



Grace

Advanced training

Pupdate 5

Welcome to your June Pupdate

I hope you're well and enjoying the longer days and warmer weather as we begin to welcome summer!

We can't thank you enough for your continued commitment and support. Because of supporters like you, we've been able to create over 36,000 life-changing partnerships to date. That's more than 400 lives transformed each year for 93 years – and counting!

Did you know that 2 million people live with sight loss in the UK, and this number is set to double by 2050? We're committed to providing support to as many people as possible, for as long as that support is needed. With the cost of living continuing to rise, we appreciate your help now more than ever. Thank you so much for supporting Guide Dogs.

I'm pleased to share your sponsored puppy's latest Pupdate, and I hope you enjoy reading it.

Yours sincerely,

Steph

Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Grace



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**Hello, it's
Ben here,
Grace's new
trainer.**

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I'm a Guide Dog Mobility Specialist and have worked at Guide Dogs for six years. I take care of the dogs' advanced training, match them with their new owners and look after their partnerships. I'm currently training three dogs, and Grace is one of them! The best part of my role is working in an environment with great colleagues, and seeing the dogs progress as they gain more and more confidence. This confidence, paired with the skills they learn, will make an incredible difference to someone living with sight loss.

Meeting Grace

Grace and I are building a fantastic bond. She's very loving and friendly. Out of the other dogs I'm training, she's the most relaxed and doesn't get distracted or overexcited easily. Grace really enjoys guiding; she's completely driven to the next objective, and she finds motivation in receiving praise and affection. She really likes being active, going out and about, and spending time with me.

Advanced training

Ann, Grace's previous trainer, did an excellent job, and I'm starting from where she left off. The training school in London where I work sits in a bustling area. Grace is adapting to the increased stimulation by starting her day with a 25-minute bus ride with her fosterers, arriving around 8:45am. Her typical day includes two training sessions, one of which is always outdoors. There is plenty of time for Grace to relax between sessions, and I also take her for free runs. Grace's commuting route is popular among guide dogs in training, so she often meets some of her training pals on the bus, which is always a fun way to start the day.

At first, I focused on skills Grace already knew, like the chin rest, which is used for health checks in her ears and eyes, or to help administer medication. She's happy to rest her chin on a chair or a towel on my lap. Grace has also learnt to locate some button boxes in the training room. I'm transitioning this outdoors as she progresses. We're navigating busy and crowded areas together, and she's learning new routes.

I'm introducing Grace to the London Underground, initially off-harness, to get her accustomed to the noise of stations.



Learn more about Grace's training by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-grace



Scan me

She's doing remarkably well, adapting to her new surroundings in this busy city. She's incredibly confident in crowded areas, even during peak hours.

Looking forward

In the coming months, I'll introduce Grace to escalators and see how she does. Her next challenge will be overcoming distractions from squirrels, which are very common in London parks.

Thinking about Grace's future, her ideal partner could be someone mature who enjoys regular outings at a relaxed pace; it could be a person who appreciates her companionship, sweet personality, calmness, and love for cuddles.

**Thank you for sponsoring Grace. I'm enjoying working with her.
Find out how her training's going in your next Pupdate in October!**



Where is Grace on her Pupdate journey?



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Key skills

Did you know our dogs need to learn 37 key skills to qualify as a guide dog? These range from those designed to help with health checks to those more specific to guiding. Chin rest (where we ask the dog to rest their head on a surface so that their ears or eyes can be checked) is an essential welfare skill, while learning to walk with the correct guiding tension is important to ensure they can guide their owner around obstacles safely, without pulling.



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