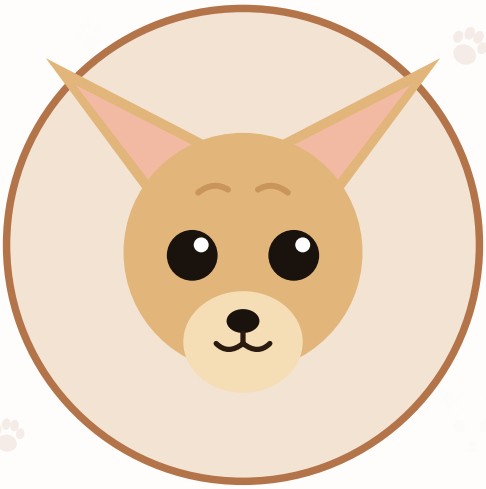


FREE BONUS GUIDE

The Bark Fix

A quieter, calmer, more confident Chi.

Bonus guide for The Complete Chihuahua Guide

Before We Begin

Your Chihuahua is a tiny dog with a very big voice. They bark at the doorbell, the window, the postman, other dogs, and sometimes at nothing you can see at all. Your neighbours may know your dog's bark better than their name.

Barking is the most common Chihuahua complaint, and it usually has the same roots: a tiny, alert, loyal dog who feels a bit unsafe in a big world.

The Bark Fix gives you a step-by-step plan to turn the volume down. It takes patience, usually 4–8 weeks, but every small step counts.

> **Safety first:** if your Chihuahua has bitten, or you're worried they might, please work with a qualified behaviourist. Sudden grumpiness can also be a sign of pain, so a vet check is a good idea.



Before We Begin





Understanding Your Chi

The alert system

Chihuahuas notice everything. For a tiny dog, barking is a way of saying "stay back!" to anything that might be a threat.

The protector

Many Chis bond strongly with one person and see it as their job to protect them, their home and their things.

The small dog problem

The world is full of things much bigger than a Chihuahua. Some Chis feel the best defence is a good offence: bark first, ask questions later.

The stress cup

Every scary or exciting thing fills your Chi's "stress cup": the doorbell, a dog barking outside, a visitor, a loud lorry. When the cup overflows, they react, even to small things.



The Behaviour Assessment

Tick what your Chi does:

- ☐ Barks at noises in the house
- ☐ Barks at the window
- ☐ Barks at visitors
- ☐ Growls when moved off the sofa or bed
- ☐ Guards food, toys or chews
- ☐ Guards a person
- ☐ Barks or lunges at dogs on walks
- ☐ Barks or lunges at people on walks
- ☐ Snaps when handled

Start with the area that causes the most problems in your home.



Lower the Stress Cup

Before training, reduce your Chi's overall stress.

- **More rest:** 16–18 hours a day in a quiet, cosy burrow.
- **Block the views:** window film, blinds, no window lookouts.
- **Background sound:** quiet music to soften outside noise.
- **Sniffing:** daily sniff walks and snuffle mats.
- **Predictable routines:** the same daily rhythm.
- **Quiet days** after busy or stressful days.

Many owners see a big difference from these changes alone.



The Barking Reset

Step 1: Teach "Thank You"

In a quiet room, say "thank you" and toss a treat behind you. Repeat 10 times a session, twice a day, for three days.

Step 2: Small Triggers

Ask someone to knock very quietly. Before your Chi barks more than once, say "thank you" and toss treats behind you.

Step 3: Real Life

When your Chi barks at something, walk over, look, say "thank you," and toss treats behind you. Then ask them to go to their bed.

Step 4: Doorbell Means Bed

Play a recorded doorbell quietly and toss treats into your Chi's bed. Slowly increase the volume over several days.

Step 5: Reward Quiet

Catch your Chi being quiet when they could have barked, and reward it.



The Barking Reset

Demand barking

If your Chi barks at you for attention or food, wait for silence before giving them what they want. It may get worse before it gets better.



Night, Demand & Lap Barking

Night barking

- Keep your Chi's bed in a quiet room, away from the front of the house.
- Cover the crate or use a cave bed.
- Play white noise to mask outside sounds.
- Make sure your Chi has had a last toilet trip and is warm enough.
- If your Chi barks, check calmly that they don't need the toilet, then settle them with as little fuss as possible.

Demand barking

If your Chi barks at you for food, attention or to be picked up:

1. Turn away and wait for a few seconds of quiet.
2. Then give what they wanted, if it's appropriate.
3. Teach a polite way to ask, like sitting quietly, and reward it a lot.

Expect the barking to get worse for a few days before it stops; your Chi is checking whether it still works.

Night, Demand & Lap Barking

Lap barking

Many Chis bark at people and dogs from the safety of their owner's lap or arms. Being up high and held can make them feel bold, and trapped at the same time. Put your Chi down on their own bed beside you, use treats for calm, and keep visitors from reaching towards them.



The Walk Reset

Step 1: Find the Distance

Find the distance at which your Chi can see another dog and still take a treat.

Step 2: Look at That

Each time your Chi looks at another dog calmly, say "yes" and reward.

Step 3: Find It

If a dog appears too close, say "find it!" and scatter treats on the ground. Then move away.

Step 4: The U-Turn

Say "this way!" and turn around. Practise at home until it's smooth.

Step 5: Close the Gap Slowly

Over weeks, move a little closer, always staying where your Chi can stay calm.



The Walk Reset

Don't let others swoop

People often want to pick up or stroke a Chihuahua. It's fine to say no. Your dog's comfort comes first.

Big dogs

Avoid off-lead areas with lots of big dogs. Choose quiet routes and times.



The Visitor Plan

Many Chis find visitors overwhelming: strangers in their home, near their people and their things.

Step 1: Before They Arrive

Give your Chi a sniff walk and a brain game. Set up their bed behind a baby gate or in a quiet room, with a long-lasting chew.

Step 2: Share the Rules

Ask visitors to ignore your dog, not to reach for or pick them up, and to toss treats onto the floor if asked.

Step 3: Let Visitors Settle

Keep your Chi behind the gate until guests are seated and the excitement has died down.

Step 4: Calm Introduction

Bring your Chi in on a harness and lead. Let them sniff the guest if they choose, then call them away and reward.

Step 5: Safe Space Before Goodbyes

Put your Chi back behind the gate before guests stand up or leave. Movement is a common trigger.

Children visiting

Children often want to cuddle and pick up Chihuahuas. Keep your Chi behind a gate when children visit, and only allow calm, supervised interactions, with the children sitting on the floor and tossing treats.



Setbacks & Your 6-Week Plan

Setbacks

Big reactions will still happen sometimes. When they do, give your Chi a few quiet days, then go back to an easier level.

Your 6-Week Plan

- **Week 1:** lower the stress cup. Block views. Teach "thank you."
- **Week 2:** night routine, demand-barking plan, and a floor bed instead of lap barking.
- **Week 3:** Doorbell Means Bed. Find your dog's comfortable distance on walks.
- **Week 4:** Look at That on walks. Practise the U-turn.
- **Week 5:** real-life barking practice, and the Visitor Plan.
- **Week 6:** review your notes. Keep going at your dog's pace.



10 Popular Questions Answered

1. Why does my Chi bark at everything? Chis are alert and often worried. Lower stress and use "thank you."

2. Should I tell my dog off for barking? No. It often sounds like barking back.

3. My Chi barks from my lap. Put them on a floor bed beside you instead (Part 4).

4. Why does my Chi bark at night? Check their needs, then follow the night routine (Part 4).

5. Is my Chi aggressive? Most are worried or protective. But if there's biting, get professional help.



10 Popular Questions Answered

6. Will neutering help? Sometimes, but not always. Talk to your vet.

7. Should I use a bark collar? No. It can increase fear and aggression.

8. My dog barks at dogs on TV. Turn down the volume and reward calm.

9. How long will this take? Usually 4–8 weeks to see real progress.

10. When should I get help? If there's biting, or you're not seeing progress.



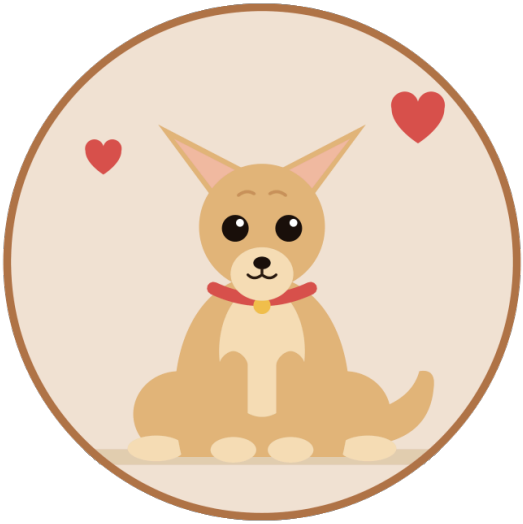
CHECKLIST

Your Reset Checklist

- ☐ Stress cup lowered.
- ☐ Window views blocked.
- ☐ "Thank you" taught.
- ☐ Night routine set up.
- ☐ Demand barking never rewarded.
- ☐ Floor bed instead of lap barking.
- ☐ Look at That on walks.



A Final Word



Your Chihuahua's big voice is part of who they are. The Bark Fix doesn't silence them. It simply helps them feel safe enough to relax.

Keep going, one small step at a time.

