



Margo

**Margo's arrived at
training school!**

Pupdate 3

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 Margo



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**Hello, it's
Emma here,
Margo's
trainer.**

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I've been at Guide Dogs for 20 years and really enjoy my job. I love seeing the potential of the dogs when they come to training school and then watching them progress and fulfil that potential when they become guide dogs. It's always incredible to see a dog full of energy qualify and begin helping someone with a visual impairment. Margo is one of four dogs I'm currently training; she's the only girl in the pack and gets on well with the other dogs.

Welcoming Margo

Margo's settled really well both into training school and with her fosterers. She's a little ball of enthusiasm and was super excited to meet all the staff and other dogs at the training centre. In the beginning, to help her settle in, we encouraged her to relax through puzzle games and snuffle mats. These helped to keep her happy in this new environment and provide good ongoing mental stimulation. Margo enjoys sniffing around for the bits of kibble hidden in the games, it's great fun for her!

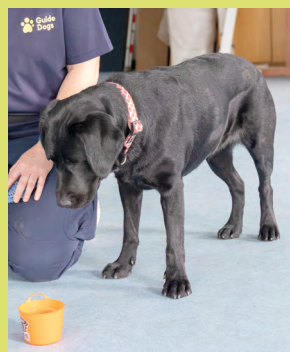
Margo loves being around other dogs, she easily bonded with the other three dogs I'm training: Theo, Hendrix and Bruce. Hendrix is her best friend; their energy levels match, so they have a lot of fun playing together and going on free runs.

New skills

Margo is a very bright dog and picks things up really quickly. I've been working on a few new skills with her. One skill I've recently introduced is platform training. This asks her to walk and step onto the low platform, placing all four paws on there and waiting. Platform training helps teach Margo to walk in a straight line while providing tension in the harness. She's doing a fantastic job, especially now she's learnt there's a tasty treat waiting as a reward.

Margo learnt the bucket game with her Puppy Raiser Richard, and I've been using this in her training too. Margo will focus on the 'bucket' of food and when she does, she gets rewarded. This helps teach Margo patience and can be built upon and transferred to tasks that need her to stay still, such as grooming and veterinary checks. She's also been introduced to her brown training harness. She loves it so we've progressed quite quickly. The second time we showed it to her she was putting her head all the way through! Next we will be getting her comfortable with it being fastened and will soon progress to putting on the handle.

Most of our training has been on the training school grounds so far. We've been out for a few loose-lead walks and Margo tends to rush with excitement. So, I will be encouraging her to remain calm on these walks as we continue training. She can get distracted by dogs but is making good progress overcoming this.



Discover how Margo has settled into training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-margo



Scan me

Looking ahead

Margo loves to learn, and I see progress with her every day. Once she's in full harness, I will be teaching her guiding cues, along with helping her to improve her self-control and dog distraction. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with Margo and teaching her all the skills she needs to become a life changer.

Thank you for sponsoring Margo. It's been great building a bond with her. Find out how her training's going in your next Pupdate in October!



Where is Margo on her 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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