



Lola

Training School

Pupdate 4

Welcome to your June Pupdate

I hope you are well and enjoying the start of summer. I'm sure you are looking forward to finding out the latest update from your sponsored puppy.

Your support is vital to help our future life changers complete their training and support a person with sight loss. We're proud to create so many partnerships through our guide dog and buddy dog schemes, and to be continuing this throughout 2022.

We really appreciate that the past few months have been really challenging in lots of ways, so we are so grateful that you have continued to support us by sponsoring a puppy. On behalf of everyone at Guide Dogs, I'd like to say a huge thank you.

Because of you and your amazing ongoing support, we can continue to make life-changing partnerships possible!

Yours sincerely,



Chris Allum

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Lola

has arrived at
training school!

“Hello, it’s Liz
here, Lola’s
trainer.”

I’ve been working for Guide Dogs for over 30 years and I believe that I have the best job in the world!

Lola is part of our Academy programme; an initiative that aims to develop more guide dog trainers. In my role as a Technical Learning Specialist, I supervise two trainee trainers, Vicky and Ali. We are teaching Lola between us, and Vicky and Ali are gaining valuable practical experience. So, Lola is not only learning herself, she is also helping to educate a new generation of guide dog trainers!

Settling in

Lola was a little bit uncertain in the new environment at first, but this is not unusual. She brought her two favourite toys with her to training school: her pink furry pig and a stuffed dog toy. When Lola first arrived she would only play with these toys, but now that her confidence has grown, she’ll happily play with any toy she can get hold of!

Lola is such a loving and affectionate pup; she enjoys nothing more than a good fuss. She’s so sweet and it’s easy to fall in love with her. She’s very playful too and will always bring her toys over to you to play – it’s her favourite way of making new friends!

New skills

As Lola is at such an early stage in her training journey, we're working on making sure that she's comfortable with all the new sights and smells around her. We're working on a few skills like how to settle calmly, and if she's displaying the skills well, we'll reward her with things like treat-filled Kongs and especially her favourite, a dog lick mat. This is a rubber mat with lots of holes that we fill with tasty treats or frozen dog food, which have a natural calming effect on Lola. They're a great way to reward behaviour without her getting overexcited and out of the training mindset.

One of the first skills that we teach dogs when they arrive at training school is 'hand touch'. This involves us asking Lola to touch an outstretched hand or closed fist with her nose, and when she does this, we give her a treat. This is a really important skill for a guide dog to learn, because their future owner can use this skill to identify where their dog is whilst out and about, or on a free run.



Find out what Lola has been learning at training school. Scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-lola



Lola has also started to learn 'chin rest'. We teach our dogs this skill to enable us to check their ears and teeth to ensure that they are healthy. Lola is learning to rest her chin on my upturned palm, which will make it nice and easy in future for her to get check ups.

Looking forward

Over the next few months, we will introduce Lola to all of the guiding skills that she will need to become a life-changing guide dog. Once she's comfortable with these early skills, we can start to introduce her to new things when we're out on training walks in public, like finding buttons at crossings and finding seats to help her future owner.

I'm excited to update you on Lola's training in her next Pupdate!



Behind them every step of the way

A guide dog puppy's training journey could not have been possible without our fantastic volunteer puppy raisers. They do an incredible job of building the best foundation for our puppies before they head off to Guide Dogs Training School. One of the best parts of puppy raising is knowing that when the pup moves to training school, they will hopefully go on to change the life of someone with sight loss.

To find out what a day in the life of a Puppy Raiser is like, listen to Kirsty and Phil's experience at guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser



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