

Bassets are Musical

As mentioned earlier, bassets, as most hounds, are very loud. They don't bark like other dogs, they *bay*, and their baying can carry a long way, even miles. This trait, then, is listed under all the things wrong with bassets -- but if you don't like hounds' baying, and consider it a problem, you probably shouldn't be looking into having any sort of hound! But I also list this trait under positives, because *true* hound lovers consider their baying to be a musical plus -- for us, it beats listening to endless, typical barking and yapping any day. And make no mistake, hounds know their voices are different, and are quite proud of that fact, as the following story definitely demonstrates:

The Yelling Contest

I once had a basset, named Brigham, who had the most magnificent voice I've ever heard -- and he agreed with me. Brigham was very proud of his voice, and never missed an opportunity to show it off. Good thing where we lived was semi-rural!

At one point, Brigham had a rival -- a neighboring pitbull, who lived just across our pasture fence. I never did learn his name, so I'll just call him "P.B." Well, Brigham and P.B. apparently had a disagreement about who had the better voice, and they'd run up and down the fence line, baying and barking, trying to out-yell each other. And yes, it was annoying, to put it mildly.

Finally one day, Brigham had had enough. While P.B. was directly facing him on the other side of the fence, Brigham backed up four or five steps, gathered his breath, and let out the loudest bay I've ever heard. Neighbors across the road turned and stared -- one neighbor, out watering his yard, dropped his hose in surprise.

He wasn't the only one. P.B. was so shocked, he literally leapt up into the air straight backward, then turned tail and slipped quickly, quietly away. I'll never forget the pleased look Brigham had on his face as he turned toward me, grinning ear to ear. He'd won the yelling contest paws down, and P.B. never challenged him again. And thank goodness for that, since the neighborhood became a little quieter.



**Tara Lincoln
Spokane, WA**

Again, let me note that sometimes the trauma of ending up in a shelter causes a dog to fall silent, even a hound! However, that usually doesn't last long, even if they remain at the shelter for awhile. But, if you happen to be drawn to a rescue basset because he's quiet -- be prepared for disappointment later on. I would personally never bank on that silence being permanent. They were, after all, "born to yell!"