

RESPONSIBLE PET  
OWNERSHIP IN NILLUMBIK



# You and your pet: **DOGS**



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## INTRODUCTION - BENEFITS OF OWNING A PET

**Dogs give us company, affection and unconditional love. They encourage us to exercise, and in fact, many studies have shown that owning a pet can improve your health.**

Health and social benefits of owning a pet includes a reduction in cardiovascular disease, due to increased exercise.

Nilumbik is the perfect place to own a pet with the beautiful open spaces and parks to walk them in.

Psychological benefits include facilitating normal child development and lowering levels of loneliness and depression, and increasing social support and interaction.

This guide has been produced as part of Council's commitment to encouraging responsible pet ownership in Nilumbik and is intended to assist you in caring for your pet and your community.



# RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

The decision to obtain a dog or cat is a decision that could affect your life for up to 15 years or more.

## Obtaining a pet

To assist with this important decision, you can seek advice from:

- Select-a-pet  
[www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au)
- Libraries and pet shops which contain breed books
- Vets – check your local directory
- Dog trainers
- Obedience clubs
- Victorian Canine Association,  
9788 2500  
[www.vca.org.au](http://www.vca.org.au)
- Nillumbik Shire Council,  
9433 3111  
[www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

Contact Council for information on owning pets in rental accommodation.

## Registering your pet with Council

By law, every dog and cat three months of age and over must be registered with Council and renewed each year by 10 April.

Council cannot accept a new registration for a dog or cat that has not been implanted with a microchip and cannot accept a registration for a cat that has not been desexed.

This includes previously registered dogs and cats that move into the Shire of Nillumbik from another municipality.

The importance of identification and registration of your pet cannot be stressed highly enough.

To register your pet, contact Council on 9433 3111 or visit [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

## Permanent identification (microchipping)

To help Council reunite you with your lost pet, identification in the form of a registration tag, name tag, and more recently, a microchip is essential.

Council is proud to offer a discounted microchipping service, which occurs at the Civic Centre in Greensborough.

For further information or to make a booking, contact the Lost Dogs' Home National Pet Register on 1300 734 738.

Keeping your contact details current with the National Pet Register 1300 734 738, Central Animal Records 9706 3187 and Council will ensure a speedy return of your pet.

**Please note: Microchipping does not include Council Registration which is due on 10 April each year.**

## What you get for your registration fees

- A Council identification marker (pet registration tag) for your pet to wear on its collar.
- Lost and found service; a guarantee that if your pet is found wearing the Council identification marker you will be notified.
- Council services to respond to calls about wandering dogs or dog attacks. This includes the removal of aggressive dogs from the streets, so you and your pet can walk safely.
- Council services to deal with nuisance problems. These services manage issues like barking dogs, cat trespass and un-owned animals.
- Council control of 'dangerous', 'menacing' and 'restricted breed' dogs in your area. This ensures they do not pose a threat to community.



- Council monitoring of pet shops, boarding kennels, catteries, pounds, shelters and pet breeding and training businesses. This ensures they meet basic animal welfare standards required by law.
- Victorian Government education program for schools. This program makes visits to all primary schools in Victoria, teaching safety with dogs and how to be a responsible pet owner.
- Victorian Government education program for preschools, teaching children and parents how to avoid dog attacks in the home and public places.
- Victorian Government education program for adults, which promotes responsible ownership and provides advice and information.
- Victorian Government research into dog and cat welfare and control issues. This includes research into preventing dog attacks.

For more information, visit [www.pets.info.vic.gov.au](http://www.pets.info.vic.gov.au).

#### Council also provides:

- activities to encourage dog owners to pick up dog faeces in public places, this includes education, administration of fines and providing bins in parks
- signs for on-leash and off-leash areas and patrols to check that dog owners comply
- education to prevent dog attacks
- education on how to be a responsible pet owner
- the annual Nillumbik Pet Expo.

### Desexing and immunisation

Desexing your pet is extremely important. In females it prevents overbreeding and reduces the risk of breast cancer; and significantly reduces aggressive, dominant, territorial and sexual behaviour in males.

Immunisation protects your pet from contracting and spreading diseases such as Distemper and Parvo-virus in dogs and Feline Aids in cats.

Contact your local vet for a guide to the vaccinations required to keep your pet healthy.

### Confinement of dogs

A large proportion of dog management problems can easily be reduced by confining your dog to your property.

Majority of dog attacks are the result of inadequate confinement and occur within close proximity to the dog's home.

Many people are unaware of their responsibilities where dogs are concerned.

For example, if you agree to look after a dog for a friend and the dog escapes from your property while it is in your care, the law defines you as the owner and therefore responsible for any actions undertaken by the dog.

This means, if the dog attacked another dog or a person, you would be deemed to be the owner, and may be prosecuted for the dog's actions.

If you live on acreage and cannot afford to fence the whole property, fence off a section or build a kennel and run.

### Owning multiple pets

To ensure the welfare of your pets, it is important that they are kept in a healthy environment. It is also important that neighbours are not inconvenienced by pets.

For these reasons, permits are required when there are more than a certain number of dogs or cats kept in a household.

Within the Shire of Nillumbik, you require a permit to keep more than two dogs or two cats on a property.

To apply to keep multiple pets on your property, visit [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) to download an application form or contact Council on 9433 3111.

### Puppy preschool

Puppy preschool is a great way to introduce your puppy to the world. It reduces some forms of aggression in dogs and encourages acceptance of adults, children and other dogs.

Puppy preschool is available through vet clinics and obedience clubs. Local clinics include:

- **Diamond Creek Veterinary Clinic:**  
9438 1183
- **Eltham Veterinary Clinic:**  
9439 8650
- **St Helena Veterinary Clinic:**  
9435 1004





## Training dogs

Many problems with dogs can be overcome with the correct training and advice. Ideally, dogs should be trained in the first 12 months of their lives, although older dogs can still benefit greatly.

Council, in conjunction with WILTJA Dog Obedience Club and the German Shepherd Dog Club, offers a five week free training course to dogs over one year of age.

Owners experiencing behavioural problems with their dogs should contact a trainer for advice.

Different forms of training include group training in a park or one-on-one training at home. Local providers include:

- **AusDog:**  
9870 5105
- **Bark Busters:**  
1800 067 710
- **Diamond Valley Dog Club:**  
9431 1120
- **German Shepherd Dog Club:**  
9457 3590
- **Michael Tucker's  
Dog Training School:**  
9439 7577
- **WILTJA Dog Obedience Club:**  
9308 2466

## Annual Nillumbik Pet Expo

The Annual Nillumbik Pet Expo is a popular pet event held each year.

It is a day for pets and pet owners to enjoy activities, see displays by working dog breeds and a range of different animals to consider as pets.

It takes place at Marngrook Oval, Main Street Diamond Creek (Melway 12 A5) from 10am-4pm.

For further information, visit [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or contact Council on 9433 3111.

## Nillumbik Regional Pound

The Nillumbik Regional Pound for dogs and livestock is located at Council's Operations Centre, 290-304 Yan Yean Road, Plenty. It operates everyday of the year from 8am to 11am.

The Cat Protection Society at 200 Elder Street, Greensborough, takes care of cats impounded in the Shire of Nillumbik.

If you have lost or found a dog or cat, contact Council on 9433 3111 or [nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

Visit Council's website for daily updates on impounded animals, [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

It is always worthwhile visiting the Pound to see if your dog is there, as our description of a dog may vary from yours.

## Enriching your pet's environment

In the home, environmental enrichment can include adding simple things, such as toys and chewing or scratching objects for your pet.

When designing your home or backyard, spare a thought for the pet that may spend day after day there without you.

Speak to animal behaviourists and trainers for suggestions to minimise the possibility of future problems, for example, a bored dog becoming a barking dog.

## Dog faeces management

Retrieval and disposal of dog faeces is important for environmental, health and amenity reasons.

It is an offence under Council's Amendment Local Law (*Amenity Local Law No. 5*) not to carry a receptacle for dog waste while walking your dog.

It's easy to put a shopping bag in your pocket on the way out the door – we all know how unpleasant it is to come across deposits on a walking track!



## Boarding kennels and catteries

Boarding kennels and catteries currently registered with Council as Domestic Animal Businesses include:



- **Cottage Kennels** 9436 1531  
248 Yan Yean Road, Yarrambat
- **Diamond Jewel Cattery** 9436 1521  
24 Ashley Road, Yarrambat
- **Gumnut Kennels/Cattery** 9436 1480  
87-93 Ashley Road, Yarrambat
- **Kimlai Cattery** 9436 1777  
48 Collins Lane, Diamond Creek
- **Kybrooke Kennel/Cattery** 9719 7300  
835 Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road, Panton Hill
- **Pampered Pooch** 9436 1252  
32-34 Ashley Road, Yarrambat
- **Rilten Kennels** 9436 1494  
80-94 Ashley Road, Yarrambat
- **Sparrows in the Treetops** 9436 1307  
72-78 Ashley Road, Yarrambat
- **Welcome Kennel/Cattery** 9436 2240  
605 Yan Yean Road, Yarrambat

## CARING FOR YOUR DOG

Being a responsible pet owner means caring for your dog and understanding your pet's needs.

### Choosing a pet

There are a number of things that must be considered when choosing a dog.

#### Ask yourself:

- What type or breed will you choose?
- What size dog?
- How much time do you have for grooming and training?
- What is your financial position?
- Will it be kept inside, outside or both?
- Why do you want a dog?
- Where you are going to buy it? (Council suggests contacting a reputable Breeder Association for advice).

Remember that a cute pup is going to grow up. Six months down the track your dog could grow to be much larger than expected.

### Desexing

Both male and female dogs can be desexed at three months of age. By desexing your pet you are promoting responsible pet ownership by preventing unwanted litters.

Council provides a discounted registration fee for dogs which have been desexed.

### Feeding

A new puppy will undergo rapid physical change within the first few months of life.

New puppies need a complete balanced diet which includes calcium, phosphorus, vitamins and minerals.

Meat on its own will not give the pup these requirements. Puppies can be fed a good quality dry cat food mixed with a small amount of canned dog food.



As the pup gets older the dry cat food can be phased out and replaced with a quality dry dog food.

Some breeds of large dogs may, however, need a vitamin or mineral supplement. If you are unsure, consult your vet.

## Worming

Puppies require worming every two weeks until they are 16 weeks old. Older dogs should be wormed 2-3 times per year.

## Sick Dogs

It is not hard to tell when your dog is off-colour and feeling sick.

### Check your pet for:

- discharge from the mouth, ears, anus, eyes and vulva
- a cough
- dry coat
- glassy eyes
- lethargic, unusual or aggressive behaviour
- sores, cuts or broken bones.

If your dog shows any of the above symptoms, contact your vet.

## Vaccination

Both pups and adult dogs require vaccination. The following schedule is recommended:

- **6-8 weeks old:**  
Distemper/Hepatitis/Parvovirus
- **12-14 weeks old:**  
Distemper/Hepatitis/Parvovirus
- **16-18 weeks old:**  
Parvovirus
- **Thereafter annually:**  
Distemper/Hepatitis/Parvovirus

## Heartworm

Heartworm is a serious and fatal parasite which is becoming well established in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Puppies can start on a monthly prevention tablet without a blood test, however, dogs over six months require a blood test prior to treatment.



Remember! Treat the dog's environment for fleas. The dog's bedding needs to be washed and treated regularly to stop fleas breeding.

## Registration

By law, all dogs over the age of three months must be registered with Council.

If you have a dog over three months of age and haven't registered it, you risk being fined.

When you register your dog you will receive a tag. It is important that you attach this to your dog's collar as soon as you get it. It is your dog's identification. If your pet becomes lost, the tag makes the task of returning it to you a simple one.

Having your dog microchipped is another way of identifying your dog if it slips its collar. You may also qualify for a reduction in registration fees.

Please note, as of 1 May 2007, Council cannot accept a new registration for a dog or cat that has not been implanted with a microchip. This includes previously registered dogs and cats that move into the Shire of Nillumbik from another municipality,

## Fleas

Fleas are the major cause of skin disorders in dogs. Generally flea collars and powders are not effective.

Two reliable methods of control are to bath your dog regularly in a preparation containing Maldison or Diazinon or alternatively, spray your dog with a preparation containing Cyermethrin.

These preparations are available your vet or a reputable pet store.







## HOW TO FIND A LOST PET

It can be distressing for pet owners and your pet if it goes missing. This is when pet registration and permanent identification is vital as it provides a greater chance for Council to reunite you with your lost pet.

### If your pet is lost:

#### 1. Conduct a thorough search of your property and neighbourhood

- Look outside, under your house, under bushes and in sheds.
- Ask neighbours if they have seen your pet (door knock or letter box drop leaving a contact number).
- Place notices in prominent positions around the local area in milk bars and shops.
- Take long walks through the neighbourhood and call your dog or cat. Search public buildings, reserves, parks, schoolyards, rivers, creeks, building works in the vicinity.

#### 2. Contact Council and other animal welfare organisations

##### Nillumbik Regional Pound

9433 3111  
290 Yan Yean Road, Plenty  
Open 7 days, 8am-11am

- Visit Council's website for daily updates on impounded animals. It is also worthwhile visiting the Pound, as our description of a dog may vary from yours.  
[www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

- If making personal visits to animal shelters (recommended wherever possible) bring a dog or cat carrier, registration papers, vaccination certificates and photos.
- You may need to make repeat visits to these organisations. (See page 17 for a list of these organisations.)

#### 3. Place notices in the newspaper

Place notices in the "Lost and Found" section of local, state, daily and weekly newspapers.

- Enquire with as many organisations as possible no matter how far reaching, in case your pet has been picked up by car and taken to an organisation or animal shelter in another suburb or town.
- If the organisations you call do not currently have your pet, leave a description of it, as well as details of when and where it was lost, and your name and contact number.



## Animal welfare organisations include:



### Neighbouring council pounds

- **Banyule City Council**  
9490 4222  
275 Upper Heidelberg Road,  
Ivanhoe  
Call for an appointment  
[www.banyule.vic.gov.au](http://www.banyule.vic.gov.au)
- **Darebin City Council**  
All dogs picked up by Darebin City  
Council go directly to:  
  
**Lost Dogs' Home**  
9329 2755  
2 Gracie Street, North Melbourne  
Open 10am-5pm daily  
[www.dogshome.com](http://www.dogshome.com)
- **Manningham Pound**  
9840 9376  
Corner Blackburn and Warrandyte  
Roads, Doncaster  
Open Monday to Friday,  
8am-10am and 3pm-5pm  
Saturday and Sunday 9am-12pm  
[www.manningham.vic.gov.au](http://www.manningham.vic.gov.au)
- **Whittlesea Pound**  
9408 7356  
335 O'Herns Road, Epping  
Open Monday-Saturday,  
10am-3.30pm  
Sunday and Public Holidays  
9am-11.30am  
[www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au)

## Local vets

- **Diamond Creek Veterinary Hospital**  
9438 1183
- **Hurstbridge Vet Clinic**  
9718 1515
- **Eltham Vet Clinic**  
(corner Mt Pleasant Road)  
9439 8650
- **Montmorency Veterinary Hospital**  
9435 1833
- **Eltham Central Vet Clinic**  
9439 1111
- **North Warrandyte Vet Clinic**  
9844 0781
- **St Helena**  
9435 1004
- **Greensborough**  
9435 3333

## Other contacts

- **RSPCA**  
East Burwood, 9224 2222
- **Lort Smith Animal Hospital**  
North Melbourne, 9328 3021
- **Australian Animal Protection Society**  
Keysborough, 9798 8044 or  
9798 8415
- **Blue Cross Animal Society**  
Wonga Park, 9722 1265
- **Victorian Animal Aid Trust**  
Kilsyth, 9739 0300
- **Peninsula Animal Aid (RSPCA)**  
Pearcedale, 5978 6811
- **Geelong Animal Welfare Society**  
Moolap, 5248 2091
- **Missing Animals Bureau**  
Ashburton, 9885 3603
- **Missing Pets Line**  
Werribee, 9748 5350
- **VicRoads Road Patrol Depots**  
To obtain the phone number for  
local depots, call 9854 2666



## FIRE AND YOUR PET

When we live in an area prone to bushfires, we must be prepared to do all we can to protect life and property. Much has been written about protection of property and human life but very little has been written about the preparations you can make to help those other, much loved members of your family – your pets.

### Forward Planning

#### Prepare an evacuation box including:

- **Food and water bowls:** ice cream containers or plastic take away food containers are cheap and effective.
- **A small amount of food:** dry food is best for cats and dogs but don't forget food for other pets, for example birds and fish.
- **Medication:** this is critical for dogs on daily heartworm tablets or if your pet requires regular medication.
- **Litter or newspapers:** put this in the bottom of your pet's carry cage, as it may be confined to the cage for a long period.
- **An information list:** your name, address and phone numbers (including a mobile number and the number of a friend or relative who is not in a threatened area) as well as your pet's name, vaccination history, medical information and food requirements and your vet's phone number.

### Identification and planning

Make sure your pets are identified with either a tag or a microchip and are registered with Council. This increases the chance of you and your pet being reunited if you become separated.



### Prepare for travel

Get your animals used to travel from an early age. Make sure both cats and dogs are taken on regular car journeys to ensure they are relaxed in the car, used to being restrained and do not get car sick.

### Vaccination

Make sure your pet's vaccinations are current at all times. If you have to evacuate, your pet may need to be boarded where vaccination is mandatory. At an evacuation centre where animals may be congregating, your pet may be exposed to disease.

### Transportation and confinement

Ensure you have the necessary means to restrain or confine your pet. Remember your pet will be frightened and may panic.

- **Dogs** will need leads and collars, also check chains and harnesses. If your dog is aggressive you may also need a muzzle.
- **Cats, rabbits and guinea pigs** need a secure cage. If this is not available, a pillowcase (tied firmly) or an overnight bag (firmly shut) can be used.
- **Birds, ferrets and mice** need to be moved in their cages or in small boxes with small air holes.
- **Fish** may be transported in a large jar, with a wide neck and a secure lid, filled two thirds with water. Include a plastic straw so you can blow air into the water periodically.



- **Snakes and lizards** may be transported in a container with a tight fitting lid with air holes in the top or a firmly closed pillowcase or overnight bag.
- **Frogs** will need a small covered tub with two centimetres of water in the bottom – remember to put air holes in the top.
- If **horses, sheep and goats** are to be transported, make sure that the float or trailer is in good working condition.

## On days of high fire risk

If you have to go out or go to work on a day of high fire risk, decide whether to take your animals to a safer place before leaving home.

Remember, in case of fire, you may not be allowed back to your home to rescue your animals.

## Evacuation

If you are at home, shut your pets inside the house so that they are on hand if you need to evacuate. Ensure you have means of restraint or confinement ready to use. Check that your evacuation box is ready. (See page 11.)

If you decide to evacuate, make your decision early. Remain calm. Handle your pets firmly but gently and keep reassuring them. Restrain dogs and confine all other animals.

Cover pet carry cages with a woollen blanket or a wet towel and secure all pets in the car. Remember to take your evacuation box.

If fire threatens while you are driving, stay *in the car* with your pets. Cover yourself and your pets with woollen blankets and stay below the level of the windows.

## If your animals must stay

Your options depend on the size and type of property on which the animals are kept, but the following has been suggested by Community Fireguard group members.

### For horses, sheep and goats

- Identify the 'safest' paddock on your property or a nearby property, for example, one with a large dam with clear access to it or a paddock closely grazed with minimal fuel to carry a fire.
- Look at your fencing. If it is electric, what happens if the power goes off or the fence is burnt?
- Consider fencing the 'safe' paddock with steel or concrete posts only, i.e. make it fire proof.
- Consider putting gates on internal property boundaries so stock can be readily moved to other areas without needing to take them on the roads.
- If you are working during the day, consider moving stock into the safe area the night before a Total Fire Ban day.
- If possible, thoroughly water the safe area the night before a Total Fire Ban day.

### For poultry and aviary birds

These animals will be affected by smoke. Make a 'curtain' out of hessian to fit around the cage. Drop the curtain sides to cover the cage and wet down.





## BARKING DOGS

**Excess barking is an annoying problem. But few realise that excess barking *actually hurts the dog.***

Chronic, excessive barking has a harmful effect on the immune system; too much barking for too long can weaken it so that the dog falls victim to infections, stress or pathogens that it would normally shrug off.

### Constant barking can be avoided

By law, a barking dog can be a noise nuisance. The owner can be taken to court if they do nothing to stop the nuisance.

The following suggests some simple things you, as a dog owner can try.

### The importance of training

Training is important so that your dog does not bark at just about anything that moves. A well-trained dog should be able to tell between people allowed into the house and people who are intruders. Start young and start as you mean to go on.

Socialising puppies to a variety of new people, animals, environments, and noises can reduce anxieties as the dog grows up.

Owner control, training, and leadership are also essential. While young, the dog should learn to spend time playing or relaxing by itself so that it's not too distressed when it must be left alone.

Good training combined with affection and companionship should mean that your dog will not develop bad habits.

### Reasons for barking

Whining, barking and howling reflect a dog's emotional state. For example, a dog that is excited or startled may bark to express its agitation.

It is important to bear in mind that your reaction to your dog's barking or whining will directly determine its behaviour in the future.

### Barking to attract attention

Your dog can learn how to behave in ways that attract attention if you reward its behaviour with attention.

If your dog barks when it sees food and you then give it food, the dog will learn to bark for food.

The dog may then learn to bark in a variety of situations, many of them inappropriate, for a reward.

The reward may take many forms, including food, praise or petting. Even in the form of punishment, negative attention is still attention.



Sometimes the best way to deal with attention seeking barking or whining is to simply ignore it.

As difficult as this may be, keep in mind that you encourage barking by giving your dog any attention, positive (reward) or negative (punishment).

### Barking during isolation

A dog that is not accustomed to being alone may become anxious when isolated or separated from a playmate or human companion. This anxiety may be expressed by whining, barking and howling.

The dog may bark or whine only in the first moments following separation, or may continue the entire period of isolation. Behaviour modification may be the viable solution.

Vocalisation (barking) may precede other forms of separation anxiety, such as destructiveness, inappropriate elimination and excessive grooming.





## Some simple things to try

### Teach your dog to 'speak' and 'stop'

Believe it or not, one of the simplest ways to teach a dog not to bark is to teach it to bark on command.

First, find a way of enticing your dog to bark. You may find it will bark out of excitement if you hold its food bowl up in the air, or you may only need to use a titbit, or a toy.

Tying your dog up safely may also increase frustration, and stimulate it to be vocal. When, with a bit of friendly teasing, your dog does bark, praise it and repeat the word 'speak!'

If you do the exercise often enough, your dog will associate the word 'speak' with the act of barking and you will be able to get it to bark on command.

The point of the exercise is to then introduce the word, 'quiet!' or 'stop!' while your dog is barking, and give it a toy or food treat.

If the exercise is repeated often enough, your dog will associate the signal to be quiet with the cessation of barking and a reward.

Reward is, of course, the best motivation of behaviour, so it's important to praise the dog at the time it's doing the right thing, not afterwards.

This means rewarding it when it stops barking, and also when it doesn't bark in a situation which would normally set it off.

When your dog is lying quietly and allowing you to chat to visitors, or when your neighbours come home and your dog doesn't bark, you can praise and reward it, which will encourage your dog to remain quiet the next time too.

### Comfort when alone

Some dogs just don't want you to go out. Get your dog used to the idea that you are away for different periods of time at different times of the day.

That way he might not be so concerned each time you leave. And don't make a fuss of your dog when you leave him.

Try putting your dog on his own in another room – at first for a few minutes, then gradually build up the time you leave your dog alone.

Do not return to your dog until he is quiet for a period. When you return, praise him.

Some dogs will bark because they want to join in what's going on outside. If this is the problem, try leaving your dog so that he cannot see outside.

Some dogs will settle only if they can hear a human voice. Leaving a radio on at low volume might help. But make sure the radio is not too loud.



### If you have to leave your dog for long periods:

- feed and exercise before you go out and leave him some fresh water
- make sure his bed or basket is comfortable and leave him his favourite toys
- check that the room is not hot or too cold and that there is adequate ventilation
- leave a light on if you won't return until after dark.

## Some other points

- If you do keep your dog outside, think carefully about where you put his kennel and where he can run. Try not to put it near your neighbour's fence or where your dog will be tempted to bark.
- Don't blame the dog and think that you will solve everything by replacing him with another. It probably won't unless you change your lifestyle at the same time.
- Getting a second dog for company might help. But think about this carefully. Do you have the space and can you afford a second dog? Another dog could result in more problems, not less.
- Growling is associated with fearful or assertive displays. Whenever growling or barking is successful at achieving the pet's goals, the dog feels rewarded. Subsequently, the growling will likely become more frequent or intense.





- Medical problems can contribute to barking or growling, and senile changes may lead to barking problems in older pets. In some cases where barking becomes intense, repetitive, and difficult to interrupt, it may be deemed compulsive. Pets with medical, geriatric, and compulsive disorders may benefit from drug therapy along with behavioural retraining techniques.

### Stopping the racket

Barking may be desirable if you value a good watchdog, however, it may also escalate to excessive levels.

When your dog is overreacting to the slightest sound or is barking constantly for no apparent reason, try the following:

- **Regular leash walks** – provide a dog with mental and physical stimulation so that it is calmer in general and less likely to bark or be destructive. Walking also gives your dog an opportunity for important social interaction.

- **'Rain on his parade'** – to remind your dog that his barking is not appreciated and that you saying, "no barking" means "stop barking," give him a short blast of water with a squirt bottle. It's best to aim for the body and not the face. When he stops barking, praise him immediately.
- **'Stoke' his chew toy** – your dog will have a hard time barking if his mouth is busy chewing. Chewing is a natural stress release for dogs and occupies time. If you're going out, give your dog his favourite chew toy just before you leave. Certain toys like 'Kong' allow you to add peanut butter or dog biscuits, making them more desirable.

- **A soft drink can with pebbles** – has an effect on both dogs and cats that is the pet equivalent of running fingernails down a blackboard. Put pebbles or small coins in an empty soft drink can and tape the opening shut.

When the barking dog doesn't respond to the command to be quiet, shake the can a couple of times. They often stop what they're doing as they don't like the sound. When they stop barking, praise them immediately.

For more stubborn cases, rolling the can towards him (but not directly at him) will have the same effect. Once again, praise the dog immediately as you get the desired result.

- **Bring them inside** – if your dog sleeps outside and barks in the evening, you may want to bring him indoors. He'll have much less to bark at.
- **Blocking the stimulus with 'white noise'** – if your dog is super sensitive to noises, try blocking some of that noise (desensitising him) so he's not so inspired to bark. 'White noise' may help refocus his attention and calm him to other stimulating noises. Turning on the vacuum cleaner to block the approaching steps of the postie or children walking home from school. Playing your stereo at a normal level may also help.
- **A little citronella** – your dog trainer may recommend a specialised 'no-bark' collar which delivers a squirt of citronella, a high-frequency sound or a light shock whenever your dog barks.

Some collars go off immediately, while others allow the dog to bark a few times before being activated.



Be very selective – your dog training expert can help you choose the right size for your pet.

Some of these collars can be extremely effective, but you really need to work with someone who can help you get a good collar and training. Pet stores and trainers offer these specialised collars.

- **Territorial defence** – is part of a dog's basic nature. Barking and growling serves to alert other pack or family members to danger. If your dog barks because it is startled by a noise outside and you immediately come to see what it is barking at, it will associate barking with the reward of seeing you next time it barks. When a dog barks excessively, this activity must be redirected immediately toward an acceptable alternative.
- **Know when to change strategies** – many time people don't know when to call it quits with a particular approach. They may keep doing one thing for months even though it is not working. If there is no improvement within 3-5 days of using one anti-bark technique, try another.

## Avoid punishment

Punishment is generally ineffective in the control and correction of barking problems.

Excessive punishment can increase anxiety and further aggravate the problem, while insufficient punishment merely rewards the behaviour by providing attention.

For punishment to be effective, barking must be disrupted at the instant it begins using a technique or device that effectively interrupts the barking.

When you are not present as barking begins, the only solution might be to use bark-activated products.

But unless the dog is also trained to be quiet in the presence of the stimulus, devices will only disrupt, not eliminate barking habits.

## Further information

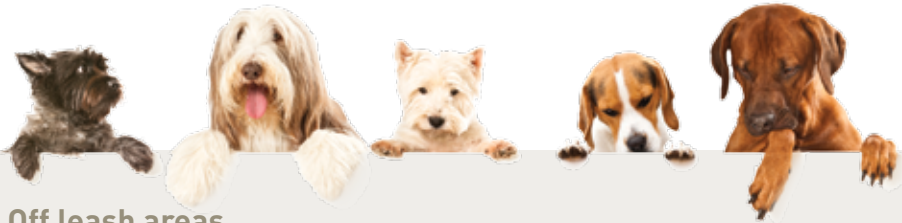
If a complaint lodged with Council continues and simple techniques aren't helping your situation, Council may refer you to an animal behaviourist. Court action is a last resort.

Listed below are local dog trainers who can help:

- |                                               |              |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------|
| • <b>Ausdog</b>                               | 9870 5105    |
| • <b>Bark Busters</b>                         | 1800 067 710 |
| • <b>Michael Tucker's Dog Training School</b> | 9439 7577    |
| • <b>Wiltja Dog Obedience</b>                 | 9308 2466    |



## OFF LEASH PARKS



### Off leash areas

Dogs **are** permitted off-leash but must be under effective control in the following parks and reserves (as designated by signs):

- **Eltham Lower Park**, Eltham (Melway 21H11).
- **Griffith Park**, Eltham (Melway 21 J11).
- **Diamond Hills Reserve**, Greensborough (Melway 11 B8).
- **Eltham East Linear Reserve**, north of Diosma Road, Eltham (Melway 22E4).
- **Wingrove Park**, Eltham (Melway 21 J9).
- **Susan Street**, Eltham (Melway 21 H6).
- **Woodridge Linear Park**, Eltham (Melway 22 B5).
- **Fergusons Paddock**, Hurstbridge (Melway 185 K7). South side of path only.
- **Nillumbik Park**, Diamond Creek (Melway 12 A5).
- **Diamond Creek Reserve**, Diamond Creek (Melway 11 K7)

*Dogs are prohibited from entering all wetland areas where signposted.*

## Under effective control

A dog is deemed to be under the effective control of its owner if:

- it returns to its owner upon command
- the owner retains a clear and unobstructed view of the dog
- it does not bother or worry other people or animals
- it stays within 50 metres of its owner.



## Non-off leash areas

Dogs and cats **are not** permitted to enter the following public places in the following parks and reserves (as designated by signs):

- **Diamond Creek Reserve**, Diamond Creek (Melway 11 K7)  
***Dogs are prohibited from entering wetland areas.***
- **Sweeneys Flats**, Eltham (Melway 22 B10) – Parks Victoria land
- **Professors Hill Reserve**, North Warrandyte (Melway 23 C7)
- **Chase Reserve**, North Warrandyte (Melway 23 D5)
- **Blue Tongue Bend Reserve**, North Warrandyte (Melway 23 J6)
- **Temple Ridge and Bailey Gully Reserve**, Wattle Glen (Melway 185 J11)
- **Gawa Reserve**, Watsons Creek (Melway 272 D5)

## Dog Faeces Management

It is an offence not to carry a receptacle for dog waste while walking your dog. It's easy to put a shopping bag in your pocket on the way out the door – we all know how unpleasant it is to come across deposits on a walking track!





## FURTHER INFORMATION

This booklet has been compiled by Nillumbik Shire Council using information from varied sources. The information is intended to be used as a guide. In the event you require clarification, please contact Council.







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