



# Douglas

A little break

Pupdate 3

# Welcome to your October Pupdate

**I hope you're enjoying the start of the new season, as the leaves begin to change and the air turns crisper again.**

Did you know that every day, 250 people in the UK start to lose their sight, four of which are estimated to be children? Nearly half report feeling isolated and cut off from the world around them. Together, we can change that.

Your support goes beyond helping puppies become life changers; you're also making a multitude of vital services possible. We're dedicated to breaking down barriers by providing information, advice and support for adults, children and families. None of this would be possible without supporters like you.

Thank you for your invaluable and continued support of Guide Dogs. Your generosity directly impacts the lives of people with sight loss, ensuring everyone can live actively, independently, and well. You are making a massive difference!

Yours sincerely,

*Steph*

**Steph Potter**  
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



# Thank you

for sponsoring Douglas



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**Hello, it's  
Caroline here,  
Douglas'  
Puppy Raiser.**

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Since your last Pupdate, I noticed that Douglas wasn't quite himself. He's usually such a cuddly boy and loves coming over to you for some tummy rubs, but I saw that he'd become much quieter than usual and more withdrawn. When his trainer, Charlie, came to do his pre-training school visit, Douglas seemed really unsettled, and I knew that something wasn't right.

We booked an appointment with the vet and Douglas made a little sound when his two front legs were manoeuvred but not when his back legs were moved. Because of this, we think he might have a problem with his joints. We've booked him in for some scans and tests, and hope that we'll find out soon what's making him feel out of sorts.

In the meantime, we've taken a little pause in Douglas' training so that he can rest. We've limited his walks to much shorter routes, and he's on pain medication for the moment too. This seems to have helped a lot – he's much more comfortable now.

## **A different pace**

I want to make sure that Douglas doesn't become bored while he's resting, as he's so used to being out and about all the time, taking in new environments and different experiences.

As we don't want to put too much pressure on his joints, we're only doing leisurely walks, but I'm trying to combine this with an activity at the end to provide some mental stimulation for Douglas.

We recently took a trip to the local cricket pitch – after a short walk, Douglas was able to relax outside and watch the cricket. There was a lady there watching the match with her husband. She went to get a drink and asked us to stay with her husband as he has dementia and loves dogs. The gentleman put his hand out towards Douglas, and once I gave the 'okay' cue, he went over and sat by the man, leaning right into him. When the lady came back, Douglas didn't move – he just stayed there for the rest of the match. It was like he knew that the gentleman needed a bit of reassurance. It was the sweetest thing to watch and helped Douglas to learn that there are some situations where being calm and quiet is really important.

## New games

We've also been getting creative with new ideas for enrichment in the house. Douglas still loves his snuffle mat, and we use this most days, but I've also been using old paint tins to create a course for him to walk through in the garden.



Watch Douglas' Pupdate video to find out more about his new routine by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

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



Scan me



Plus, I have some empty flowerpots, which I've been lining up and hiding kibble underneath to see if Douglas can work out which one has the snack. He loves this game as he enjoys using his nose and receiving the tasty reward at the end!

## Making progress

Before our setback, Douglas was making great progress on his dog distraction during free runs and while at puppy classes. He's become much calmer around other dogs, and his recall has really improved! I'm so proud of him.

**Thank you for sponsoring Douglas. Look out for more news in his next Pupdate in February!**



Please note some of these photos are from Douglas' previous Pupdates.

## Where is Douglas on his Pupdate journey?



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## Our breeds

Labradors and golden retrievers are the most common pure breeds in our training programme, and historically crossing these two breeds has produced the most successful guide dogs. But did you know that we also breed and train German shepherds, poodles and curly coated retrievers? These dogs often become successful guides and also provide secondary benefits, such as longer strides for faster walkers, or shedding less hair which is very important for guide dog owners with allergies to dog hair!



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