



Bonnie

It's time for
training school!

Pupdate 5

Welcome to your October Pupdate

I hope you're enjoying these beautiful autumnal months.

Thanks to supporters like you, we can provide our incredible life-changing services. It's estimated that six million people in the UK live with sight-threatening eye conditions, and more than two million of these are living with sight loss that has a significant impact on their daily lives. At Guide Dogs, we want to support as many people as possible through these life-altering changes, providing the right services to help everyone.

Did you know that training and partnering our wonderful guide dogs isn't all we offer? We also provide support to adults through our My Sighted Guide service which partners trained volunteer guides with a person with a visual impairment. For children and young people, we offer a fantastic range of support, from companion dogs via our buddy dogs scheme to personalised, large print books through CustomEyes Books. Our expertise means we can make life-changing differences to those affected by sight loss, enabling them to live actively, independently, and well – however they choose. Thank you for helping us to do this with your generous support.

I'm pleased to share your sponsored puppy's latest Pupdate with you, and I hope you enjoy reading it.

Yours sincerely,

Steph

Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Bonnie



“

Hi, it's
Giuliana
here, Bonnie's
trainer.

”

I joined Guide Dogs two years ago, after working as a Guide Dog Mobility Specialist in Italy for three years. Back there, I trained and matched 11 dogs. I'm currently training three dogs, and Bonnie is one of them.

Welcoming Bonnie

Bonnie was a little late to training school as she spent some extra time with her puppy raiser, recovering from the accident to her tail. However, this hasn't stopped her at all; she doesn't even seem to notice that her tail is shorter now. Bonnie is making progress and I'm seeing improvements in her everyday. She's a very sweet and affectionate dog and she likes attention. We bonded very quickly and she loves to have a cuddle.

Training time

Bonnie's day starts with a free run with her new friends. Then I take each dog out in turn while the others relax with enrichment toys. Bonnie's favourites are frozen Kongs and LickiMats!

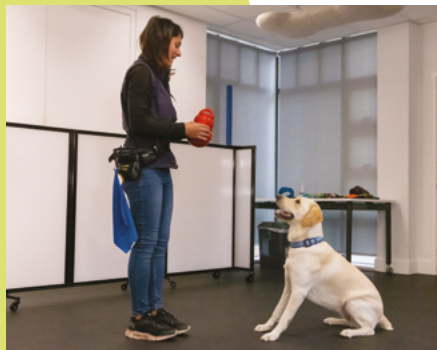
Usually from 1-2pm, Bonnie and the other dogs have time to sleep with lights out and relaxing music: studies show that if dogs rest between training sessions, they'll learn better.

Bonnie's practising cues like 'place', 'sit', 'stand' and 'down'. She loves to work, especially when there's a tasty treat or some fuss waiting as a reward. Her recall is excellent and she's great on her free runs.

When I show her the brown training harness and give her the cue 'head in', she'll put it on easily, allowing me to fasten it. Bonnie has good guiding tension – this refers to the tension created through the harness handle that a person with sight loss will be holding. It allows them to feel where the dog is going, and match their speed.

A work in progress

Bonnie's very keen and loves to please. Sometimes she can get distracted and find it hard to stay still. She's an active dog and likes to keep moving, especially through open doors. She just needs to be a little patient and wait, so I'm working on this with her.



Find out how Bonnie's settled into training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

[guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-bonnie](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-bonnie)



Scan me

Looking forward

Over the next few months, I'll focus on Bonnie's distraction around dogs and people. She's very sociable and always wants to say 'hello', but I want her to learn to wait for my cue before she does. She isn't a fan of spending time alone currently, so I will be working on this with her. It's important that Bonnie is comfortable spending small amounts of time alone in case a future guide dog owner needs to go somewhere without her; for example, to an appointment.

Bonnie's ideal owner will be someone who can match her energy, possibly someone who's had a guide dog before. She loves attention, especially cuddles and playtime and will be fantastic company for her future owner.

Thank you for sponsoring Bonnie. She's so sweet and I love working with her. Find out how her training's going in your next Pupdate in February!



Where is Bonnie on her Pupdate journey?



1

2

3

4

5

6



The training harness

Once our pups move to training school, they begin learning more specific tasks related to their future career. Introducing a young dog to their brown training harness is one of the first milestones at training school. Most dogs have previously worn their puppy coat, meaning they're familiar with the body sensation. With this as a foundation, we build up to placing the harness on the dog's back and fastening it. Once a dog is partnered, they will wear the iconic white guiding harness.

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