

- <http://mcp.charlessturt.sa.gov.au/emags/AMK/barking/index.html>



Thank you!



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