

# Puppy Love

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## The Way of the Wolf

The wolf is the ancient ancestor of our little doxies. Their genetic link became intertwined about 30,000 years ago when evolution began to separate the species of a potentially domesticated dog from the wild lifestyle of the wolf. Around 17,000 years ago man began using dogs to perform duties that would benefit their daily lives. Barking is considered a normal behavior within the dog world so it is very surprising that wolves rarely bark. In fact, only 2.3% of their vocalizations are barks; the rest are almost entirely howls. It turns out, according to ethologist Csaba Molnar, we are the reason our dogs bark. He determined through his research that dogs have universal barks for specific functions and because humans respond to these vocalizations it reinforces the barking behavior. The back and forth of barking and human interaction were the most beneficial when it involved friendlier wild dogs and well-meaning humans. It was the beginnings of the relationship that is characterized today with the well-known cliché: a dog is man's best friend. However, one exception to Molnar's theory is observed today. The "friendly traits" of juvenile wolves mimic the varied and playful vocalization of a domesticated puppy. The *World Canine Organization* recognizes 340 breeds of dogs ~ and they all bark, however the basenji yodels!



## Dog Talk

Dogs communicate with us and other dogs by barks varied in pitch, pattern and intensity; combined with body language and the situation you can usually understand what your dog is telling you. *K-9 Magazine* conducted research and identified ten types of barks: a deep voice usually means aggression and a high pitch is typically friendly. Most experts agree that both emotions and communication is complex and there's still much they don't understand about dog talk. Surprisingly some dogs still howl. If your little doxie lets out a long drawn out 'hooooooowl', he is simply communicating over long distance like dogs would in the wild. He is not signaling sadness or loneliness, he's just having fun being a dog.



## BLACKIE and his Daring Rescue

World famous, academy award winning actor John Wayne's dachshund, Blackie, became famous overnight when he woke the actor's wife due to a fire in the home. The second floor of the 24 room mansion where Mrs. Wayne and their two year old daughter were sleeping exploded into flames as they escaped. Mrs. Wayne was quoted saying, "We owe our lives to Blackie." The Wayne's home fire took place in 1958. But, everyday dogs are heroes barking their hearts out to save the family members they love, whether it is a house fire or some other tragic event.



If you are dealing with inappropriate barking do not shout at your dog to stop, yelling only encourages the behavior because he thinks you are barking, too. Tell him in a firm voice "no" and give him a treat when he stops, even if it is just to take a breath. This is not an easy fix so be prepared to be very patient with bark training. Another tool for bark training are collars designed for this purpose. Be sure to read the labels and look for ones that use water spray or vibrations and avoid any that use shock treatment.