



Guide  
Dogs

Sponsor  
a Puppy



# Cooper

Growing up

Pupdate 2

# Cooper's journey continues



**“Hello, it’s Margaret here, Cooper’s Puppy Raiser. I’m excited to update you on his progress.”**

Even though the last few months have been a challenge due to Covid-19 restrictions, I’ve enjoyed watching Cooper continue to grow and develop. Cooper has become more confident in different situations which is lovely to see. He is confident around dogs of all ages and doesn’t shy away from new situations.

## **Cheeky personality**

Cooper’s cheeky personality has continued to show itself which keeps things fun in our home – he has a joy for life. He still loves his soft Labrador teddy and doesn’t go to bed without it. However, he now has another favourite toy which is a squeaky pig. Cooper lays down on his back and holds the pig in between his paws. When we watch TV Cooper loves to squeak the toy really loudly!

Cooper has mastered all of his basic commands, and in particular is very good with his ‘wait’ command.

To practise this, I tell Cooper to wait while I slowly leave the room and get further away from him; but Cooper never leaves his position, he's as good as gold. When out in public Cooper behaves very well, he waits very patiently while I'm packing the shopping, and he is very good at leaving food on the floor.

## Developing skills

Previously we were unable to practise using public transport with Cooper due to lockdown restrictions. However, as soon as we got approval to begin training on transport, we took Cooper on several buses and trains where it was safe to do so. Cooper was not bothered by using public transport and wasn't fazed at all by the loud noises. He laid beside me and took interest in watching people get on and off the bus! It's great to see Cooper continue to progress and experience new things.

We're keen to focus Cooper's training around dog distraction now, as he is a very sociable dog and his instinct is to stop and say hello to passing dogs. Currently, I'm making sure to keep Cooper focused on me when we're on lead walks, then if we pass a dog without him getting distracted, I give Cooper a treat. I am confident that Cooper will do very well with this in the future, as it's natural for a pup of his age to get distracted when out and about!

(Continued overleaf)



See how Cooper has grown in his own video:

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



## Cooper's progress

It's been an absolute joy to experience watching Cooper grow with confidence and maturity. He truly is a lovely boy and a delight to be around. And it's fabulous to see how well Cooper has progressed and coped with training during the Covid-19 lockdown. A lot of external environments have changed due to local restrictions, but this doesn't stop Cooper.

**I can't wait to see Cooper progress further in his journey to becoming a qualified guide dog. Look out for your next Pupdate in June!**



## Training – Puppy to qualified guide dog

It takes around 20 months of training to transform a newborn pup into a qualified guide dog. The pups learn basic commands and are introduced to new surroundings with their Puppy Raiser. They then venture on to Guide Dogs training school, where they learn the foundation tasks required of a guide dog. The final stages of training focus on their partnership with a new owner, where they learn specific skills tailored to their owner's specific needs.



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