

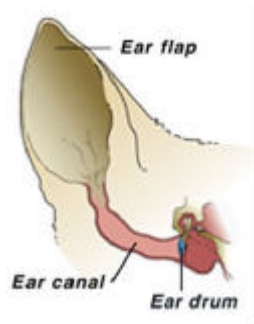


ANIMAL ANTICS

Have you ever asked yourself “Why Does My Dog”? In the last of the series we look at Sound.

“IN YOUR DOG’S WORLD” PART 3 ... SOUND

Communication using sound is important for dogs, especially in situations where vision is impaired, such as in thick undergrowth. Dogs make a number of different noises, such as whining, barking, growling, howling and grunting, which are used in different contexts.



Compared to humans, dogs have far better hearing. Sound travels in waves, where frequency is measured in units called Hertz (Hz). The higher the frequency, the higher the pitch of the sound.

The average human has a hearing range of 20-20,000Hz. Dogs, on the other hand, have a range of about 20-65,000Hz. They are most sensitive in the range of 500-16,000Hz. One reason why some dogs (and cats) dislike the sound of vacuum cleaners or certain two-stroke engines could be that the machines emit disturbing high-pitched sounds that we as humans cannot hear.

The magnitude (loudness) of sounds is measured in decibels (dB) - zero decibels start at the threshold of human hearing. Very loud noise can ‘hurt’ your ears, and the pain threshold for humans is 120dB.

Because a dog’s hearing is more acute, they can hear much fainter sounds than humans can. For example, a sound just audible to the human standing 6m (20ft) away from its source can be heard by most dogs at a distance of 25m (80ft). Dogs pick up the sound of an approaching thunderstorm 10km (6 miles) away much sooner than we can.

TRIVIA: Dogs are very sensitive to voice tone, and respond best to a quiet, ‘happy’ voice. Use a light, soft tone for praise and a gruff or loud tone for commands or correction. Words used for praise or commands should be short, simple and clear.

TRIVIA: A sound stimulus is reduced in effect if accompanied by touching a dog’s body, as the physical stimulus overrides the auditory command, so don’t pat or touch your dog while you are giving it a command.

TRIVIA: The dog’s acute hearing adds to its value as a guard dog and enables it to obey commands over long distances, which may also explain why a dog may appear restless and bark for no apparent reason.

Lastly, watch your dog the next time your wife, husband or friends are due to arrive home ... your dog will probably know long before you’ve heard them or even seen a car pull into the driveway!

COURTESY OF PET PATROL 365
01342 851333 / 07974 728967
www.petpatrol365.co.uk

© Pet Patrol 365