



Sponsor  
a Puppy

A close-up photograph of a white dog's face, likely a Labrador Retriever, looking directly at the camera. The dog has floppy ears and a black collar. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field.

# Rupert

It's time for  
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 Rupert



I joined Guide Dogs last year as a trainee Guide Dog Mobility Specialist. Rupert is the first pup I'm training, alongside his brother, Tigger. I worked as a nurse for many years but wanted a change in my life. However, I still wanted to do something to help people, so I decided to become a guide dog trainer. It's the perfect role for me! Spending time with Rupert is so enjoyable and doesn't feel like work. Nina is my supervisor and a great teacher, I really enjoy working with her.

### About Rupert

Rupert is a fantastic dog; he is polite when saying hello, picks things up quickly and his tail is always wagging! When he's on the lead, he's calm, and when he's off it he's really playful, especially when free running in the field beside the river! Rupert's such an affectionate dog and likes to stay close to you; he loves cuddles. He makes me smile when he lies on his back and holds his toy in the air!

### Settling in

Rupert settled into training school really well. Before training sessions, he relaxes in his pen and usually plays with a Kong, a toy filled with food. He has lots of fun trying to get it all out, and it's great for mental stimulation too.

“

Hi, it's Rhiannon here, Rupert's trainer.

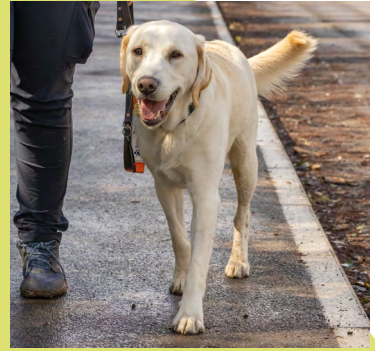
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When Rupert first met his fosterers at their house, he made himself comfortable straight away. Their grandchildren were there too, and he was fantastic! The children were very kind and calm, and Rupert loved their company. We all went on a free run together and Rupert enjoyed playing in the mud!

## Rupert's training

Recently Rupert's been learning food manners and loose-lead walking. I'm teaching him some cues too, such as 'touch' and 'drop'. When I say 'touch', I'm asking him to touch my fist with his nose, and when he does it, he'll receive a treat. If he's holding a toy in his mouth, he lets it go when I say 'drop', and then he gets another treat. I'm also working on Rupert's self-control: when he stays focused on me, I'll give him a treat. With this positive reinforcement, he'll learn to ignore distractions such as cats or pigeons.

I'm also beginning to teach Rupert skills such as 'platforms'. I ask him to walk from one low platform to another, stopping on the second with all four paws. Platform training helps him to walk in a straight-line while guiding. Rupert's also been introduced to the training harness, and he's getting used to wearing it. I hope to start teaching him some guiding skills soon.



Find out how Rupert has settled into training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

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



Scan me

## Looking forward

Over the next few months, I will be helping Rupert to be more comfortable during vet checks. He finds it a little uncomfortable when he goes to the vet for routine eye and ear checks. This is because he's a bit sensitive, so I'll work to overcome this by building a positive association with the environment using his favourite treats and toys.

Thank you for sponsoring Rupert. I'm so honoured to be part of his journey to become a future life changer!

**I'm looking forward to updating you with his progress in your next Pupdate in October!**



## Where is Rupert on his 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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