

Buddy

GUIDE
DOGS



Pupdate 3

Developing skills

Preparing for early training

**SPONSOR
A PUPPY**





Hello, it's Gulcem here, Buddy's Puppy Walker. Buddy will soon be going off to early training and I'm excited to update you on how we've been preparing.

I've absolutely loved having Buddy in our lives. He is the fourth dog we've puppy walked for Guide Dogs and we will definitely be welcoming another trainee once Buddy moves on to early training. Puppy walking gives you amazing

opportunities to meet new people and also keeps you fit and healthy! I now understand how much guide dogs change the lives of the visually impaired and it's so rewarding to be part of that journey.

Over the summer we've been enjoying lots of time in the garden together. We bought Buddy a paddling pool and he has had such fun splashing around in it with his toys!

Adventures

Buddy really enjoys the buzz of busy places and is always very comfortable walking through large crowds of people. Since your last Pupdate Buddy has travelled on a boat down the Thames!

Over the summer we exposed Buddy to lots of



different sights and smells that he hasn't come across before. This will prepare him to face new situations in the future. We visited the seaside for the day, went to a country show where Buddy got to meet horses and other livestock and he's also been to a zoo and watched some of the animals!

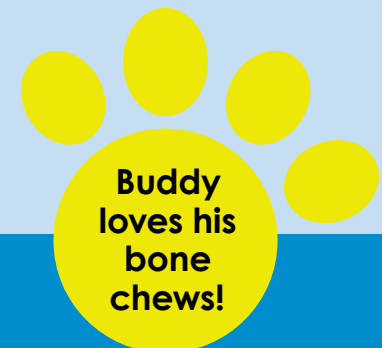
Preparing for early training

Buddy has kept his playful nature which is great to see, however when his blue puppy jacket goes on, he

knows it is time to work! He's become much more obedient and focused and is very responsive to commands.

Now that Buddy has mastered basic commands we've been developing more challenging skills.

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One of these is the 'head' command, in which Buddy puts his head on my leg to allow me to check his ears, eyes and teeth. He has picked this up very quickly and it makes health checking him so much quicker and easier.

I've also taught Buddy to 'find the chair'. He can now locate empty seats on the bus, train, in a coffee shop and in the park. This will be a valuable skill to his future guide dog owner.

I'm also pleased to say that Buddy has improved when walking on the lead and no longer pulls as much as he did. We are still working on his dog distraction as he's such a friendly boy and always wants to say 'hello', but it's vital he remains focused on me as his handler whilst out and about.

We can't wait to see Buddy begin early training. Look out for your next Pupdate in February to see how he's getting on!

Training – Puppy to qualified guide dog

It takes around 20 months of training to transform a newborn pup into a qualified guide dog.

The pups learn basic commands and are introduced to new surroundings with their Puppy Walker.

They then venture on to early training where they spend about 19 weeks with a Guide Dog Trainer learning the foundation tasks required of a guide dog. For the last 12 weeks they're with a Guide Dogs Mobility Instructor for partnership training to learn specific skills tailored to their owner's specific needs.



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