



Walter

Unusual places

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Welcome to your February Pupdate

The colder months are nearly behind us and spring is just around the corner.

The UK's first guide dog partnership qualified in 1931. Since then, we have matched over 37,500 people with a guide dog – that's at least one new partnership every day for the last 94 years. Our dogs help people with sight loss to get out and about safely, providing life-changing support every single day. They help people with visual impairments to enjoy the freedom and independence many of us take for granted.

1 in 5 people will live with sight loss in their lifetime. By sponsoring a puppy, you're helping us provide vital services, from mobility training to assistive technology and more, that enrich the lives of adults and children with visual impairments. None of this would be possible without supporters like you!

I hope you enjoy reading the latest news from your sponsored puppy. Thank you for being a part of their journey.

Yours sincerely,

Steph

Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Walter



Walter's just adorable; anyone who meets him falls in love instantly. Each morning, we start the day with Walter doing 'zoomies' in the garden. It's my favourite thing to watch – he has so much fun. He's always trying to entice our pet dog, Cora, to join in, but she likes to watch with me instead. Walter's a sweet-natured boy who loves being around people – he follows me everywhere around the house. He's like my shadow.

Progress

Since your last Pupdate, I've been working hard with Walter on a number of cues, and I'm so pleased with his progress. He used to be a bit chatty when he saw other dogs or people as he wanted to play and get their attention. With the help of our Puppy Development Advisor, Sophia, we started to work on this by ignoring his vocalisations rather than engaging with him. Walter's learnt that if he barks for attention, he won't get it, but when he's calm and quiet, he'll get lots of fuss and praise.

Walter can also struggle to settle in cafés as he's so interested in everything around him. I'm working on him recognising that when we sit at a table, it's his cue to settle down beside me for a little while and not to look for attention from other people.

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**Hello, it's
Vicky here,
Walter's
Puppy Raiser**

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It's important that he learns to settle in all environments, as his guide dog owner will need him to be calm during meetings or appointments, and while out with friends or family. I've seen great progress, and he is no longer vocal with people around him when he wants attention.

Out and about

I spend a lot of time out and about with Walter and take him to as many different places as possible. We regularly go to the post office, bank, GP surgery and shops, as well as much larger places like the hospital and the local swimming pool. My daughter has weekly swimming lessons, and Walter comes with us, watching from the poolside. I've also taken him on buses, trains and even boats! He's fantastic everywhere and isn't fazed by anything.

Our local police headquarters had an open day attended by thousands of people. There were police displays with horses, police dogs, the firearms unit and some smoke bombs. It was a very loud and busy atmosphere, with many unusual sounds and smells, but Walter was amazing! He took everything in his stride, I was so proud of him.



Watch Walter's city adventures with Puppy Raiser Vicky by going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-walter

Training school preparation

Over the next few months, I'll continue to practise the cues Walter's already learnt and work on his settling and chattiness. I'll also be working on encouraging him to get into the boot of the car as he can be unsure about jumping in. Although he loves car trips and doesn't want to get out once we arrive! We've already made so much progress over the last few months; I'm confident we'll conquer this too.

Thank you so much for sponsoring Walter. He's wonderful, and I love raising him. Find out how he's progressing in your next Pupdate in June.





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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