



Moose

**Advanced
training**

Pupdate 4

Welcome to your February Pupdate

We're excited to share your sponsored pup's recent news!

We can't thank you enough for supporting Guide Dogs by sponsoring one of our incredible dogs. Did you know that nearly three quarters of people of working age who are registered blind or partially sighted are unemployed? At Guide Dogs, we are determined to support the independence of people with sight loss by providing them with the skills and services they need to pursue the life they choose. It's because of kind people like you that we're able to continue doing this. Your support really does make a huge difference!

In 2022, we supported over 4,060 guide dog partnerships and nearly 700 My Sighted Guide partnerships, a service which connects a locally trained volunteer with a person with sight loss. Our fantastically trained dogs and our wonderfully dedicated volunteers help people get out and about while also boosting their confidence. We couldn't provide these services without supporters like you – thank you.

I can't wait for you to read your puppy's latest Pupdate, and I hope you enjoy finding out what they've been getting up to!

Yours sincerely,



Steph Potter

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Moose



“

**Hello, it's
Nicola here,
Moose's
trainer.**

”

I'm a Guide Dog Mobility Specialist and have been at Guide Dogs for 30 years. As part of my role, I match dogs to their new guide dog owners. I love seeing the incredible difference the dogs make to people living with sight loss.

Zoey, Moose's previous trainer, has done a great job training him. My job is to build on what Zoey has taught him and fine-tune his skills. I'll also work on the areas that he may still be struggling with. Then, I'll begin the process of finding his perfect partner. Moose is an amazing dog; he's a gentle giant who enjoys lots of affection. He has a great, relaxed nature and we're forming a good bond. He loves his food; it really is the way to his heart!

Improving skills

I've recently introduced Moose to narrow gaps, for example, if we're on a route and the pathway gets smaller because of an obstacle like cones or a car parked on the pavement. I'm teaching him to warn me of the change by slowing down and then encouraging him to decide whether we'll be able to fit through the gap. If not, he has the responsibility of guiding me safely off the pavement, around the obstacle, and back on again.

He's making great progress with this; I notice him thinking through the situation and making good decisions.

Moose is great at locating objects, such as benches and button boxes. He's also excellent at indicating kerbs and picked this up quickly. He'll reliably stop at them to let me know that there's a change in my path. This will be really important for a future guide dog owner, so that they are aware of any changes and can safely step up or down without tripping.

When we're out and about, Moose settles nicely in cafés and is comfortable with different forms of public transport. This is helpful for his future role, since a person with sight loss can rely heavily on public transport. The main challenge now is managing Moose's distractions, mostly cats and squirrels. At our training centre, there's a green area with trees and squirrels where I practise 'engage and disengage' with Moose. This is a game which encourages him to focus on me rather than the squirrels; every time he looks at me, I reward him with some kibble. For cats, I place a soft toy cat in the training room whilst I practise skills such as platforms with him.

Together, we walk from one low platform to the other, which encourages Moose to walk in a straight line, and I reward him every time he focuses on what we're doing rather than the cat.



Find out more about how Moose is learning to navigate obstacles by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-moose



Scan me

Looking ahead

Over the next few months, I'll continue to work on Moose's distractions and fine-tune his skills. I'll also be looking for his perfect partner. Moose has a fast pace, so he'll suit someone who can match his speed. He's an affectionate boy, so someone who'll give him lots of fuss and attention would be great too.

Thank you for sponsoring Moose. Find out how he's progressing in your next Pupdate in June!



Where is Moose on his Pupdate journey?



1

2

3

4

5

6



What is STEP?

Standardised Training for Excellent Partnerships (STEP) is the bespoke programme we use to train our dogs. STEP uses the same principles as PREP and adds in the 37 key skills that are required of every guide dog. It is a scientifically evidenced way of training which places each dog at the heart. It harnesses the power of positive reinforcement so our dogs understand that learning new skills is rewarding, meaning they're more eager to engage. STEP helps us produce more confident guide dogs, which improves the life-changing impact they have on their owners.



/SponsorAPuppy



GuideDogsUK



/sponsorapuppygd

Find out more about how we manage and respect your data at **guidedogs.org.uk/privacy** or call **freephone 0800 953 0113** to request a printed copy. Please use this number to tell us if you have changed your mind about how we contact you; including telling us that you do not wish to receive occasional direct mail about Guide Dogs.