

**Below are comments by a variety of dog owners – some pet owners and others dog show people and professional handlers. Some of these people are AKC Dog Show Judges. These comments were collected by request on internet lists – asking for pro and con comments regarding the bark-softening of dogs. These comments were collected during the first ten days of February, 2009**

**Dana Johnson**

**[danjodobies@snowcrest.net](mailto:danjodobies@snowcrest.net)**

**The first few are people who are more than willing to be contacted for further information:**

I had my 2 bitches debarked after I moved to Vegas. Before that I had a number of dogs but lived in the country and they could bark whenever they wanted with no one to complain. When moving here to a development with homes on each side and a walkway behind us, I didn't want to be bothered with Animal Control if someone made a complaint. When I was home there was no problem but traveling most weekends and having a dog sitter come in 3-4 times a day (she lived 3 houses down from me) the dogs could come and go in and out with a doggie door.

The debarking didn't remove the vocal cords entirely. They could bark, whine or make any noise they would do normally except it was many times more quietly than if they hadn't been debarked.

I'd never had it done before and talked to my Vet at length about the procedure. Once I was relieve it was a minor operation and they could come home immediately and they could eat right away, I did it. I haven't been dissatisfied. Yes, they got louder as they got older but still is not a bark you could hear 2 houses away or maybe even one house. It's enough for me to hear them anywhere in the house if someone comes to the door or someone is outside like they normally would.

Would I do it again? YES. Do I think it is cruel? NO

When you consider the amount of dogs that are turned in to A/C for neighbors making complaints about barking, it is a good alternative I feel. I would never do bark collars or any electric gadget to stop them. To me that is cruel. Possibly the stuff they is sprayed in their face might work but I still would not like to do it to my dogs. Training works when you are there with them 24/7 but most people work or are not home at all times. Some owners are just plain lazy and inconsiderate of their neighbors and that's where the problem lies.

JuD

Judy Doniere, AKC Judges (now deceased)  
[toledobes@cox.net](mailto:toledobes@cox.net)

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I am an AKC judge and keep small numbers of dogs for my breeding programs. I raise German and Australian Shepherds and usually keep four to six personal dogs and raise one litter every two to three years [when I'm ready for another dog]. Professionally, I spent 19 years working for DeKalb County Police Department/Animal Services and Enforcement Division in Atlanta - the largest AC facility in the South East. We served over 600,000 residents in an urban area. Barking dog complaints were a major source of complaints.

Personally, I have had five dogs debarked - a female Aussie and her four offspring. Barking tends to run in lines and all five were NUSIANCE barkers sounding off outside at birds, bugs, or just for the pure joy of making noise. When inside they barked at the TV, radio, cat, each other and ME! All did it from a very early age [five weeks] and all were debarked at six months of age - the earliest I could have it done. My neighbors never complained but when the barking bothered me they had to be annoyed with one to five dogs running

and barking their heads off next door!!! None of the dogs were in situations commonly conducive to boredom barking - they were active in training when I was home - all have advanced titles, inside dogs, not excessively crated or any of the other reasons commonly quoted by the animal rights folks [remember I was an AC officer]. They simply barked to make noise. The surgery was done by one vet at different times and all five, while no longer able to produce explosive noise, could still be heard due to the explosive expulsion of air created by the bark action. Recouperation time was less than 24 hours [as surgery was not invasive and completed through the mouth]. All were running and playing the day after the surgery just like kids with tonsils out.

As an AC officer and supervisor, I frequently recommended debarking when behavior modification, environment enrichment and collars (both shock and mist) failed to work. I even recommended veterinarians in our area that would do the procedure. If debarking becomes illegal, many dogs will be surrendered to animal controls when all else fails. Instead of a simple surgical procedure barking would become a death sentence for many dogs. Using debarking as a last resort keeps dogs in their homes, the owners happy, and stops neighborhood complaints - all are win/win situations for the officers who enforce noise ordinances.

As a police department employee I understand the concerns of police officers who face aggressive debarked dogs. The same scenario is always offered by the animal rights groups when they speak for debarking - the drug dealer and his vicious pitbulls debarked so officers don't know they are on the property. However, in our County, encompassing the largest police force in Georgia, Sherriff's Department, and Marshall's Divisions as well as non sworn officers in Code Enforcement and Animal Services, we had VERY few incidents. In fact, for every 'drug dealer with a debarked dog', there are thousands of friendly pets who BARK incessantly resulting in the vast majority of complaints coming from neighbors who just want to live in peace and quiet when at home!

In my grandfathers time they had a saying - "Good fences make good neighbors!" In today's urban environment with residential neighborhoods the norm, "Quiet dogs make good neighbors!"

Suzanne Kinman  
[tsaligsds@comcast.net](mailto:tsaligsds@comcast.net)

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I have had Shelties that are de-barked, and some due to their less talkative nature who are not. My oldest all of my de-barked Shelties have lived to ripe old ages of at least 14. None of them ever stopped barking, they just didn't create a public problem as the volume was turned down on them.

All of my dogs who had this procedure did so when they were less than one year old. A couple had it done at the same time that they were spayed or neutered.

I choose to use a reputable veterianian who gives the dog a short acting anesthetic and uses a quick, bloodless, laser to make a notch in the vocal cord. The procedure takes just minutes and the dogs are up and trying out their new voices right away. The hardest part of the procedure is to try and keep them quite while the notch heals as their behavior has not been modified one bit. I have never had one miss a meal, or require a second procedure. All these dogs went on to compete in agility, herding, obedience, and were a joy to live and travel with. Strangers often commented on their "cute little bark" and wished their dog sounded like that.

I have used bark collars and an number of other methods to try and train the barking out of them. This was a far more painfull experience to both the dog, and all the humans involved. These methods only worked on the Border Collie and never deterred any shelite I have ever met to "shut up".

I would rather de-bark a dog rather than to put it down, or give it up due to public complaints. I can't believe we can abort babies and kill them but de-barking a dog is a criminal offense. What is up with that.

Pam Fugitt-Hetrick  
[pnetrick@dcds.com](mailto:pnetrick@dcds.com)

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**Hi Dana**

**I received this email from the yahoo group. I own Shelties, of which many have been debarked. Hardly ever is the bark totally silent after the debark and it does come back to some degree.**

Depending on the dog and it's original bark some can sound hoarse, some can sound like a squeaky toy or some can have a bark as loud as it was before the procedure.

I can tell you that the dogs do not suffer either emotionally or physically or else it would not be done. The only one who suffers may be the owner both financially and constantly fighting these laws.

For more information contact me at [domarlewis@aol.com](mailto:domarlewis@aol.com)

Marianne Lewis  
My Lord's Shelties

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To Whom it may concern, I, Anja Heibloem Stroud want to relate my findings on debarking a dog. First off, I swore that I would never debark a dog, that training could cure all dogs. Then I got Pax, bred by myself, she was extremely high drive and aggressive. She could and would BARK, for hours and hours and hours! Didn't matter what it was she would continuously sound off. I tried all the tried and tested methods of training, NOTHING worked. I tried a bark collar, didn't work, I tried two bark collars set on different settings. Didn't matter, she would take the shock and continue barking. I was at wits end, and even considered putting her down, in fact I was willing to strangle her myself. A friend suggested debarking her, I at first said no, but then after listening to her all day long, finally said OK. We had the surgery done one morning, both sides at once. I picked her up later that afternoon, brought her home to have her try barking. Blessed silence, for two long weeks, she couldn't make a sound. It's been several years now and she has regained some of her voice but now it sounds hoarse and the volume is 1/4 of what it was. I will never again put up with barking like that. As far as Pax goes, she can now bark to her hearts content with out me screaming at her to shut up, with out me having to go lock her up, with out me wanting to kill her, beat her or do other bodily harm. Believe me I would do it again in a heartbeat! And she never even quit eating, same day she came home after surgery she had a full meal without a problem! Debarking is a valuable surgery that should be available to anyone with a problem dog. Much safer surgery than spaying or neutering a dog. Feel free to use my name. Anja

Anja Heibloem-Stroud  
[anja\\_heibloem-stroud@msn.com](mailto:anja_heibloem-stroud@msn.com)

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### **Other comments from other dog owners.**

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It is common for Fox Terriers to be debarked. They were bred to be heard underground. But living in the city or even a rural setting, they will be heard far and wide. About half of my dogs are debarked.

**My vet may participate as well. (in efforts to defeat anti-de-barking legislation)**

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The term 'debark' does not describe this surgery. Voice softening would better describe this. When I was at my vets office today, a woman asked the vet where she could get this surgery done. She worked full-time and during the day, the dog was outside. They lived in an upscale subdivision and he could see the ducks in the little pond nearby. The neighborman said it interrupted his dam (sic) and complained to animal control authorities. She was going to have to turn the dog over to the shelter if she could find remedy this. My opinion is that shock collars can be extremely cruel when someone who is not used by a professional trainer. Also someone has to be there to follow-up on the technique. The voice softening surgery is performed by a licensed vet under general anesthesia as an outpatient. The dog goes home and eats a big meal of hard kibble right after. The vocal cords are NOT cut. The larynx is not cut or surgically altered. While I am not a vet, several vets have told me what they do. As near as I understand, most use a cervical biopsy tool [much the same procedure we experience when we have a skin growth removed on our face or elsewhere]. It quiets the bark. You can still hear the dog bark if you are in the house. The dog does not bark more often or feel distressed in any way because it isn't loud. Activists are misguided. If a dog is anxious, it is due to other reasons, such as lack of training, lack of affection, lack of exercise or lack of attention. It is NOT EVER due to lack of ability to project a loud noise. In 20 years, I have never heard of any side effects to any dog who underwent this surgery. If something happens during surgery, then it is due to other factors [vet technique, care, or health of animal, etc] and not due to this procedure.

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**Good morning I am responding to your e-mail because I am the proud owner of 10 de-barked dogs. My breeds are Border Collies and Parson Russell Terriers. I have two of my Border Collies de-barked and the rest are Parson Russells. I have never had any problem with any of them. I show dogs and have a license to do so. I live on a ranch in Trabuco Canyon, CA on a four acre parcel. For**

**my own piece of mind I have had them de-barked. I can sure sleep better at night.**

**I have only had the down the throat type of de-bark. It runs under a \$100.00. If the operation goes through the throat it can cost hundreds of dollars. Every de-bark is different with each dog. Sometimes the vocal cords do grow back. If that happens we just do it again.**

**Which is more cruel to the animal a de-bark or euthanasia? We know the answer.**

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I have only had one dog de-barked and it was at the same time as her spay. Reason: Min-Pin yuppies. Her bark had such a high pitch it actually hurt my ears. She barked the whole time I was in the kennel doing chores. No noted change in temperament or barking style after the procedure. She got to do what she wanted, and I was left with ears unassaulted. I have owned as many as 28 dogs at one time, and have never had the need to have another de-barked. I have purchased dogs that were de-barked before I got them. I could not see any difference in their style of bark except it was much quieter.

I board dogs for a living. I have recommended a de-bark to two of my clients. One a Fox Terrier the other a Bassett Hound. Both excessive barkers, both wearing anti-bark collars that had penetrated the skin causing much pain to the dog. It would not be my first plan of attack on an excessive barker, but to keep neighbors from complaining, to keep my sanity, and to keep the dog happy, I would do it as a last resort before getting rid of the dog. Cheri

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**My Sheltie was Debarked as a breed this is a very friendly up beat but Noisy dog. I didn't mind so much the fact that he barked at everything even leaves blowing by the house it was the peircing pitch at which he did bark. He was Debarked by my vet and never missed a beat he had some voice but the tone was deeper. He lived a very happy and long life till he passed away at almost 14. He was never even sick a day in his life just passed away in his sleep. I opted for the surgery instead of a bark collar because the surgery was a one time painless option and it was not a punishment which I feel the bark collar can be. I would think more dogs will end up in the shelters if this option is taken away from people. More dogs will be euthanized at shelters due to more being turned in because their neighbors complained about barking or the people couldn't handle the problem barking some dogs have. Its not a bad surgery at all.**

**Allison**

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**All of our adults are now debarked. We had one neighbor complain about dogs barking during the day when she was trying to sleep, so we took all of the adults up to Imlay city for debarking.**

**I am a huge fan of debarking for the following reasons:**

**1. The dogs can still be dogs - they can go through the process of barking while playing or "guarding" the property and get the satisfaction that they are barking without disturbing the neighbors. I can truly vouch that our dogs are very happy and content.**

**2. I do not have to constantly be the bark police, shushing the dogs.**

**They can be out playing in the dog yards any time of day or night. I can do my dog chores at 4:30am and 11pm without bothering anyone.**

**3. I had spent almost \$3,000 for no-bark collars, which work for stopping barking, but the dogs cannot perform the joy of barking and the other dogs chew off the collars and destroy the electronics.**

**Response of other people:**

**1. Some people think it is cruel that the dogs can't make the noise of barking. In fact many of the technicians at the Imlay City vet clinic did not approve and none of the other vets at that clinic are willing to perform debarking.**

2. Many people have a misconception that we do the "Amish" debarking method and stick a pole down the dog's throat - ?????. For those that do ask about the debarking, once I explain that it was done surgically under anesthesia and they actually see the dogs "barking" without loud noise, but still happy and playing, they tend to agree that it is not what they thought and that it is okay.

2. Our neighbors really appreciate that our dogs are not making noise, especially during the summer when windows are open.

**Side-effects:**

1. Some of the dogs have regained some of their voice. It is softer and does not carry the force of a loud bark. It does not carry and I actually like the fact that they could still alert me if needed.

2. Our older border collie was debarked at 9 years old and she has some residual odd "winded" type sounds. Also our older dogs (2+ years old at debarking) have kind of a slight gagging sound sometimes when they "woof" rather than a full fledged bark. Our younger dogs (approximately one year or less when debarked) have no residual effects.

I hope this is helpful. I have been very surprised at the resistance by veterinarians to debark. Anyone that visits us can see that our dogs are happy, content and have lots of freedom that they would not have if they were barking. I think that many neighbors of dog owners, particularly in subdivisions and condos, would be big fans of debarking, especially if it resulted in dogs being able to have happy lives doing what comes naturally but not bothering anyone. I would be interested in how much time and money is spent to quiet dogs with collars and/or other devices that squelch their natural joy of barking. In addition how many dogs are turned over to animal control/shelters as a result of barking, when they could actually stay with their family if they were not barking.

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I have a female Dutch shepherd that was de-barked 2 years ago. My other dogs are German shepherds and while they do bark, it is for a reason. This girl barked non-stop. I have a good relationship with my immediate neighbors and all my dogs sleep in the house at night. However, one neighbor behind my property complained about her constant barking during the day while I am at work. I couldn't really blame him as her bark was high pitched and annoying. I tried training, bark collars and even that sonar thing. Nothing worked. I decided to have her de-barked and it was the best thing that happened for all of us. The vet used laser and so far, the bark has not returned. She can bark to her heart's content and not get into trouble. In fact, the constant corrections for barking was shutting down her normal happy self. The recovery was easy and she required no pain meds. She was ready to go back outside and resume normal activity almost immediately. I kept her in for a couple weeks to give adequate healing time to prevent the bark from coming back. She can still whine or make other noises if she is in distress or needs something. I can hear her bark, but others cannot. My neighbor is happy and so is the dog. There were no side effects in either her drive or temperament due to the de-barking. She is my agility dog and a wonderful, happy and fun dog again. Had I not de-barked her, I would have had to give her up or risk noise complaints and possible problems with Animal Control. I fear that eliminating de-barking will cause more dogs to be added to the shelter population and thus more euthanasia of otherwise healthy and wonderful companions. De-barking seems the more humane solution to a problem barker when other options do not work.

Sincerely,

Laura Thomas

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I never understood why people are so against debarking. Some dogs (mostly toys) bark nonstop. Would the people against debarking rather have the dog yelled at it whole life? or hit for barking? or put in a place where it gets no attention and can't be heard, or end up in a shelter (and then killed) because it can't be adopted? The surgery takes less than 30 seconds and dog can still bark it just sounds like a muffled bark.

JMO

Alison

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*I have shelties. This breed is usually quite "talkative". I think debarking is the only answer. It is a simple matter and doesn't seem to bother the dogs at all. They do not act as if it hurts at all. They still bark but the bark is softened and cannot be heard all over the neighborhood. I don't think they even know that they are not still being as effective with their "voice". They are just so much more enjoyed when the bark is softer. A shrill, constant bark is just so irritating to hear. I think it is just SO MUCH better to have the voice "softened" than to constantly have to be telling them to be quiet. I hear people shouting at their dogs to "shut up" but that just does not work. That just makes them all the more excited and loud. I think a shock collar is cruel and would never use that.*

*Since shelties can be bad barkers I am afraid that many dogs (especially shelties) would be given to the dog pound if their owners were not able to have this simple procedure done. I certainly hope I will always be able to have my sheltie voices soft around my home.*

*-- Sheltie lover in Riverside, CA*

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**A few years ago I had one of champion German Shepherd bitches de-barked. Her nickname was the psycho bitch from hell, since she barked so much. I was home all night with her and my husband was home all day. We tried verbal corrections as well as water to no avail. The decision was made that she would either have to go or be de-barked. The vet did the de-bark with a laser procedure. Once it was done he sent her home with pain medication which I used for the first few days even though she didn't seem as if any pain. I wanted to make sure she was comfortable. The vet told us she would need to be crate confined in the house where she could be watched and kept from barking for the first 7-10 to prevent scar tissue from developing. Once this was done Maggie was fine from then on. She continued her barking and none of her behavior changed, we just couldn't hear her so easily. I have no problems whatsoever with de-barking as I think we were all much happier after this procedure was done. She could go about with her same behavior as before, but it wasn't disturbing us so she wasn't in turn being constantly corrected. I would do it again in a heartbeat if needed.**

**Candy Zumwalt**

**Etna, Wyoming**

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I've been a rather small time Sheltie breeder and exhibitor for almost 30 years. Until 1996, I routinely de-barked (bark softened) every dog I kept - I was almost always living in 3 dog neighborhoods with more than 3 dogs. I frequently checked with neighbors about whether or not the dogs bothered them - The answer was always 'we never here them'. Certain breeds such as Shelties, can rarely be trained to not bark especially outside. Shelties were originally bred to protect the croft gardens from birds, rabbits and other small creatures - this necessitated barking so barking is a genetic trait.

The procedure was as follows: The vet would weigh the dog/puppy and administer a light iv sedative. After the dog was asleep, the vet would clasp the tongue and have an assistant hold it out of the way - he would then take a small biopsy tool & would snip a small amount of tissue from each vocal cord. The dog was then placed in a prepared place to be watched until they awoke. I have many times seen Shelties wake up and 20 minutes later start barking abet much quieter. People that say that the dog can no longer bark are completely wrong. The dogs still bark - just not as loud as previously.

I've only had one Sheltie whose bark didn't stay as softened as originally - but the bark was still much quieter than before. It is also my understanding that if the procedure is done via an incision in the throat, the bark is much quieter. I have never had this done as I've always been satisfied with the former method.

I quit having the procedure done as I lived out in a canyon north of LA and didn't have to worry as I was on licensed kennel property.

**Grandma Sue - Texas**

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**I have an Italian Greyhound, who formally lived in Canada and was debarked due to excessive barking. Due to a death in the family the dog was returned to her breeder. I helped find her a new home, but I also babysit this dog. I have never been in favor of debarking. Boy, let me tell you, she can still bark but it is quiet, she also screams and it is quiet. I have tried behavior modification. The former owners were at home with her all of the time. Collars both citrus, and shock made her scream and pee all over. I have a dog grooming business out of my home and am with the dogs all of the time, so the dogs get a Quiet command, water, rattle can, or a tossed toy to distract. Nothing I**

have tried works with this dog, this is a dog that would be dead if it wasn't for the fact that she is debarked. Even listening to her debarked, I for one can tell you, her soft barking is great, because most of her waking hours are spent barking at everything, leaves, birds, grass, noise of any kind, and the best thing of all is because she's quiet the rest of the dogs just ignore her excessive barking. My clients come and go and all is quiet. Except at night, the dogs know the difference between working and non-working hours and will alert me, and quiet upon command. Jacquie, CA  
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*I have 3 dogs that are debarked. I have had several in the past that all lived very long and healthy lives..I get them debarked when I find myself yelling and chasing them..some dogs just are barkers and some, not so much..One that I have right now would not be here if she weren't done..she barks all the time, and now, I don't mind...Mine can all still make noise, but just not to the point of me wanting to scream...they still are barking and still having as much fun doing it. These are Dachshunds..One grew back on a Doberman who was a recreational barker and couldn't be outside for any length of time..even with the grow back, she is a lot quieter and the neighbors don't even hear her now. None of them have ever been depressed..they don't even act like anything's been done..I have had them come right home and get into the dry kibble before I could catch them..didn't faze them a bit..*

*Hope this is what you wanted.*

*Leslie*

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When I was still living at home my parents had a Sheltie named Sarge that they did have de-barked. They had elderly neighbors and they asked my parents to do something about his barking. This dog had obedience classes under his belt already and they finally decided to go with de-barking. As far as I remember (this was many years ago:) ) Sarge was not ever in any pain after the surgery and still managed a fairly loud maybe hoarse sounding bark - although it was only audible when he was around you (ie - if he was outside barking at something, you could not hear it in the house). They neighbors didn't complain about his barking after that and he seemed to have no ill after affects either physically or mentally. They lived in Garland, Texas at the time.

Shannon

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I have had several German shepherds debarked over the years basically because I lived in a very congested neighborhood with not so animal friendly neighbors and I didn't want the noise of one barker to cause me to loose all my dogs. The first one was when they made an incision in the neck and went in that way the other to went down through the mouth and now a days at least near me it is done with laser so it is "bloodless" after each one the dog s came home and ran and barked as much as ever but it was barely heard they all ate the same night with no apparent discomort. I still have one of those 3 left she is 8 yrs old and the bark is still soft and she is as happy and healthy as ever.

Thanks

Kathleen

Brookfield Massachusetts

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I don't know if this helps. I live in a very strict township in Ontario Canada and the kennel behind me breeds Shelties and all her dogs are de-barked. The reason I talked to her about it is I have one Dobe that I give up on I have to get her done. This lady told me when she first got into Shelties she was horrified that every kennel she went to had all their dogs de-barked, she thought surely you can train them . Well a year later she faced the loss of her kennel liecence and had to follow the others. I have a girl that the minute she is outside she starts. I tried every type of correction collar and she beat them all. She is not lonely as I have 8 Dobses. The whole time she is outside this door she barks, she has 30 fenced acres to run and play on but she barks. I'm a freaking dog trainer and I give up. Now is it fair not to let her out to play with the other dogs, is that humane? I work at home so it is not a training problem. I bred her so nobody else caused this, she has only lived with us. If it wasn't for her you would never know I had dogs. So she is booked next month to be spayed and "de-barked."

Sheilah

Garshangan Kennels

perm reg'd

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In response to your request for info on debarking experiences. I've had three of my dogs debarked over the years, always done as a last ditch effort to keep them quiet when bark collars, vinegar sprays, and "quiet" commands no longer worked. I live in Southern California. One of the dogs, and Australian Shepherd, was debarked following her frequent barking at me while at shows because she wanted to get out and show. We tried no, quiet, etc, that didn't work. Tried covering her crate with a towel so she couldn't see me, that didn't work. Tried citronella a bark collar which worked well until it was run out of spay, then failed. Tried an electronic collar, which only made her upset and caused more barking. The debark was performed under anesthesia by a licensed veterinarian, and took a matter of days for her to fully recover. Once she woke from the procedure we took her home to recuperate...to aid in the healing process and help lessen the chance of vocal cord scarring, she was given a light sedative. She now exhibits a whisper in most cases, but can occasionally vocalize more...which would allow her to be heard in case of an emergency. She appears to have had no scar tissue buildup nor any negative affects from the surgery, which occurred 6 months ago.

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We have had Shelties, Corgis and GSD's debarked, over the last 29+ years, we see no problem debarking an animal if bark collars do not work, or if you have a number of dogs. We live way out in the country but have a neighbor that is @ 10acres away and complains if he hears a single dog bark, and of course blames us because we raise/show dogs.... currently, out of 10 dogs we have 9 debarked, we find that it's actually better for the dogs because you are not yelling at them or shocking them with the e collar, over the past 29+ years we have debarked over 30 dogs, and we have had 3 dogs that had to be redebarked. I have assisted in debarking process and it only takes maybe 20 mins, and they are back on their feet and they act as if they have a sore throat for a couple of days, my dogs have always been put on pred and an antibiotic for 10 days, the success of debarking is to keep the dog quite for the 10 days, ie: kept in the home and/or crate and only outside to potty and stretch their legs BUT no barking aloud....

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**I debark and helped defeat a bill in Maine that would have outlawed debarking.**

**Laura**

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I managed to get on WXTK radio the other day with regard to this. As President of Last Hope, Safe Haven Inc, based here in Mass, I find MANY people who have had to give UP their dogs due to barking! If the choice is either debark or give up your dog, then the owner has no choice but to debark the dog. Would everyone rather the owner leave the dog in a shelter to be euthanized? There is even a case of a military wife who is having serious problems with neighbors due to the dogs barking. They are having to sell their HOME! This is not being a irresponsible dog owner....she did EVERYTHING she could to placate the neighbors, but there are some towns with laws that are so strict you couldnt POSSIBLY live up to them even with ONE dog.

I have 4 GSDs. I am constantly harrassed by one of my neighbors whenever they make so much as a woof...Legally I can have 6 here. While I would not myself consider debarking, it has been suggested to me by my friends in dogs. My reason is that I WANT my dogs to be heard when someone attempts to break into my home. With the escalating crime rate, my dogs are my safety net. The law here in Yarmouth states that if a dog can be heard barking INSIDE THE HOUSE within 150 feet of your home, its considered nuisance barking. This is totally unrealistic. I know GSD people who have had their dogs debarked because of noise issues with neighbors. I personally know these dogs...they have suffered NO ill effects whatsoever. I honestly believe they may be happier than having someone have to douse them with a hose or constantly scream at them to "Keep QUIET". This summer I will be forced to purchase citronella collars and HOPE that they work. If not, I may end up resorting to debarking myself.

Dawn

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**My old \*rescue\* dobe is debarked. Technically she was a rescue but I have known her pretty much all her life. She was debarked after my friend tried everything known to quiet her down. Ruffian is obsessed with squirrels. Once she sees one, she will bark for hours regardless if she even knows where the stupid squirrel went. Cathy's neighbor had "allegedly" sprayed something in Ruffian's face-nearly blinding her at one time-and we are sure it was because of the non-stop barking.**

**Ruffians seems none the worse for wear and as she has aged, her "voice" has returned somewhat. Originally she had a whisper/old smoker type sound but now it just sounds like a very hoarse former**

smoker. :) Doesn't matter as we live in the middle of 15 acres.

Ruffian was probably about 3 or so when the procedure was done. It had to be repeated a few months later, she went from horse to normal almost over night. The 2nd procedure was a completely success and she seemed fine after the surgery.

I don't think I would do the surgery given my current circumstances but for many dogs, it is a matter of life and death.

Let me know if I can be of any more help.

**Kim**

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*I have debarked most of my Shelties over the years. The ones that were very yappy got debarked, and the quiet ones did not. I do it to keep my neighbors happy-- I have one cranky neighbor who has complained-- otherwise I wouldn't have it done--barking doesn't usually bother me. I don't think it's cruel, I don't think it causes them a lot of pain, though they certainly don't like the trip to the vet. I've only had one that I feel is upset over having her bark "softened" and overall I don't think most of the dogs are really upset with having a "softened" bark. **Here is a key point, "debarking" is really a misnomer, they still bark only now it's just softened, and quieter.** Lots of Sheltie people call it "bark softening". I think some people assume it's some terrible procedure that prevents the dog from being able to bark. I'll be pleased to answer any questions you may have.*

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**Beagles are debarked on a regular bases. They are hounds and they are very vocal. The dogs don't have a problem with the debarking procedure and yes, sometimes the debarking has to be done again as the "cords" grow back.**

**Most all of the little breeds have people that will debark them. Yorkies (some), Bichons, etc. The little dogs seem to be such yappers and it is either debark the dogs or have the neighbors complain, complain, complain and it is also very hard for the owners to live with a dog (or more than one) that has a high shrill bark and uses it every two minutes.**

**Most of the time an owner will try everything and when all else fails they debark and the owners are much happier with the dog. The dog does not know the difference.**

**Above from a Professional Handler**

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**I saw your request about debarking experience on Cyberdobbies and though I would send a reply. I had a Doberman De-barked once. In the same situation I would do it again. He was from German Working lines and would bark a lot, at anything that moved.**

**He was not left outside very much at all but the neighbors would complain EVERY TIME he barked. (Event though they would leave their dog outside - loose no fence etc, so sometimes he was barking at her on our property, and she barked constantly when they were gone. But they maintained she was not an issue LOL)**

**If I had to leave him in the kennel when we were going to be gone all day I would put a bark collar on him. But he got to the point that he would bark through the collar and started getting sores on his neck.**

**I am lucky in that I live in a county with a very good animal services. I know the director because she likes to involve local dog clubs in fund raisers for the shelter, animal awareness talks, responsible dog ownership talks etc. (Many of her staff are involved in local dog clubs as well - agility, schutzhund, flyball etc)**

**I asked her what she felt about debarking and she told me that she had one of her Corgi's debarked for the same reasons and totally recommended it in this situation. She even gave me the name of the vet who did her De Bark.**

**I will honestly say in that situation it was the best thing I could have done for him. He had virtually no pain, he still had a quite raspy bark, and was perfectly happy to be outside barking at anything**

that moved but not bothering anyone. And he no longer had to be in pain every time he saw a deer, the neighbors dog, a leaf etc.

As an alternative for a dog that barks a lot, it is, in my opinion a much higher quality of life. (Not to mention how many dogs have been surrendered or put down due to nuisance barking)

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I have to say this is the most ridiculous bill yet. I had a "bloodline" of barkers. I had several of them "de-barked". When something occurred, I would hear the "de-barked" dog before I would those that could bark.

Mary

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Those who think debarking is stupid have never lived w/a dog who barks b/c he likes the sound of his own voice.

I have a dog in perm foster care that is like this. if a leaf blows he barks for 15min. When we first got him, he barked for 48h straight. I finally told my husband one of us needs a valium and I dont care which at this point.

no amt of training, bark collars, positive reinforcement has changed him. I've even spoken to him via SEVERAL communicators - he tells them all a similar story - he gets excited and cant stop himself.

I wish I'd done it when I first got him. If I'd known he was unplaceable and was going to stay I certainly would have. Now I cant b/c of his rabies vax status (allergic). Fortunately, my neighbors are semi tolerant and I've only had the police called once but that could change at any time.

IMO its would be MUCH LESS cruel to debark him than to constantly have bark collars on him or yell at him etc.

it should never be a first or even 2nd option but for some dogs/situations, its really the best course of treatment.

B

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hello, i debark all of my dogs. i have fox terriers ( mostly smooths one wire fox) i also have a toy poodle that is debarked. most of my dogs i have had de barked surgically. i had a few done where they used a laser down the throat with no incisions whatsoever. that method does not seem to work as good at the surgical method where they make a small incision on the throat.

i have had many of them get their "bark" back somewhat because of scar tissue growing.

only maybe two of them seem to look miserable for a day after it was done. but i think mostly were real dopey from being put under for the procedure.

most of them were bouncing off the walls when i picked them up. ate and drank just fine. only had one that seemed sore from it and was better after a few days.

i live in a small neighborhood and my dogs enjoy barking their heads off any chance they get. the bark collars were scary to some of them and didnt phase others. they would bark through the shock of the collars. i thought the bark collars seemed cruel and de barking was more humane. it is just a surgery one time and none of my dogs seemed upset that they could not bark. they just act like they can still bark. so they get to go outside and bark at stuff without the neighbors complaining or threatening me.

when my dogs could bark in my old neighborhood i was blamed for every dog in the neighborhood barking since i had multiple dogs. i had notes with threats on them attached to my door several times. if my dogs were out at all barking my neighbors would call the cops. and this was not a nice neighborhood. it was a poor area and the people were kind of red neck types.

i had the cops sitting in front of my house once a week listening for dogs barking because of my crazy neighbors.

the dog catcher would drive by my house at least once a week also.

i do the surgery for my dogs safety and i love them very much. i want them to be able to bark and enjoy the outdoors in thier fenced yards or kennels without fear of someone threatening me.

my dogs are my life. they go to work with me and anywhere else i could possibly take them.

i dont think de barking is cruel. many people who come into our groom shop think it is mean and that i am a horrible person but i dont believe it is any more cruel than cropping ears or docking tails... that is just my

opinion. then there are others who want to know where i got it done so they can do it to their dogs.  
i dont think they should make it illegal. i think if more people de barked their dogs there might be less dogs  
in the shelters because i bet there are quite a few that get abandoned because of noise complaints from  
neighbors, ect.  
thanks  
jaime  
near dayton, ohio

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## **Dis-satisfied:**

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**I have a dog who was de-barked. I tried a lot of things before doing this procedure - including but not limited to bark collar (both shock & citrinella). I timed this dog recently & the longest quiet time was 5 minutes! She is 18 months old so you know I have tried to resolve w/o de-bark. I have other dogs - they were not barking w/her - and I could find no reason for her barking. She gets plenty of exercise/attention, etc. I finally decided to de-bark her rather than "kill her" (joking) because I could not stand the noise - felt my neighbors should not have to listen to her either. I have owned multiple dogs for approx 30 years & this is my first de-bark!**

**I was present when the procedure was done & was surprised at how quickly it was done & how little bleeding. She was awake quickly after the procedure and ready to go home. She was fine at home & wanted to go out to play (or bark) the same day. I kept her in the house for two days since we did not want her to bark the first 24 hours - 36 hours.**

**I let her outside to play on AM day 3 - she began to bark as usual & I realized early on that the de-bark did NOT reduce the volume of her bark - it just changed her bark to a slightly hoarse sound. I am sure my neighbors can hear her just fine as can I! The de-bark did not "grow back" - it did not work. I called the Vet who said this is not unusual - said to do it again. I am not sure that I will do it again. He does not give a discount price for repeat - nor does he say it will "work this time".**

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**A procedure that for a "snip" is expensive & unnecessary. My wife is a Vet Tech & regularly sees \*debarks\*. I've been in for my appointments & heard these debarked dogs. On some, the vocal cords have grown back. Personally, I believe that training to solve the barking issue is a better resolve.**

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