



Guide
Dogs

Sponsor
a Puppy



Cookie

Cookie has started
training school

Pupdate 4

Cookie

is on her way to becoming a guide dog



I have been a trainer here at Guide Dogs for four years. Cookie is my forty-second dog! The thing I love most about being a trainer is seeing my hard work pay off - each dog is a completely different experience to work with!

Cookie is a friendly dog

When Cookie first came to training school we organised it so she would be introduced to her foster family. Cookie stays with her fosterers in the evenings and weekends, so it was lovely to see her settle in with them straight away. When Cookie came onsite, we let her take her time to play and explore her new surroundings with no pressure. This helped her relax and settle in at her own pace.

“ Hello, it’s Jo here and I am Cookie’s new trainer. ”

Cookie's made a friend in training school

When dogs come into training school, we try to introduce them gradually to other dogs onsite. Cookie has mixed well with fellow pup in training Storm. Storm is a Golden Retriever and he and Cookie play nicely with each other. They even enjoyed a run in the woods recently! I'm working on training Cookie not to get distracted by squirrels, as she loves to chase them when free running in the woods – which is typical for German Shepherds!

Learning new skills

I've introduced Cookie to her harness, and she's been brilliant. To begin with I did have to make some alterations to getting her used to the harness due to her big ears! To make sure her ears didn't get caught on the harness when she put her head through, I propped the harness up between two chairs, to give her plenty of space.

(Continued overleaf)



See how Cookie has grown in her own video:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-cookie

The first few times Cookie put her head through it took her a couple of minutes to settle to the new feeling, but now she is fine. I've also taken Cookie to residential areas where she can concentrate on getting used to the harness and how it feels on her body. Cookie will walk out nicely and has already learnt how to find the curb.

Initially we had to focus Cookie's training around getting in and out of the van, as she could be quite hesitant. However, she has progressed massively and is now good as gold. Cookie is a bright and responsive dog who picks up new things quickly. She enjoys having things to think about and loves using her brain to challenge herself.

I look forward to updating you on how Cookie has progressed at training school in her next Pupdate.



The matching process

Every person and dog is unique, so matching a guide dog to an owner is a complex and carefully managed process. Our trainers take into account a person's needs including lifestyle, walking speed and height.

Once a match has been made, our trainers spend several weeks training the guide dog owner and dog together, learning their common routes and making sure their partnership is a success.

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