



**Guide
Dogs**

Sponsor
a Puppy



Coco

Training School

Pupdate 6

Coco has arrived at training school!

Hello, I'm Rose, Coco's trainer.

I've been working at Guide Dogs for about six years and I love it! I love being able to work so closely with the dogs every day and it's so rewarding to see when they master new skills.

I'm pleased to say that since your last Pupdate, when Coco had a few setbacks with her health and in her training, she's settled into training school really well. She's such a sweet, affectionate pup and always eager to learn.

Settling in

To help Coco's transition to training school feel a little bit easier, she came in for some trial sessions so that the different sights and smells wouldn't be quite so daunting. This really helped her adapt to the new environment; now she settles really well and will just lie down for a snooze! She's still building her confidence, but I can tell that with every new day she comes out of her shell a little bit more.



Coco is a very sociable pup – she loves nothing more than saying hello to everyone around her. I'm currently working with a trainee trainer before they become fully qualified, which means that Coco has two of us around to give her lots of attention!

New Skills

As Coco is still at an early stage in her training school journey, we're introducing her to the first guiding skills that she'll need to know. One of the things we're working on together is 'touch', which involves holding out a fist with the verbal cue 'touch'. The aim is for the dog to touch their nose to the fist, and they'll be rewarded with a treat. Once Coco has mastered this skill, it will form part of target training, such as finding a crossing box so that a person with sight loss could easily find the button to safely cross a busy road.

We've also started working on Coco's platform work, which involves walking to a platform and stopping with all four paws on the platform. This is a really important skill to learn because it shows the dogs where to stop and gives them a good target to focus on.

Coco had been learning this with her Puppy Raiser, Fran, and I'm really pleased with how well she's doing so far. She's even able to stop without relying on a lead to help her!

Looking forward

Over the next few months, we will introduce Coco to all of the guiding skills that she will need to become a life-changing guide dog. I'm also looking forward to introducing her to her training harness, which will make Coco identifiable in public as a guide dog in training. Once she's comfortable with her harness we can introduce her to new things when we're out on training walks, like kerb work. This is where a dog stops near the pavement edge to warn their owner about the road; this helps a person with sight loss to stay safe when they're out and about.

Thank you so much for all of your support for Coco in her journey to become a guide dog. Although it is taking her a little longer than we'd hoped to complete her training, we're really proud of how far she's come. As she's just started at training school, we'll update you as soon as we have news of her progress.



Find out how Coco has settled into training school. Scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-coco





“ Coco is such a sweet, affectionate pup and always eager to learn. ”
Rose, Coco’s trainer

Behind them every step of the way

A guide dog puppy's training journey could not have been possible without our fantastic volunteer puppy raisers. They do an incredible job of building the best foundation for our puppies before they head off to Guide Dogs Training School. One of the best parts of puppy raising is knowing that when the pup moves to training school, they will hopefully go on to change the life of someone with sight loss.

To find out what a day in the life of a Puppy Raiser is like, listen to Kirsty and Phil's experience at [guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser)



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