



Theo

**Theo's
progress**

Pupdate 3

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 Theo



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**Hello, it's
Jo here,
Theo's Puppy
Raiser.**

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A gentle giant

You'd hardly believe it, but Theo has grown even bigger – he's in top physical form! He's through his 'teenage' phase, and his personality's got a lot calmer and steadier now. He's the kind of dog that likes routine and structure in his everyday life. He's very clean, he doesn't like to get wet in the rain or puddles. If Theo was a human, he would definitely be an unflappable man, putting his feet up by the fire.

Theo's also adapting to new responsibilities as a big brother: I recently welcomed home my third puppy in training, Ulla. She's 6 month-old black German shepherd/golden retriever puppy and Theo's amazing with her, just like Maple was with him. He took Ulla under his wing; he likes to cuddle up with her and sleep close to her bed.

Skills and experiences

Over the past few months, I've been consolidating what Theo's learnt so far and improving what he's found a little challenging. As he's growing up, he's a lot better at ignoring dogs while on walks; most of the time he looks at me and waits for a treat.

He's also getting really good at lying down and settling: when I go shopping with him, I find a safe spot in the aisle where he can lie down then I drop the lead and he'll happily stay, waiting for me, while I put my shopping in the basket.

Theo's self-control is improving and he's starting to recognise his strength on loose lead walks. Recently I noticed he's developed some slight body sensitivity, so I'm working on helping him feel comfortable in the TTouch harness and puppy coat with positive reinforcement. When Theo sees the harness and the puppy coat, I give him a treat so he builds a positive experience around them. I'm gradually helping him to overcome this, it's a work in progress.

Theo's great at performing chin rest, which is where I ask him to lay his head on my lap. This makes it easier for me to check his ears and eyes, and will be helpful for vets and his future owner too. He also travels beautifully on public transport; together we've been on buses and trains and he takes everything in his stride. He's learning to find a safe and comfortable spot close to me.



Learn more about what Theo's been up to by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-theo



Scan me

Theo's great with my grandchildren too, he really likes human interaction. Whenever I have the chance to enjoy a different experience or event, I like to take him with me, so he can get used to new environments.

The future

After raising three puppies, what I enjoy most is seeing the differences in their personalities. Theo's maturing into a really lovely calm dog and I enjoy his company very much – I'm sure I'll miss his peaceful presence at home when the time comes for him to go to training school.

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



Where is Theo
on his Pupdate
journey?



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Our breeds

Labradors and golden retrievers are the most common pure breeds in our training programme, and historically crossing these two breeds has produced the most successful guide dogs. But did you know that we also breed and train German shepherds, poodles and curly coated retrievers? These dogs often become successful guides and also provide secondary benefits, such as longer strides for faster walkers, or shedding less hair which is very important for guide dog owners with allergies to dog hair!



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