



Dexter

**Dexter's
progress**

Pupdate 4

Welcome to your June Pupdate

I hope you're enjoying these warmer and sunnier months.

Thank you so much for supporting Guide Dogs by sponsoring a puppy. Did you know that in 2022 nearly 100,000 people were told they were losing their sight? This kind of news can have a huge impact, both practically and emotionally. Thanks to puppy sponsorship from our generous supporters, we're able to be there every step of the way for those who need us, delivering life-changing services, advice and support when it's needed most.

At Guide Dogs, we believe people with sight loss should live actively, independently, and well – however they choose. We're dedicated to educating, campaigning, and of course training incredible dogs like your sponsored pup. None of this would be possible without people like you; by sponsoring a puppy, you're helping to transform the lives of both adults and children with visual impairments. Thank you.

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 Dexter



“
**Hello, it's
Sam here,
Dexter's
trainer.**
”

Dexter is progressing well at training school. We have a great relationship, and our bond has really developed. He's a very sweet dog and is always up for a cuddle. Usually, I train up to four dogs at once, but at the moment Dexter is the only one, so we spend a lot of time together. He loves to bond with the people around him as he's such an affectionate dog.

Training continues

Since your last Pupdate, I've introduced Dexter to his training harness. I started off by asking Dexter to put his head through something circular, like a hula hoop, using his favourite treats to create a positive association. This progressed to asking him to place his head through the brown training harness and eventually to put it on completely. I'm happy to tell you that Dexter has done really well with this. The next stage was to encourage him to pull gently whilst wearing the harness to create guiding tension, which can be unusual for dogs to get used to. Dexter soon picked this up and he now walks in his harness completely unfazed. It's important for dogs to guide with the correct tension as it means that they can navigate their owner confidently around obstacles without pulling too strongly.

It can take Dexter a while to pick up new skills but once he gets it, he's great! Repetition, patience and lots of fuss and rewards are the best ways to build his confidence.

Recently Dexter's been learning guiding routes in quiet locations so he can focus and become familiar with local areas. Distractions are something that I'm working on with Dexter and he's steadily improving. The routes I'm teaching him always end in a free run to give Dexter something to work towards. He loves a free run, and his recall is fantastic. I've been encouraging Dexter to ignore distractions by practising walking past food and toys in the training centre. He can now walk past food without losing focus. Dexter still needs to improve on toys; he loves them so it's a little more challenging for him, but I'm feeling positive with what he's achieved so far.

Dexter's also been working on kerbs and he is now guiding me to them and stopping whilst out on training walks: it's a work in progress but it's going well. This is an important skill as it indicates to a person with a visual impairment that there is a step coming up.



Discover more about the skills that Dexter is learning at training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-dexter



Scan me

Moving forward

Looking ahead, I will be focusing on building Dexter's confidence with the skills he's developing. I'll also be working on his distractions and overcoming these in real-life situations. I'll be doing more training in busier places to help him to build his skill set.

Future owner

Dexter is a great dog! He'll suit someone who will give him lots of affection, as he loves people and builds a great bond with those around him. I believe he would do well in a home either with a single person or with a family, he's quite versatile.

**Thank you for sponsoring Dexter. I'm really enjoying training him.
Find out how his training's going in your next Pupdate in October!**



Where is Dexter on his Pupdate journey?



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The training harness

After around 12-16 months with their puppy raiser, our pups move to training school to learn 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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