Puppy Raiser Manual
DEDICATION

We dedicate this manual to all of the individuals and families who have graciously opened their homes up to raise a puppy for the Guide Dog Foundation. We recognize the time, dedication, and care that is put into raising each puppy that goes through our program. Because of your generosity our students are given a remarkable gift: a partner that enhances their lives with increased independence, mobility, as well as a loving companion. In addition to puppy raising, many of you work with us to further fulfill our mission in other areas of work. Thank you for all that you do for the Guide Dog Foundation.

With continuous gratitude,

The Guide Dog Foundation Puppy Department
FORWARD

Your job as a puppy raiser is to nurture and raise a puppy to become a guide dog, service dog, or part of our breeding colony. Our department’s mission is to give you up-to-date information, supplies, and support that is needed to give every puppy the opportunity to reach their full potential. Thank you so much for all that you do for the Guide Dog Foundation.

Each puppy is different and we know that as a puppy raiser you grow to love the puppy you welcomed into your life. With your love and care and the training and support of our staff we know that we can help each puppy raiser and puppy successfully take on this endeavor.

As part of our manual we provide videos that can be viewed on our YouTube channel (YouTube.com/GuideDogFoundation; look for the “Puppy Raiser Training Series” playlist). While every puppy is different and might need a different approach, we feel these videos offer training and insight that is easily accessible to all our puppy raisers throughout the country.

We appreciate your commitment to serving alongside the Guide Dog Foundation.

Hallie Wells
Puppy Program Manager
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1-1 OUR MISSION

The Guide Dog Foundation’s mission is to improve the quality of life of people who are blind or visually impaired or who have other special needs.
1-2 THE FOUNDATION

A Brief History
After World War II, a group of civic leaders wanted to establish a guide dog school closer to the New York metropolitan area that did not charge for its services.

In 1949, the organization’s original name – Guiding Eyes for the Blind – was changed to the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. (Guiding Eyes for the Blind, based in Yorktown Heights, New York, is not affiliated with the Guide Dog Foundation.) In the 1950s, property in Smithtown, New York, was purchased for a training facility. There was a kennel, but there were no residential facilities for the students; students were put up in local rooming houses. Later, a student dormitory was built and the training grounds were developed.

The 1960s ushered in several changes at the Guide Dog Foundation. Under the direction of two English trainers, the Foundation combined a blend of English and American techniques that emphasized individual attention and small classes. The Foundation’s breeding program was started, with Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers. In fact, many of the guide dogs that work today are descendants of those original dogs.

In the 1980s, the Guide Dog Foundation consolidated all its operations on the Smithtown property, which is about 50 miles east of New York City.

The 10-acre campus consists of administrative offices, student residence, state-of-the-art kennel, puppy nursery, nature walk, Japanese garden, simulated city streets, and housing for key staff.

The Foundation, one of 10 recognized guide dog schools in the country, continues to provide guide dogs free of charge to blind people who seek enhanced mobility and independence. In addition to providing Second Sight® through the use of our guide dogs, the Foundation provides extensive public outreach through its speakers bureau and on-campus talk and tour program to broaden society’s understanding of vision, visual impairment, blindness, and disability rights.

The Guide Dog Foundation Values
The Guide Dog Foundation strives to be a leading resource and provider of premier services to facilitate the independence of people who are blind or visually impaired.

The Puppy Department
The puppy department at the Guide Dog Foundation works closely with each puppy raiser to produce a successful puppy raising experience. We are a vital, thriving part of our organization and work closely with our breeding and training departments. The puppy department is continually striving to improve and better serve our clients and puppy raisers. That means we offer open communication between our staff, volunteers, and raisers. We value suggestions and
opinions given to help us move toward progress. The puppy department wants each puppy and raiser to succeed and have fun. Puppy raising is a challenge and can become difficult at times. We hope the relationships you build with your advisor, area coordinator, group leader, and other puppy raisers will provide adequate support in whatever challenges and success you might face.

**Advisors**

Advisors are staff members who oversee puppies in their assigned area. Currently, our program staff are assigned puppies in their geographic proximity and boundaries. They are responsible for overseeing each puppy’s training, health, and raising until the dog comes in for training at the appropriate time.

All of our advisors have excellent communication, training, and dog handling skills. They are kept up to date on new health and training news. Your advisor is expected to guide you through puppy raising by answering your questions, offering support, teaching obedience and socialization classes, and helping you and your puppy reach your full potential together.

**Area Coordinators**

Area coordinators are selected individuals who have shown further interest in being involved with the Guide Dog Foundation. They hold themselves and others to a high standard of excellence, have shown their respect and understanding for puppy raising and training guide dogs, have excellent communication skills, and are ambassadors of our mission.

Area coordinators are assistants to advisors. They are volunteers who would like to dedicate more time to our mission. ACs are often responsible for teaching classes, being a point of contact for our raisers, and offering support to their assigned puppy raisers.

**Group Leaders**

Group leaders are a vital part of our organization. Again, they are volunteers who want to offer more than just puppy raising to the Foundation. They are learning to become area coordinators and offer support to puppy raisers alongside area coordinators.

**What is Expected of You**

As a puppy raiser we ask that you follow the values we share:

- To be kind and respectful toward all people regardless of disability, culture, ethnicity, or background.
- Be open to innovation and change. The animal training industry is constantly evolving to improve the partnerships and lives of the animals working with us.
• Treat each animal with respect.
• Help create a supportive environment that welcomes other people into puppy raising.
• Value teamwork and communication.
• Further the Guide Dog Foundation’s missions and values.

1-3 OUR DOGS

Guide Dog Foundation breeds
The Guide Dog Foundation currently breeds and uses the Labrador Retriever, the Golden Retriever, Standard Poodle, and Labrador and Golden Retriever crosses.

Selection of our breeding stock
Guide Dog Foundation puppies are very special; they are the products of an internationally recognized breeding program that seeks to maximize the excellent characteristics of Labradors, Golden Retrievers, and Standard Poodles. To be selected for our breeding program, dogs must be physically and temperamentally sound. In addition, the dog must have a healthy constitution.

Veterinary screening of potential breeder dogs includes a series of evaluations including x-rays to determine orthopedic health, echocardiograms to determine heart health, examination by a veterinary ophthalmologist, routine blood tests, veterinary exams, and genetic screening tests when available.

In addition to the evaluations of your puppy advisor and puppy program manager, our breeding program manager performs an independent assessment of each dog. If a puppy passes all health and temperament evaluations and is selected for the program he or she will be incorporated into our breeding colony. We work with other guide dog and service dog programs to enhance our bloodlines and add to our breeding colony. This will permit us to improve the standards in our dogs that produce effective working guide dogs.

How your puppy was chosen for you
Our puppies spend the first 8 weeks of their life living in our nursery and puppy kennel. In those first weeks we have volunteers and staff who interact, observe, and record our puppies’ personalities and socialization. When they are 8 weeks old they go through a brief evaluation that gives our staff an idea of how the puppy handles stress; interacts with the environment, other dogs, and people, if they are better suited for guide work or service work, and how sensitive they are in new situations.

From there, we match up each applicant’s abilities, lifestyle, and personality with the right puppy. We understand that no two puppy raisers are exactly the same – just like our puppies.
Interacting with them for the first 8 weeks of their life we hope we can learn about their personality and give them to a puppy raiser that will make them most successful.

If you would like to see more about our puppy socialization and puppy temperament tests please go to our YouTube channel (YouTube.com/GuideDogFoundation; look for the “Puppy Raiser Training Series” playlist)

2-1 GETTING STARTED

Application Process
Like many of our puppy raisers, you have most likely owned a dog before and that is what sparked your interest. However, raising a puppy to be a guide dog is much different from having your own pet. There are different rules and protocols that need to be followed, and the application process will help you be prepared before you get your puppy.

After attending orientation we ask that all applicants attend puppy classes or a dog handling skills evaluation with an advisor or area coordinator. Because raising a puppy with the Guide Dog Foundation requires regular attendance at monthly classes, we want to make sure this is something that can fit into your schedule before you receive your puppy. Attending puppy class or dog handling skills evaluation as an applicant gives you the opportunity to observe your advisor or area coordinator as they teach and support the other raisers in using our training methods. It also gives you the opportunity to hear raising anecdotes from raisers who went through the same process that you did before they got their puppy. Your advisor or area coordinator will ask you to handle different dogs and puppies during the class or evaluation. This is your opportunity to see what it’s like to have a puppy in public. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and make observations or suggestions. We are a community that supports and encourages open communication.

The next step in your process will be a home interview with a staff member or an approved volunteer. They will come to your home and make sure that it is a safe environment for a young pup. During the interview they will ask you questions about feeding time, exercise, and playtime for the puppy, where the crate will go, what your lifestyle and schedule are like on a regular basis. In order to place the best puppy in your home we want you to ask any questions that you need to in order to feel you’re ready to welcome a new puppy into your home.

Once your home interview has been completed and approved you will watch a young puppy under 5 months old for several nights and a pup older than 9 months old. This will give you the chance to see what it’s like to raise a puppy. We will give you all the supplies and support you need!
Success as a Puppy Raiser

Before you receive your puppy please know that our advisors and puppy team are responsible for the following:

- Informing and teaching raisers the Guide Dog Foundation puppy raising policies, standards, and procedures.
- Conducting a thorough home interview to review the safety of the home, requirements of puppy raising, and determining the suitability of the home for puppy raising.
- Providing each puppy raiser with current, up-to-date information and relevant material.
- Teaching raisers training techniques and guidelines for raising and socializing your puppy.
- Upholding the Guide Dog Foundation’s values and mission.

Class attendance and communication

Our advisors and area coordinators are required to know how each one of their puppies and raisers are doing in their group. Because these are dogs that need to be comfortable with all situations, our classes are usually in public, which allows our staff to see your handling, progress with training, and your puppy’s temperament. We require all our raisers attend class at least once a month. However, different advisors and areas have different requirements. Some areas will require more frequent attendance.

Another aspect of raising that is vital for your puppy to succeed is excellent communication with your advisor or area coordinator. We ask that reports are filled out on time, C-BARQs are submitted, and other communication is answered promptly. Many behavior or medical issues are time sensitive, so your advisor or area coordinator needs to know about issues you’re having as soon as possible. Much of our department’s communication is through email, and we ask that they are responded to within 24 hours.

Even if you feel your puppy is having trouble or not on the right track, please contact your advisor or area coordinator. They are part of our team because they are experienced, knowledgeable, and can help develop a plan to help you and your pup succeed. The puppy department is here to help you in any way that we can!

Problem Solving and Creating Success

In order for one of our puppies to become a guide dog, we ask each puppy raiser to work closely with our staff. Oftentimes, puppies, just like humans, will develop fears, suspicions, poor behavior, or other problems. We understand that these problems also arise, and our department is committed to help each raiser and puppy try to resolve these issues.
There are times where the best solution for the pup might be continuing the training with another raiser. While we try to avoid that scenario, it does happen occasionally due to life changes, the puppy not getting the socialization they need, or having another puppy raiser who is better equipped to handle the problem.

As hard as we try, some puppies are not cut out to have the career as a guide dog. Certain problems can’t be resolved or make them unsuitable for working in our program.

**Possible steps to resolve a puppy problem**

- Puppy evaluation with our team to assess the problem and form a plan for resolution
- Temporary placement of the puppy in another raiser’s home
- Permanent transfer to another raiser’s home
- Career change

**Puppy evaluation**

Puppy evaluations vary based on the problem, but most likely your advisor or area coordinator will schedule some time outside of class with just you and your puppy so the problem can be addressed and they can give you their full attention. During that time, the advisor will assess the severity of the issue and formulate a plan with you to help resolve the issue. Oftentimes, your advisor or area coordinator will want to set up several evaluations and keep in contact regarding the issue until it is fully resolved.

**Puppy swap**

Sometimes placing a puppy in a new environment can help resolve an issue like poor house manners, busying on route, and fears in public. Placing the dog in a new setting that has different or fewer exposures will give the dog an opportunity to overcome the issue. Usually, we will place the puppy in a suitable home and you will take the other raiser’s dog. It’s important for our pups to transfer to different handlers well so this is often a great opportunity and learning experience for everyone involved.

**Rehome**

In some circumstances rehoming the puppy is the best option for their success. It isn’t admitting fault or defeat, but every raiser has different skillsets and environments they will expose the puppy to while they’re raising. This is always a decision that is carefully thought out and done with the puppy’s best interest and success in mind. Even if the puppy is rehomed you may still be eligible to raise another puppy. This is a decision made on a case-by-case basis on whether you are a suitable household for puppy raising.
Career change

Unfortunately, not every puppy is suited for a career in guiding. Dogs can be career changed for medical, temperament, or behavioral reasons that would prevent them from being a successful guide dog. Typically, the last raiser of the puppy will be offered the opportunity to adopt the dog if they are career changed. However, there are circumstances that might prevent you from being offered your puppy back including:

- The Guide Dog Foundation feels your home is no longer a suitable environment for one of our dogs.
- Your household did not follow the training and protocols given to you by your advisor or area coordinator.
- If we feel the puppy was mistreated, abused, or neglected in any way.
- If your dog was career changed for inappropriate dog behaviors and you are currently raising another puppy. You will be given the option to return the puppy you are currently raising or adopt the career changed dog.

The Guide Dog Foundation has a strong team of staff and individuals who are prepared to work with you as you raise your puppy. If you have any question that relates to puppy raising, please do not hesitate to contact your advisor, area coordinator, or group leader. Please do not call other puppy raisers, students in class, or trainers unless instructed to do so by your point of contact at the Foundation.
2-2 A SAFE HOME ENVIRONMENT

If you have raised a puppy before, you know how curious and investigative they can be. There are certain items in your household that can be dangerous for the puppy, and in turn, that we prefer the puppy not to come in contact with. Prior to bringing the pup home, we recommend that you do the following:

- Lift and hide any television, phone, or electrical cords within the puppy’s reach.
- Keep the floor clear of items that you don’t want the puppy to have, such as children’s toys, slippers, magazines, or newspapers.
- Consider temporarily picking up small area rugs, especially those with fringed edges.
- Remove house plants from the puppy’s level. Many can be poisonous if ingested. (See the veterinary section on poisons.)
- Take steps to ensure that the puppy doesn’t get into lower kitchen or bathroom cabinets that usually contain cleaning products. You can purchase child safety latches, or tie a rubber band around the knobs to hold the doors together.
- Bitter apple spray is a product we recommend to prevent chewing; it is applied to wood furniture legs to discourage chewing and is available at most pet shops.

Remember, the puppy must be crated or supervised at all times

Then there is no way it can get into trouble. When you are unable to supervise the puppy, it should be crated.

Once the puppy establishes good house manners, it is very important that you slowly restore these items to their original locations. At that time, you will teach the puppy to respect these items and Leave it when told to do so. Please speak with your puppy advisor or area coordinator about when it is an appropriate time to slowly restore previously removed items.

Suggested first aid kit supplies

- Blanket and towel – for cleaning or covering your puppy if needed
- Scissors – for cutting bandages and tape
- Tweezers – for removing ticks, glass, or burrs
- Adhesive tape – for applying bandages
- Gauze – to make a bandage
- Flashlight – for checking eyes and ears
- Antibiotic ointment – to use on minor wounds or burns
- Hydrogen peroxide – for cleaning wounds
- Styptic powder – to stop bleeding nails
Please do not use these items without a veterinarian’s instruction and approval and informing your puppy department contact

- Hydrogen peroxide
- Mineral oil
- Benadryl tablets/capsules
- Boric acid solution

**Poisoning**

A curious puppy can often find items that they are not supposed to ingest or come in contact with. Please contact your veterinarian immediately if you think your puppy has been exposed to something poisonous. It is critical that your puppy is safe and stabilized as soon as possible. Once they are stable, you or your veterinarian can contact your advisor or area coordinator to determine further treatment.

**Common substances that are poisonous to dogs if ingested**

- Antifreeze
- Ant poison
- Chocolate
- Fertilizers
- Household cleaning products and solvents
- Insecticides
- Medications
- Peach pits
- Raw fish
- Raw onions
- Rodent poisons
- Tomato plants
- House plants

Here are some other resources with additional references:

http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control

http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/poisons/
The Crate
The crate is part of all our puppies’ training and socialization. It is not a cage or punishment. Our puppies are taught to use their crate as a safe place to rest and relax. The crate we provide is large enough for your pup to stand, lie down, and turn around. We will often provide a divider so there is not so much room that a puppy feels comfortable soiling it. A puppy can be in their crate with approved toys such as a Nylabone. The crate is an aid we use to keep your puppy safe, teach polite house manners, and confine them when you cannot supervise them. Dogs should not go more than 6 hours in a crate, and puppies should not be in a crate for an extended period of time. Young puppies should not be left unsupervised with cloth or bedding in the crate because they will often chew or ingest the fabric. Ingesting the bedding can cause an intestinal blockage, which is extremely dangerous for a young pup. When you bring your young pup home, start introducing the crate as a positive place to rest by putting them there for meals, nap time, and with a toy to play with when they are awake.
If your puppy starts vocalizing or barking and you don’t feel like they need to busy, please do not reward the vocalizing by letting them out. Simply ignore it until they are quiet and then let them out once they have relaxed and settled down. Being let out for vocalizing is a demanding behavior that can cause problems in the future. Soon enough after the crate is introduced properly you will see your pup seek out their crate during meal times or when they need to rest.

Fencing
If your yard is fenced in, it will be inspected during your home interview. It needs to be safe, free of holes or large gaps, and high enough that a dog cannot jump out. While you are puppy raising your puppy is not allowed to be left in the yard unsupervised or unattended. Before getting your puppy please remove any twigs, poisonous plants, rocks, or objects that can cause intestinal obstructions. When your puppy is playing please do not allow them to dig. It’s a destructive behavior that is unacceptable. If your puppy is eventually placed with someone who has visual impairments, holes can become extremely dangerous! Remember to keep fresh, cool water available for your puppy when they’re playing outside.

Other Safe Play Areas
Many of our puppy raisers do not have fenced-in yards but have found alternative spaces for their puppy to free run. Tennis courts or enclosed playgrounds are wonderful places that allow your dog to stretch their legs. Dog parks can be used with caution. Because you are unable to control every dog at a park we ask that you speak to your advisor or area coordinator before bringing your pup to a dog park. No puppy under 16 weeks are allowed to go to dog parks. There
are many parks that have safe, off-leash areas for dogs to play, and that’s a great place to practice recall as well.

The crate should be a happy, welcoming place for your pup to relax and rest.
Your pup should always be supervised or in their crate until they are trustworthy.
If in an open area, pups must be on a leash that the handler is holding at all times!

2-4 EQUIPMENT AND HOW TO USE IT

Training aids
- A 5–6-foot leather leash is provided with the first puppy raised. This leash should be kept by the raiser for their next puppies if they are continuing to puppy raise.
- One puppy Tufflock collar and one adult Tufflock collar.
- A 4-foot nylon leash is provided for younger puppies that are still chewing and can be used as a dragline while playing or free running.
- A cable tie-down is provided with the first puppy raised. The tie-down should be kept by the raiser for their next puppies if they are continuing to puppy raise.
- Puppy coat. One small puppy coat is provided and can be exchanged for a larger one as your puppy grows. Please remember that it is only to be used for a guide dog puppy in training and no other dogs.

General supplies
- Stainless steel food bowl, 2 qt. size is provided by the Guide Dog Foundation.
- Large-size travel crate for your puppy to grow into. The crate should be kept if the raiser is continuing to raise after their first puppy.
- Heartworm prevention is provided by the Guide Dog Foundation for the pup’s time with you.
- Enzyme cleaner is highly recommended for cleaning accidents.
- A first aid kit (see suggested supply list in section 2-2) is recommended for emergencies.
- Busy bags for cleaning up after your puppy defecates.
Grooming supplies

- Bristle grooming brush is provided to brush your puppy regularly.
- Ear cleaner is provided by the Guide Dog Foundation. Ear cleaner can be used weekly if needed, after swimming, and baths.
- Baby wipes to clean ears and face.
- Toenail clippers if you feel comfortable trimming your pup’s nails. If not, your advisor or area coordinator will trim them at class for you.
- If you plan on trimming your own pup’s nails, we recommend styptic powder to control the bleeding if a quick is cut.
- Shampoo is recommended for baths. We ask that our pups aren’t bathed more than every other week. Aloe and oatmeal shampoo is recommended.

Toys

- One Nylabone is provided. However, you can purchase toys on the approved toy list in section 3-5.

Other supplies used on a case-by-case basis

- 8-collars will often be given to raisers as a training aid.
- Head collars (similar to the 8-collar) can also be used as a training aid.
- Citronella collars
- Snappy trainers

The Leash and Collar

Your puppy was introduced to a leash and collar during their time in the nursery and home socialization. Now they need to learn how to respond in a new setting and new handler.

Guidelines for introducing the leash and collar

- Start introducing the leash and collar as soon as you get your puppy.
- Let them lead you and explore their new area.
- As they explore occasionally get your pup’s attention by talking to them and walking close to them. Reward their interaction with you with a brief pet or piece of kibble.
- Slowly start taking the lead on where you are going and encourage them to follow you using your voice.
- Remember to keep using your voice and petting to reassure them that where you are leading is safe and that it is what you want the pup to do.
• Praise your puppy for following you and listening to you as you talk to them.
• Do not scold them in any way for not following you or showing resistance. Instead, be patient and quietly encourage them with your voice or get closer to the ground to make your puppy feel more comfortable following someone new.
• If you continue to have problems because your pup is not following you, use a more elated, excited tone of voice, lightly clap your hands to encourage them to come toward you, lightly tap the ground near you, and praise any attempt they make to come toward you.
• Following these suggestions – instead of scolding or discipline – will help your pup trust you and start your relationship off right.

Once your puppy is comfortable in their leash and collar they might start pulling or dragging you around! While we always love to see a go-getter puppy that takes initiative, we want you to be the leader.

Use the following suggestions if your puppy starts pulling
• Shorten the leash by sliding your hand closer to the collar.
• Keep the leash loose between your hand and the collar.
• Redirect your puppy’s attention by talking to them.
• If your puppy continues pulling, stand in the same spot without moving and wait for them to stop pulling.
• **Once your puppy has stopped praise them immediately.**
  • It is extremely important to praise your puppy every time they stop pulling and turn their attention toward you.

We want a puppy that understands their raiser is in control and you are the one leading. Oftentimes, puppies are just excited and want to explore the world.

The more you praise them for being polite and walking on the leash in a calm manner the less they will want to pull because that is a behavior that is **not rewarded**. Your puppy will start responding to the tension when they pull and avoid it in order to be rewarded for good behavior. This requires correct handling skills and consistent praise on your part.

**NEVER** use the following techniques:
• A tight leash – this will lead to constant pressure and tension. Your puppy will feel confined and start resisting. It can cause damage to their throat.
• Dragging the puppy or allowing them to drag you.
• Continued leash corrections.
• Improperly timed leash corrections or leash snaps.
• Hitting the puppy with the leash.
• Yanking the puppy.

Cable Tie-down
The tie-down is used to teach a puppy to calmly stay in one place. It can be helpful in several situations:
• Supervising a young puppy
• Potty training
• Meal preparation time
• Quiet time
• When guests are visiting
• Teaching them to remain calm during long periods when the raiser is sitting

Guidelines for tie-downs
• Tie-downs are short and intend to have the puppy comfortably lying down.
• They are short enough to prevent tangling or allow the puppy to walk to the end to relieve themselves.
• Do not use a chewable object like your leash as a tie-down.
• Reward them for remaining quiet and calm with a toy or periodic food reward.
• NEVER leave a puppy unattended on a tie-down.

Some puppies can be resistant to a tie-down because it is unfamiliar and feels restricting. It’s essential that they learn to relax and stay calm.

To teach your puppy to use the tie-down please use the following procedures:

• Patience, patience, patience. The end goal is a polite, calm puppy. That won’t happen right away!
• Use rewards like verbal praise and petting when your puppy is walking politely. They’ll be more willing to walk with you if there’s reward.
• Never yank, jerk, or drag your puppy.
• Select a safe, visible spot to attach the tie-down. The area needs to be free of items the pup can chew on or destroy.
  o Puppies can be strong so it needs to be something sturdy that will not fall over.
  o Several safe spots are a couch, heavy table, or bed.
  o Put the tie-down in an area where the puppy can be observed the entire time they are secured to it.
• Once you have the tie-down secure, bring your puppy and a toy to the area.
• Attach your puppy in a calm, positive way while still remaining close.
• Once your puppy is secure, slowly move away as you release your hold on the tie-down.
  o Rushing away will most likely make your puppy rush toward you and get an undesirable correction for reaching the end of the tie-down.
• Move away from the puppy without talking or providing any attention. It often makes them more anxious if they aren’t relaxed yet.
• Once your puppy is calm and relaxed provide praise 30 seconds after they have been quiet.
  o Some puppies relax immediately while other are more resistant and will take time to settle down.
  o A puppy that will not relax needs to be ignored, and you need to remain patient and wait for them to be quiet before any attention is given to them.
• After your puppy is relaxed leave them on the tie-down for short periods of time (as little as 3 to 5 minutes if they didn’t settle well) and then slowly increase the time.

Should your puppy continue to be resistant to the tie-down after several days please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

The tie-down should only be used under supervision. Never leave a pup unattended.
• It’s a great tool to teach your pup to remain calm and in the same place.
• The tie-down is extremely useful when people are coming in and out of the house!

The Head Collar and 8-Collar
Both the 8-collar and head collar (like Halti or Gentle Leader) are pieces of training equipment that can only be used on the recommendation of your advisor or area coordinator. Do not use them without direct permission from your leader.
This training equipment fits around a dog’s head and muzzle. It works through the simple idea of where the head goes the body will follow. Both collars are used to get gentle control of a dog instead of using a flat collar. All of our guide dogs in the training center are introduced to a type of head collar and must be comfortable wearing it. It is a beneficial tool that not every puppy raiser needs, but every puppy should be comfortable wearing one at some point.

Head collars are used to teach control and focus to a dog. They are not used to give a dog corrections the way a flat collar can be used. A puppy or dog should never be jerked, dragged, or corrected when wearing a head collar. Incorrect use can lead to neck injury, eye irritation, and negative public perception.

**Introducing a head collar**

Once your leader advises and instructs you on how to use a head collar, the next few days will be an introduction until it can be used as an effective training tool.

- Let the puppy wear the head collar before a meal time and feed them their meal while they’re wearing it. This will often distract them from the new sensation and create a positive experience with the food correlation.
- Play with them or practice puppy training with the head collar on. Again, this will distract the puppy from the new sensation and offer a positive experience with praise and the raiser involved.
- Allow the puppy to continue wearing the head collar a few times a day, starting with just several minutes. Slowly build up the time each day.
  - It should not take more than a week for the puppy to adjust and continue working without being distracted by the head collar.

It’s important not to coddle or baby the puppy or immediately take the head collar off if the pup is upset wearing it. If you act as a strong leader and are upbeat, the puppy will be more accepting and more comfortable wearing it. Never leave the head collar on unsupervised.

Head collars can be used as frequently as every outing or just when the raiser needs more direction and control over the dog in certain situations. For example, busy stores, streets, or high-distraction areas are places where the head collar can be worn. Your advisor or area coordinator might specify when and where the puppy can wear the head collar to improve their training and socialization.
2-5 PREPARING FOR YOUR PUPPY

What to do when you first arrive home

The first thing to do when you arrive home with your new pup is to take it out to the desired “busy area” and encourage it to relieve. Give it at least 10 minutes to “busy.”

You will be very excited about the newest family member but give the puppy time to adjust to its new home. Set the stage for an easy transition: keep guests to a minimum and introduce new friends in moderation.

While they are exploring their new home, give the puppy adequate time so they are comfortable. Reinforce this behavior by being calm, and enjoying the outing as well. While exploring, permit the puppy to check everything out; this builds confidence and acceptance. After 20 to 30 minutes of exploring their new home, take the pup out to its busy area via the route you want to teach.

If it’s time, offer the puppy food and water. If the puppy came with medication, administer it at this time according to the directions given. Offer the puppy another opportunity to relieve itself.

Let the puppy investigate its new home while you are supervising so that they won’t get into any trouble. If they pursue something that you’d prefer them leave alone, say, “Leave it,” offering it a toy instead, or you can distract it with a high-tone positive voice saying, “Come,” while clapping your hands, slapping your thighs, making kissy noises, or anything similar that will get their attention and encourage the pup to respond to you.

Introducing the new puppy to the other pets in your home

How you introduce your guide dog puppy to other pets in your home is very important! We want the first association with your pets to be a positive one. Have an additional person to make sure the resident dog(s) are controlled on leash. The resident dog has already established its territory, so it is best to introduce the new pup and your dog on neutral ground, such as the front lawn or
sidewalk. Carry the puppy to the chosen location with the puppy’s leash and collar on where the resident is waiting and allow the dog to sniff the pup while in your arms, all the while calmly praising both the pup and the resident dog. Once the dogs settle down a bit, you may place the puppy on the ground. Allow the dogs to interact without either dog jumping on or at each other. Praise calmly for appropriate behavior. Once the excitement of the introduction is over, both dogs can be taken into the home.

The guide dog puppy will require a lot of your time, so don’t forget to give the family pet its fair share of your attention as well. On the other hand, if your family dog growls or shows dominance or aggression, quickly correct the dog. If you’re concerned about how to handle a particular situation, please call your puppy advisor or area coordinator for advice and assistance.

The introduction of the guide dog puppy to cats in the home will be a little more difficult. Some cats are very accepting of the new puppy in the house and will be curious about the new addition, coming up to them without hesitation. Of course, the puppy may be a little too exuberant for the cat, so please monitor the behavior and do not allow the puppy to play with the cat as if it was playing with its littermates.

Some cats may find the puppy’s presence a total inconvenience at first and not show themselves until the puppy is in the crate. Usually, after time the cat comes around and starts to make friends with the puppy.

The puppy must be taught from a young age to tolerate the presence of the cat, not chase the cat, and not to eat the cat’s food. Make sure that the cat’s litter box is in an area out of reach for the puppy.

**The first night**

After you’ve fed, watered, busied, played with, and exhausted the puppy, the puppy should be put in the crate to go to bed. The crate should be in your bedroom. It truly makes the puppy more comfortable to be with you. Remember, it’s probably the first time that the pup has been away from its mom and littermates.

Initially when the pup goes to bed, give it a few minutes to fuss until it settles. If it doesn’t, then tell the pup in a low firm voice to be quiet.

If you are having problems getting the pup to settle at night, here are some suggestions to make the pup more comfortable transitioning to the crate:

- Add a towel
- Stuffed animal
- Cover the crate with blanket or sheet
- Leave a television or radio on low volume
- Allow your pet dog to sleep quietly next to the crate

Keep in mind that pups have a small bladder and no control yet. You may need to get up a few times during the night to allow them to busy. We don’t want the pup to think that 3 a.m. is a great
time for playing. Take the pup outside, repeat **Busy, Busy** in a calm quiet voice, then a bit of quiet praise, and quietly go back to bed. If the pup gets a lot of attention, petting, and playing at 3 a.m., they will want to do it every night. If it’s quick and businesslike, the pup be less likely to bark and pester you.

**2-6 THE END GOAL OF PUPPY RAISING**

Raising a guide dog puppy is different from just having another pet in your home. How you care for them, feed them, play with them, and interact with them all serves the purpose to prepare them to become someone’s eyes and independence. While they still get to have fun and enjoy their time with you keep in mind how your puppy is raised will affect their future training and partner.

**Our puppy raisers have three objectives:**

1. **Socialization:** we ask that you socialize your puppy outside the home at least five times a week in a variety of places. Our dogs need to be comfortable in varying environments and this has to start at a very young age.

2. **Good house manners:** Guide dog are expected to have excellent house manners. Again, a solid foundation and successful introduction to correct behaviors is necessary for them to succeed.

3. **Ensuring Success:** This one is the hardest job of them all. Some dogs are not suited to be a guide dog despite our best efforts. In order to ensure the safety of our clients and the wellbeing of each dog it’s up to us to decide if a dog should begin formal training as a guide dog for the blind. It’s up to the puppy raiser to inform their advisor of any and all behavior, temperamental, and medical concerns. Sometimes, there are other career paths the dog you raised can take on instead of being a guide dog—even if that means they’re a loving pet in your home we consider it a success because we made the right choice by changing their career path into one best suited for them.

The reason we are putting this section first, Success before You Start, is simple. We want you to be successful in your puppy raising endeavor. We want to give you the best tools possible to take on this challenge and help you develop the right mindset for puppy raising.

**Puppy raising requires the raiser to become alert to their surroundings and their dog’s reaction towards it.** They must develop skills for reading dog body language, multitasking, and assessing the situation they are about to enter with a puppy. It’s a tough job sometimes and we want you to be confident and comfortable with taking your puppy in public and having them live in your home.
SUCCESS BEFORE YOU START

Puppy raising is all about being proactive instead of reactive. What does that mean to you; the human on the other end of the leash? It means you have to think like a puppy! In order to help you keep B.A.R.C in mind:

**B.A.R.C**

**Before the leash is in your hand**

**Assess your dog**

**Reward accordingly**

**Calm**

- Before the leash is even in your hand take a look around.
  - What is surrounding you that would appeal to a puppy?
    - Food on the ground, bikes passing by, other dogs in the area, kids running past you, etc.
  - The raiser has to make the effort to be more important and exciting than the stimulating environment.
  - Is there anything you can remove from the environment to make it more age appropriate?
- Assess your dog’s body language
  - Look at their tail set, posture, ears.
  - What is your dog showing you with their body and focus on you?
- Reward according to the environment, dog age, and stimulus
  - Are you offering enough reward so the dog doesn’t have to be corrected?
  - Young pups need frequent reward and as they mature need less in the same environments.
  - The more stimulating the environment, the more reward.
- Calm
  - Can your dog focus on you?
  - When you say their name do they pay attention?
  - Is their body language relaxed and calm?
  - If the dog has not had appropriate energy outlet the dog might have trouble focusing.

The more you can set your dog up for success the better. Maybe that means using a head harness until the pup is 9 months old, feeding entire meals out of your treat pouch, or exercising your dog for thirty minutes so they can focus on you during class.
It is our job to give you the tools to help you and your dog, but it’s up to you to understand your dog’s behavior and help them remain successful in all environments.

**In order to provide the foundation for training a guide dog, the puppy needs to learn how to do the following:**

- Interact with humans and willingly work with and for their handler’s praise and affection.
- Ignore distractions that a pet would show interest in.
- Behave appropriately in any situation – even ones that encourage distraction and play.
- Be comfortable in many different environments ranging from quiet rural areas to busy cities.
- Remain calm and comfortable when being groomed and handled.
- Be relaxed and comfortable in transportation.
- Be friendly and relaxed around other animals without becoming distracted or seeking their attention.
- Be friendly and relaxed with all types of people without seeking their attention.
- Be comfortable walking on all types of surfaces, stairs, and elevators calmly and confidently.
- In public and the house, ignore desirable items such as food left on the floor, trashcans, or objects such as shoes.
- Relaxed and confident in all situations.

Even though guide dog puppies are different from pet dogs, they can still have fun! They love being with their puppy raiser (you!), playing with other dogs and puppies when it’s appropriate, and playing modified fetch and hide and seek.

### 2-7 PUPPY RAISING DO’S AND DON’TS

**DO**

- Supervise at all times when in public and use different opportunities to teach them new skills and practice good behavior.
- Keep a safe, clean environment for your puppy.
- Allow your pup to busy on different hard surfaces in varying environments.
- Take your pup on frequent car rides and different transportation.
- Allow other people to pet your puppy.
- Take your puppy on frequent walks.
- Allow your pup to play with other dogs and interact with different people.
- Let your puppy free run daily in a safe, enclosed area.
- Have a structured socialization and exposure plan that allows your pup to learn and be exposed to new things at the appropriate time.
- Teach your puppy to walk on leash in a calm, relaxed manner.
- Practice walking up and down stairs on a loose leash.
- Confine your puppy in their crate or on a tie-down several times a week for quiet time.
• Reward your puppy when they are exhibiting good behavior.
• Always reward your puppy for coming when called.
• Communicate with your advisor or area coordinator with any comments, questions, or concerns about your puppy and their training.

**DO NOT**

• Mistreat your puppy by shouting, hitting, or jerking on your puppy’s leash.
• Call your puppy to you to reprimand it.
• Allow your puppy to chase objects like cars, bikes, or skateboards.
• Allow your puppy to chase other dogs, cats, or other animals.
• Confine your puppy for long periods of time during the day.
• Allow your puppy to chew, nibble, or bite on people.
• Allow your puppy to play with or chew on toys that aren’t on the approved toy list (listed in section 3-5).
• Leave your puppy unsupervised outside.
• Let your puppy play off leash in an unenclosed area.
• Allow your puppy to bark, whine, or vocalize while crated, on tie-down, or in public.
• Leave your puppy unsupervised on a tie-down.
• Give your puppy any medications, treats, or food not approved by your advisor or area coordinator.
• Teach your puppy “tricks” outside of their obedience.
• Teach your puppy to play retrieve or chase games.

**2-8 PUPPY RAISING ETIQUETTE**

All puppies, especially guide dog puppies, need to be taught boundaries and manners. Our puppies will eventually be with their partner all day so early on they need to learn how to behave appropriately. The guidelines below will help you raise an enjoyable companion.

• Never allow your puppy on the furniture.
• Do not allow your puppy to beg.
• Never allow your puppy to investigate in the trash or items that do not belong to them.
• Do not allow your puppy to steal food from other animals or people.
• Do not allow your puppy to eat meals in anything outside of their food bowl.
• Never allow your puppy to jump on people.
• Never allow your puppy to rush up stairs, through doorways, in or out of vehicles.
• Never allow your puppy to drag you or lunge when walking on their leash.
• Never allow your puppy to be protective of their food or toys.
If you have any questions or are facing challenges with these guidelines please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

Public etiquette

When you are in public with your puppy you are an ambassador for the Guide Dog Foundation and the rest of the assistance dog community. You are representing yourself, other puppy raisers, and assistance dog users. It is important to have a positive public perception and interact with the public in a polite manner. We know that puppies aren’t always on their best behavior so if they aren’t behaving it is sometimes best to leave the environment you’re in and try again another time.

If someone has a negative experience with you and your puppy it could possibly lead to other puppy raisers or people with guide or service dogs being denied access to public places.

Puppy etiquette

- Always relieve your puppy before entering a public area. Even if it was a short walk or ride to your destination excitement and movement can cause your pup to have to relieve itself again.
- If your puppy does have an accident please clean it up. Always carry a cleanup kit with you.
- If your puppy becomes too excited or hard to control please remove your puppy from the setting.
- Do not allow your puppy to jump on or solicit attention from people in public.
- Always have a clean, well-groomed pup and a clean puppy vest on your puppy in public settings.
- Regularly wash your puppy’s vest to keep it clean. If your vest becomes stained, torn, or needs to be replaced please contact your advisor or area coordinator for a new one.

People etiquette

- The public is watching how you handle your puppy – remember to always follow our protocols and treat your puppy and the environment with respect.
- Because you have a puppy in public, people will often ask questions. Be prepared to speak with new people who are interested about puppy raising or guide dogs.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the ability of your puppy. Do not bring your puppy into settings that will overwhelm or stress your puppy.
- Do not try to force or argue your way into a business or public place. You can politely educate people on why it’s important your puppy visits and then thank them for their time.
- If your puppy has an accident and you don’t have adequate cleanup supplies let someone know so they can help you find the right supplies.
3-1 SAFETY

Caring for a puppy can be rewarding, but it is a lot of work. This section will help prepare you for keeping your puppy healthy and happy! You will learn about feeding, a healthy body condition, and the correct procedure to use when feeding your guide dog pup.

The Importance of Keeping Your Puppy on Leash

- Guide dog puppies are required to wear their Guide Dog Foundation identification collar at all times.
- Do not go for walks or runs off leash with your puppy even in remote or rural areas. It only takes one moment for your puppy to leave your side.
- Guide dog puppies are never allowed to be off leash unless they are in a safe, fully enclosed, secure area.
- Use a long line or retractable leash to exercise your pup. Keep hold of the line at all times when exercising your puppy in unfenced or unsecured areas.
- Always use your leash when taking your pup to Busy, the car, or any unfenced area. Keep any extra leash in a convenient spot so it is easy to grab before heading out the door.
- Always check the gates and doors to outside exits before letting your pup out.
- Use a chain or snap clip to secure gates and fence doors whenever possible.
- Teach all household members and visitors to close doors and gates behind them. Make sure everyone is aware that the pup must be on leash in outside open areas.
- If there is lots of activity in your house keep your pup on leash or in their kennel if they cannot be supervised.
- Teach your puppy to wait at doors, gates, and when exiting vehicles.
- Frequently check enclosed areas for open gates, holes, or weak areas.
Lost Puppy Procedure

If the puppy gets lost, you must notify a representative from the Guide Dog Foundation immediately.

Your first contact should be your puppy advisor or area coordinator, leave a message if you cannot talk to them in person. This is an urgent situation. If you cannot reach your puppy advisor or area coordinator, please use the list of phone numbers below in order until you speak with a person:

Guide Dog Foundation-631-930-9000
Hallie Wells – 631-258-8905
Deana Izzo (GA, NC, SC, TN, AL) – 706-372-6197
Melissa Harrington (VA and MD) – 703-577-6249
Grete Eide – 631-258-1914
Theresa Manzolillo – 631-258-8901

Steps to follow after notifying the Guide Dog Foundation

- Start searching the area where your pup was last seen.
- Call friends, other puppy raisers, and family members. The Guide Dog Foundation also reaches out to volunteers in your area to help you search for your puppy.
- Go to your local animal shelter to see if your puppy was found and turned in.
- Check areas you frequent in the area – neighbors’ houses, parks, stores you visit.

After you have spoken with a representative of the Guide Dog Foundation, call your local police departments, animal shelters, and veterinarians, leaving a description of the dog, color of collar, gender and ID number that is tattooed in their right ear.

After the dog is recovered, please notify your puppy advisor or area coordinator and whomever else you have spoken with.

3-2 Feeding

Guidelines to maintaining healthy eating habits

- It’s easier to figure out the pup’s pattern of when they need to eliminate if you can control when they eat their meals and take in water.
• When you offer the puppy their food, allow the puppy a maximum of 10 minutes to eat. If the food isn’t finished, remove it, and don’t offer anything else until the next regular mealtime. Since guide dog puppies are going to be working dogs, they do not have the option to graze at the food bowl all day long because they will be out working.

• When feeding multiple dogs in the home, you should never leave them alone while the bowls are down. If the resident dog is food protective, the pup should be fed in another room so they don’t learn the same behavior. While we want our dogs to allow people to handle their bowls, you should not place your hands in the bowl while they eat. We prefer that you stay in close proximity of the pup while they are eating so that they realize you are not a threat.

• When they are done eating, just pick up the bowl. We don’t want the pups to think we are taking food away, which could inadvertently cause food aggression/protective issues.

It’s important that our puppies be fed high-quality nutritious food. A good quality dry dog food provides a shiny, healthy thick coat; firm, compact stools; and adequate caloric intake for age and size-appropriate weight. Please talk with your puppy advisor or area coordinator for a list of approved foods.

Our puppies are fed a dry food diet readily found in grocery or pet stores. We do not feed large-breed specific food to our puppies. The reason for not feeding the large-breed food is so that we can ensure that our puppies have a diet that helps them grow at a more moderate pace. A moderate pace will mean that puppies should not (theoretically) have excessive growth spurts. Puppies that have major growth spurts are prone to bone disorders often associated with a diet that is inadequate or inappropriate for their needs.

Therefore, puppy food should be a more satisfactory diet than the large-breed puppy food. Anyone really interested in this should look at the bag and note the differences in protein levels, phosphorus, calcium, and vitamin D ratios. These ratios are relative to a growing puppy with a great nutritional need. Please do not be misled into thinking that the size of the kibble is the important factor here. The kibble size remains the same, but the ingredients do not!

When you bring the puppy home, they will be used to eating three times a day. This is the schedule you should follow. At first, the transition from the Guide Dog Foundation to your home might affect the puppy’s appetite. There’s no need to be concerned. Usually, within a day or two, the pup will adjust and look forward to their food with much excitement.

One cup at breakfast time, one cup at lunch time, and one cup in the evening. Do not overfeed the dog, regardless of the instructions on the bag; overfeeding can cause obesity and orthopedic problems. All puppies are individuals and amounts may need to be adjusted to suit each pup. Please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator if you have any further questions about how much, when or what to feed the puppy. If you have any further questions about how much, when or what to feed the puppy.

Never add anything to your guide dog puppy’s food. You should not give the puppy any table scraps, cottage cheese, yogurt, canned vegetables, or raw eggs. It’s not necessary, and it can
cause gastrointestinal problems. In addition, feeding table scraps can cause behavioral issues, such as begging for or stealing food.

The Guide Dog Foundation insists that you follow this feeding regime. Any change could produce gastrointestinal problems. *If you feel that this schedule is not working for you or for the puppy, please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator for advice.*

**When to feed the pup in the crate**

Young puppies should be fed in their crates with the door closed. This is important for two reasons: It reinforces to the puppy that the kennel is a happy and safe place, and it allows the puppy to focus better on eating without distractions. Puppies need to be able to concentrate on eating their meals when they are offered.

**When to feed the pup out of the crate**

When the puppy is between 4 and 5 months of age and reliably eating all its meals, you can start to feed it in outside of the crate.

Puppies should be taught to sit while you place their food down. They should not attempt to eat until you have told them to do so. (This is how the dogs will be fed when they are working guides.)

**Feeding Procedure**

It is important that guide dog puppies are taught to wait for their food until their handler allows them to eat. It would be dangerous if a guide dog was so anxious to eat it leapt toward food, went too fast, or rushed forward, which could potentially hurt someone who is visually impaired.

Your guide dog puppy will learn to sit politely for meals and wait until the whistle has been blown three times to approach the food bowl.

**Guidelines to start whistle feeding**

- Begin with your puppy on leash with the leash relaxed in your hand.
- Calmly place the food bowl down 3 to 4 feet away from your puppy so they cannot eat before given the signal.
- If your puppy becomes distracted or excited when the food is visible, wait until they have settled down and returned their focus back on you.
- Whistle three times and place the food bowl in front of the puppy as a signal that they can eat.
Once your puppy associates the three sharp whistles with being fed you can start allowing the pup to walk toward the food bowl.

After your pup has matured and gained self-control through this exercise you can start placing them in an on-leash stay. Then, stand 4 to 5 feet in front of them with the bowl of food in your hands, and lower the food bowl down. If the puppy breaks their stay before you whistle, place them in the previous spot before whistling.

If your puppy consistently struggles with the stay and whistle you have started too early and need to return to your pup remaining on your left side until you whistle.

Whistle feeding still allows for the feeding procedure to be controlled by the handler, who can maintain an expectable level of obedience. It gives the dog a clear and obvious verbal cue when to eat.

The dog is more willing to return to the handler due to the expectation of food reward. The three sharp blows of the whistle, followed by the dog’s name and the Come verbal cue, allows those puppy raisers with poor and ineffective voices to be more effective in gaining the dog’s attention and instructing it to return immediately to the handler.

Dogs that have wandered too far and may not hear just the voice of the handler can easily pick up the distinctive three-blow pattern from the whistle.

Transitioning to Adult Food and Eliminating Lunch

Unless otherwise instructed, when the puppy is 7 months old, switch to adult formula food. The switching can be accomplished successfully by weaning the pup from one food to another gradually. We recommend doing this in ¼-cup increments over a period of 10 days.

Days 1 to 3: For each meal combine ¾ cup puppy food with ¼ cup adult food.

Days 4 to 6: For each meal ½ cup puppy food with ½ cup adult food.

Days 7 to 10: For each meal ¼ cup puppy food with ¾ cup adult food.

*If the puppy’s stool becomes soft during the weaning process, stay at that level of food until its stool firms up again and then continue with the weaning. For example, if the stool becomes soft when you get to the ½ and ½, stay at that level until the stool firms up again. Then continue with the schedule.

Eliminating lunch

When the puppy is 7 months old, you will eliminate the lunchtime feeding. Again, we recommend doing this in ¼-cup increments over a period of about 1 week.

*If the puppy was eating 1 cup, three times per day (total of 3 cups of food), it will now be getting 1½ cups twice a day (total of 3 cups of food).
Evaluating Your Pup’s Weight

Run your hands down your pup’s rib cage and move your hands back and forth while you and the pup are standing. You should be able to feel their ribs. If you can see your pup’s ribs, you might need to increase their food. If either of these situations applies, please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator for advice on how you should adjust the pup’s food intake and feeding schedule. Contact your advisor or area coordinator for advice on how you should adjust the pup’s food intake and feeding schedule.

Important Notes

A loss of interest in mealtime is unusual for a growing puppy. Please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator for advice if this happens.

In the past, we have received many phone calls regarding pups that always seem to be hungry. Many people base this assumption on the fact that their pup is picking up and eating leaves, sticks, etc. This behavior has nothing to do with how full or empty their tummies are as much as it has to do with behavior, possible boredom, and the ability to get away with it. Dogs explore the world through their mouths, much like small children do with their hands. In order to determine if the pup is getting the correct amount of food, please see above for a description of what their bodies should look like. If you are unsure if the pup’s food needs to be increased or decreased, please call your puppy advisor or area coordinator for advice.

Check to make sure you are feeding the proper amount of food and that your dog is not distracted by other pets in the vicinity while they are eating.

To slow the puppy down, here are some suggestions:

- Spread the dry food on a cookie sheet.
- With the dry food already in the bowl, add enough water so that the food floats.
- Add toys (Nylabones, Kong, or any other durable approved toy) in the bowl so the puppy has to eat around them.

Do not add anything to the food to entice the puppy to eat. Finicky eaters should have the food removed after 10 minutes; they must learn to eat when their food is offered!

Contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator if poor eating habits continue.

Appropriate treats for guide dog puppies

- Part of their meal. Keeping some of their allocated meals as treats can be done for food reward.
• High-quality dog biscuits in a small size only. You may feed the puppy up to three small biscuits per day.
• Raw, unpeeled carrots no longer than 1 inch in length.
• Apples are an excellent treat as well. Remove the seeds and the core as they contain small amounts of arsenic, which is toxic for dogs. Apples can also cause diarrhea so do not feed them to your pup if they have a sensitive stomach or have had recent GI issues.
• Ice cubes –no calories and can be given daily as a reward.
• Raw fresh string beans. You may feed the puppy up to three string beans per day.

If the puppy is having issues with their stools, do not feed apples, carrots, or string beans.

Water

Puppies need a steady supply of fresh water. Adequate hydration is necessary for their physical well-being and growth. Please provide your dog with free access to fresh, clean water all day. A normal, healthy dog will only drink as much water as he or she needs to stay hydrated.

Limiting water (in the summer especially) can be dangerous to the dog. No two dogs are the same, and one may need more water than another just to stay healthy; we cannot say how much water is enough for any particular dog. Never limit a dog’s water because you think that it has had enough. Especially in the heat and with varying amounts of exercise, not enough water in hot weather can lead to dehydration and heat stroke. It can also cause very serious urinary tract and digestive problems.

If you feel that the puppy is drinking too much water and/or are having problems with house breaking, please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

3-3 RELIEVING AND TEACHING BUSY

One of the most important foundations you can teach your puppy is a consistent relieving verbal cue and routine. To be a guide dog your puppy must learn to relieve on verbal cue, on leash, and on a hard surface.

The verbal cue Busy should be given to teach your puppy to relieve when you ask them to relieve themselves. It’s important that your puppy learns to relieve themselves only where and when you ask them to when they are on leash.

Teaching your puppy the Busy verbal cue

• To teach this verbal cue most effectively, pick a designated busy spot at your home and take your pup to the designated area every time early in their training. Using the same door to exit your home will also help establish a consistent busy routine.
At a young age many puppies will need to be carried to their busy area to prevent them from relieving themselves before given the verbal cue or having an accident in the house.

- Remember that your busy area should be a dry, hard surface like asphalt.
  - When your dog is in training and with their partner they will be expected to relieve only on hard surfaces. The reason for this is the ease of cleanup and to prevent dogs from pulling their partners over to or relieving on grass.
- Once your puppy is in their busy area, give the verbal cue **Busy** and allow them to sniff while walking around you.
  - As the handler you should stay stationary and allow your puppy to circle around you. There is no need to move to a “new” spot or allow your puppy to drag you to sniff.
- When your puppy starts to relieve themselves say **Busy** followed by praise. Wait until they are done urinating or defecating to praise them, but quietly tell them **Good Busy**. It may take several weeks for your puppy to correlate relieving with the Busy verbal cue.
- Once your puppy seems to understand the busy verbal cue start saying **Busy right before** they start to relieve. As before, praise your pup once they have urinated or defecated.
  - Once you have done this for several days and the connection seems to be understood, start saying the verbal cue as your pup indicates they are about to busy but hasn’t started yet.
  - Then, start saying the verbal cue when you get to the area where they normally relieve themselves.
- Follow a consistent routine and be patient. Always relieve your pup on leash on a hard surface and praise them when they are done!

**Preventing accidents**

- Usually pups need to relieve at these times.
  - First thing in the morning
  - After playing, eating, or napping
  - After a new experience, training, or being exercised
- Learn how frequently your pup needs busy breaks.
  - Young puppies need to relieve frequently, but older pups learn to wait until given the opportunity.
- Do not allow your puppy to drink too much water before bedtime.
  - Do not limit their water too early, but remove water an hour or two before bedtime.
  - Always offer an opportunity to relieve after their last meal and before bedtime.
- Read your pup’s body language.
  - Some pups slow down, pause frequently, vocalize, or start sniffing the ground.
- Take your young puppy out every time they signal even if it’s late at night.
- Be patient and consistent.
Set up for success

- Always have your puppy in their crate when you cannot supervise them.
- Make sure the crate is not too large that they can soil in one area and still be comfortable.
  - A crate divider or a box to take up space should prevent your puppy from soiling their crate.
- Supervise and watch your puppy’s body language. If they are in their crate or supervised there will be less opportunity for accidents.
- Always take your puppy to the same area to relieve themselves.
- If you catch your puppy relieving inside the house gently correct them.
  - Do not correct your puppy after the accident has already occurred.
  - If you catch them relieving, take the puppy outside to finish relieving.
- Do not scold or hit your puppy. Do not rub their nose in the accident.
- Praise your puppy if they finish relieving outside.

If your puppy has an accident in the house it is important to clean the area as soon as possible. Puppies will be drawn to the area where they have already relieved. Most grocery and pet stores have effective cleaners that will deodorize the area and prevent staining.

Relieving without permission for puppies over 5 months old

- If you are in a public place and your puppy indicates they need to busy tell your puppy NO, place them into a sit for about 1 minute, and, if possible, take your puppy home to busy.
  - Taking them home will teach the puppy they have to relieve only when asked to do so.
  - If you feel your puppy cannot wait to get home to busy take them to a close, appropriate busy area.
- If you are in a situation where you can act more dramatically, give a sharp leash correction and more intense verbal correction to disrupt the relieving. Firmly place your puppy in a sit for several minutes and then take them home to their designated busy area. Your puppy should be praised enthusiastically when they are relieve in their designated busy area.
- Remember that your puppy should not ask to relieve by pulling or indicating. They should be given a time and place by you – this will prevent accidents and the development of undesirable habits.

If your puppy continues to have accidents or you are having problems establishing a busy routine please contact your area coordinator or advisor.

Why the Busy verbal cue is so important

As you know, your job as a puppy raiser is to teach your puppy verbal cues and behaviors that will be the foundation for their guide dog training. Your puppy needs to learn how to busy on verbal cue and control their relieving while they are working.
Focus on teaching your puppy when and where to relieve so a negative pattern is not created by letting your puppy decide indiscriminately when to relieve. It is important that your puppy only relieves themselves when told to do. Provide plenty of positive opportunities to relieve in their designated spot. Creating a pattern and routine will build a foundation for correct relieving habits.

When your puppy is in public keep the exposures short and close to an exit. Always have cleanup supplies in case an accident does occur. A puppy should not establish the habit of relieving in stores or public areas. If your puppy did not relieve at home they should not be taken in public.

Never use neighborhood walks or off-leash playtimes as an opportunity for relieving. Your puppy should busy before and after walks and playtime so they don’t get in the habit of relieving indiscriminately.

Any time a puppy relieves themselves without being given the verbal cue to do so is an accident – in stores, on neighborhood walks, even pulling off to the side as an indication is an accident. An accident is any unplanned relieving.

- What goes in must come out. After meals, naps, and playtime, pups usually need to relieve themselves.
- Consistency is key! Create a schedule and stick to it.
- Accidents will happen so always have cleanup supplies on hand.
- Any unplanned relieving is an accident and is an undesirable habit.

3-4 MAINTAINING YOUR PUP’S HEALTH

Daily grooming is essential for the puppy’s good health. It keeps the pup looking and feeling good, and it teaches the pup to accept being touched. Daily brushing helps to distribute the natural oils throughout the coat, remove excess hair, and minimize shedding. Good grooming practices are especially important for puppy raisers, because your work will teach the dog that grooming is a positive experience. This sets the stage for the dog later in life, when its partner will groom it every day as well.

Grooming

While grooming, observe the puppy’s coat and skin for physical irregularities or parasites, such as fleas and ticks; this way, we can address them before a condition becomes an issue. Be on the
lookout for hot spots, an area of moist dermatitis prevalent in the summer (see veterinary section). Be gentle and check carefully for tangles or mats behind the ears and tail.

’s legs or abdomen, because these areas are quite sensitive; instead, run your hands over these areas to check for hot spots. Then with your hands, touch their feet by spreading the toes and massaging the pads, tail, ears, muzzle, gums, neck, stomach, and legs in a gentle and friendly way. This way, they will look forward to this daily interaction. They will look forward to this daily interaction.

If the puppy tries to move, gently but firmly place it back in the position and then calm praise (good sit, down, or stand) while it is still. Be sure to make it positive.

When grooming the puppy, it is important to touch its feet. You can observe to see if there are any abrasions, sores or irritation.

Routine ear maintenance is necessary. With this, a puppy will have generally healthy ears. However, some dogs are predisposed to ear infections. We supply the ear cleaning solution for you to clean the pup’s ears. You will only need to clean them when they are dirty. See the veterinary section for instructions on how and when to properly use the ear cleaning solution.

It is a good idea to groom the puppy when it is tired. Because puppies have a short attention span, they will naturally fidget. It is important that you communicate to the pup that this event is positive. Initially start for a minute or so, increasing the time spent grooming very gradually. The grooming sessions should eventually be a maximum of 10 minutes. If the puppy is uncooperative, contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator.

- Brush your puppy while they are sitting or lying on their side.
  - As they get older you can expect them to stand while being examined and groomed as well.
- Be gentle while brushing to create a positive experience. Include all parts of the body – ears, neck, chest, belly, back, and tail.
- Check your puppy’s ears for any redness, odor, or discharge, and if necessary, clean them with ear cleaning solution and a damp cloth.
  - Our dogs can get dirty ears after baths, swimming, or playing outside. Make sure to wipe their ears out and clean them when they’re in those environments.
- Handle your pup’s feet even if you aren’t trimming their nails. Check for cuts, abrasions, or sore spots.

**Ear Care**

Generally, with routine maintenance, a puppy will have healthy ears. However, like people, some dogs are predisposed to infections. If the puppy shakes their head or scratches in the area of their collar, check its ears with the “sniff test.” Just as a clean, healthy dog has a characteristic “doggy,” but not unpleasant, smell, so too do clean ears. Any unpleasant smell, or sign of debris or reddening, indicates an infection. Sometimes only one ear is infected, sometimes both. Be sure to make us aware of any problems you have with the puppy’s ears.
Otitis externa is an ear infection of the external ear canal. Generally, it is caused by an overabundance of yeast, bacteria, or a combination of the two. Routine ear cleaning can decrease the occurrence of otitis externa.

The pup’s ears should be examined on a daily basis and cleaned when dirty. A dog’s ear canal is deep and curved, and dirt, wax and excess moisture often accumulate (particularly because Retriever ears are large and heavy).

**How to clean your pup’s ears**

- Hold pup’s ear open.
- Fill the ear canal liberally with the cleaning solution. Gently massage at the base of the ear.
- Place a cotton ball just inside the ear, and again gently massage the base of the ear.
- Let the puppy shake out excess solution.
- Gently wipe the outer ear with a clean cotton ball.
- If any colored debris is present on the clean cotton, repeat the above steps

**Symptoms of ear infection to look for during routine cleaning include:**

- Redness or irritation
- Unpleasant odor or discharge
- Pain and/or tenderness
- Dark wax or debris

If any of the above symptoms are noted, call your puppy advisor or area coordinator, rather than your veterinarian.

**Nail Trimming**

*If you do not have experience clipping a dog’s nails please do not attempt to do it yourself.*

Dogs’ nails have a soft, fleshy insert, called “the quick.” If this section is cut, the puppy will bleed profusely, and it is quite painful. The end result: a puppy who shows concern or fear when their feet are touched.

When you groom the puppy, handle their feet. When you are in puppy class, you can have your puppy advisor or area coordinator trim the pup’s nails. If you have a scheduled vet appointment, you may also ask your vet to trim their nails. If you are on Long Island, you may bring the pup into the kennel. By handling their feet, you will get the pup accustomed to this procedure.
Bathing

Bathing the puppy is necessary only when wiping them down with a wet cloth is insufficient (e.g., when the puppy is heavily soiled). Excessive shampooing dries out a pup’s coat and skin and removes all topical flea and tick products. Please do not bathe the puppy weekly. A bath once every 2 months should be sufficient with normal daily activities. When bathing the puppy, be sure to minimize the risk of skin irritations by rinsing them thoroughly.

The pup should be bathed using a mild puppy shampoo, which you can get from any pet store. **Do not use any shampoo that has flea control in it unless you speak with your puppy advisor or area coordinator first.**

The puppy will be bathed each time it enters or leaves our kennel.

Teeth Cleaning

Brush your dog’s teeth regularly after 6 months of age.

- Keep sessions limited to 1 minute each, at the same time and in the same location each day.
- Start by getting your pet used to having something placed in the mouth. Place your finger, dipped in lukewarm water, inside the cheek along the outer surfaces of the teeth on either side. (Garlic water, or beef or chicken bouillon may be used.)
- Once your dog has accepted this procedure, progress to a dampened gauze pad or pantyhose wrapped around your finger. Gently sweep across the outer surfaces of the teeth on either side. Follow with praise and reward. Continue daily until your pet accepts it with little objection.
- Purchase a C.E.T.® toothbrush (available through your veterinarian) or an Oral-B20® soft children’s toothbrush. Moisten the brush with Viadent® toothpaste (available through pharmacies and most food stores) or Nolvadent® (available through your veterinarian). Other pet toothpastes can be used, but they are less effective as plaque-inhibiting agents. Do not use “people toothpaste.”
- The cheek is gently pulled from the teeth and the brush is inserted at a 45-degree angle between tooth and cheek. Concentrate on the area where the tooth meets the gum using short, gentle strokes back and forth over the external surface of each tooth (especially the molars in the back). Praise the pet during and after each session.
- Continue 1-minute sessions daily. Have a veterinary dental exam done at 6-month intervals to ensure health and help prolong the life of the puppy.

3-5 EXERCISE AND PLAY

Daily exercise is just as important to your puppy’s health as feeding, grooming, and obedience. Our dogs are expected to be fit and well behaved. Many of our guide dogs walk miles every day so it is important for pups to develop stamina and be healthy. Exercise and play helps your puppy bond, relieve stress, and release energy. Overall, an exercised puppy that plays has the mental and physical capabilities to learn and act properly.
Signs pups will give to indicate needing exercise

- Inability to focus or listen to you
- Quick to excite and hard to calm down
- Fidgeting
- Persistent mouthing
- Running through the house and leaping on furniture – puppy “scoots” or “zooms”

Appropriate play and exercise

- Should occur outside in fenced-in area or on a long line or retractable leash if the area isn’t fenced.
  - Your pup can run, but do not chase them – it only encourages them to be unresponsive.
- Indoor playtime should be quiet and low-key.
- Do not permit roughhousing, romping, or chase games in the house.
  - This can be a dangerous activity when they are in their home with their new partner.
- Walking on leash, running in a fenced area, or swimming are all safe types of play and good exercise.
- Do not run or jog with your puppy on leash.
  - We do not want our pups to get in the habit of jogging when on leash.
  - Puppies’ growing joints are not fully developed and cannot handle jogging for long periods of time.

Safe play and exercise

- Always in an enclosed area or on leash.
- Do not push your puppy to continue playing or exercising if they are tired.
  - Some warning signs that your pup is too tired are heavy panting, heavy breathing, attempting to lie down, moving slowly, or unwilling to continue.
- Learn your pup’s energy level. Different ages, temperaments, and breeds have different exercise needs.

Acceptable Toys

- Nylabones
  - Only the “durable” bones and size appropriate for your pup
- Natural sterilized bones
- Kong toys
- West Paw’s Zogoflex dog toys
The Būmi® is a favorite with our Labs, and it is durable

- JW Hol-ee roller
- Dentabones
- Deer antlers
- Jolly ball
- Balls of any kind
  - Only to be used with the modified retrieve

Unacceptable Toys

- Flavored bones
- Rawhide
- Shoes or socks
- Sticks
- Gummy or soft bones
- Plastic bottles
- Frisbee® (flying discs)
- Vinyl toys
- Soft toys
  - Can be used as a training tool with instruction from the puppy department
- Stuffed animals
- Retrieving toys

Engaging in Play Without a Toy

Playtime is crucial for a well-rounded, happy puppy. Pups learn about other dogs, their environment, and how to interact with humans through playing. It’s important to teach your pup how to play appropriately even if a toy is not present.

Play can help refocus your pup, occupy them if they’re bored, relieve stress, reward them for good behavior, build their trust, and practice self-control. Interactive play becomes a great way to reward or relieve stress in training and when your pup is with their partner.

How to play interactively with your pup

- Start with your pup on the leash
- Stand, sit, or kneel near your pup
- Encourage your pup to engage with you
  - Your pup will start becoming playful by bouncing, darting, or wiggling around
- Encourage them to continue these happy behaviors with an excited voice and light touches
- Stop play by using the verbal cue **Enough** followed by the verbal cue **Sit** or **Down**
Once you have stopped playing with your pup they will learn playtime is over

- Practice starting and stopping playtime on your terms
  - This helps teach your pup playtime is initiated and ended by their handler

Interactive play is a useful tool that can be used almost everywhere. If your pup had a particularly stressful experience, for example, walking up stairs that were a new surface and they were hesitant, quietly engage them in play for a short period of time (10 seconds to a minute) before walking back down. Engaging your pup in play reinforces that outings are fun, and your presence is supportive. Play relieves stress and gives them a break from the next task.

You can use interactive play when your pup gets fidgety in public. Focus their attention on you, quietly play with them for several minutes, and then ask them to stop. Continue this on and off, and they will become more focused on you – you’re teaching them self-control by controlling when the play starts and stops.

**Interactive play should not include the following:**

- Roughhousing
- Wrestling
- Chasing the pup or letting them chase you
- Holding or pinning the pup down
- Slapping or being rough with the puppy

**Do not encourage or permit the following:**

- Becoming excessively excited
- Vocalizing
- Mouthing or grabbing at clothing
- Snapping
- Barking
- Leaping up or onto you
- Racing behind you
- Mounting you or any objects

**When you play with your puppy remember to use a quiet, excited voice and only gently pat or push to engage them with you during the playtime.**

It is important that our pups learn when it is appropriate to play and when it is time to work. Directing when playtime occurs, starts, and stops gives your puppy the opportunity to practice self-control and reinforces your leadership role with your pup. You control playtime by when the game starts, stops, how intense the playtime is, and what type of playtime. It is important to remember to remain consistent so you are seen as your pup’s leader from their perspective.
4-1 VETERINARY OVERVIEW

Why is proper veterinary care so important?

- Routine vet care enables us to give our guide dog puppies the best possible chance of growing up happy, healthy, and vibrant.
- It also allows us to be proactive in dealing with the health of our puppies.
- Since our puppies have been bred for guide work, we want to ensure that they are in peak condition at all times for the important career path that lies ahead of them.

The puppy’s vaccine schedule has already started. Everything above the double black line on the “Routine Vet Schedule” chart in this chapter has already been given to the puppy. Please start your care after the 7-week mark unless otherwise directed.

Your guide dog puppy requires a vet appointment for each of the vaccines listed on the puppy’s personalized vet schedule. Please call your participating vet hospital at least 1 week in advance to make an appointment for the pup on or about the date given.

The Physical Characteristics of a Dog

Use this picture and terminology when discussing the puppy with your veterinarian or Guide Dog Foundation personnel. Correct use of terminology helps everyone understand what is being described.
<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neck</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Back</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tail</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Head  
2. Neck  
3. Back  
4. Tail  
5. Thigh  
6. Stifle (knee)  
7. Hock  
8. Elbow  
9. Feet/Paws  
10. Carpus  
11. Chest  
12. Shoulder  
13. Bite/Teeth
### Normal Dog Vital Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital Sign</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Abnormal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rectal Temperature</td>
<td>100.4 to 102.5 °F</td>
<td>Above 103 or below 99 °F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiration Rate</td>
<td>10–30 breaths per minute</td>
<td>Faster or slower rate, labored breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not when panting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulse Rate</td>
<td>70–160 beats per minute</td>
<td>Weak pulse, faster or slower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Indicators of a Dog’s Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Sign of Illness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appetite</td>
<td>Will eat readily</td>
<td>Won’t eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>Normal dogs occasionally vomit food or bile (yellow foam) once every few weeks</td>
<td>Repeated vomiting or retching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stool</td>
<td>Firm, log-shaped</td>
<td>Watery or unformed diarrhea; blood in stool; straining to defecate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Whatever is normal for that dog</td>
<td>Consider outdoor temperature, but lethargy is a sign of illness; excessive restlessness also may be a sign of illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panting</td>
<td>Can be normal even when a dog is not hot; panting is a means of heat elimination</td>
<td>Possible sign of illness, especially if present with other signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lameness</td>
<td>Short-term lameness (1–2 days)</td>
<td>Long-term lameness (more than a few days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urination</td>
<td>Whatever is normal for that dog</td>
<td>Very frequent urination, or accidents in the house when previously housebroken; if severe, blood in urine or straining to urinate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Routine Vet Schedule

What to expect

During the pup’s exam, the vet will note the general condition of the pup. The doctor will check the eyes, ears, mouth, teeth, coat, skin, and paws. The doctor may run his/her hands along the puppy’s body looking for any sensitive area, checking the size of the lymph glands, and looking for any unusual bumps. Some vets may take the pup’s temperature. This initial exam should help to pick up anything unusual about the pup’s health.

Anything other than a normal check-up should be reported to the Guide Dog Foundation immediately! The puppy has its own medical file at the Guide Dog Foundation. We need to keep accurate notes, not only for the health of the dog, but for information for the Breeding Department.

If, at any point, you think the pup may require medical attention that is not an emergency (such as for limping, an ear infection, flaky skin), please call the Guide Dog Foundation before calling your vet.

Vaccinations

Why vaccinate? In the event the puppy is exposed to a disease we vaccinate for, it will already have some protection against the virus. A vaccine exposes the puppy’s immune system to the disease in a form that the puppy’s body can fight off. This prepares the puppy’s body defenses against attack in the event it encounters the disease in the future.

The pup receives vaccinations for these diseases. Please refer to the vaccination schedule for the puppy that is included in this manual.

- **Distemper** A highly contagious disease caused by a virus. It is known to attack the cells that line the surfaces of the body (eye membranes, airways, and mucous membranes of the intestinal tract). Fever, loss of appetite, listlessness, and watery discharge from the eyes and nose are the first-stage indicators of the disease.

- **Infectious canine hepatitis** A highly contagious viral disease transmitted only to dogs. It primarily affects the liver, kidneys, and lining of the blood vessels. Fever, painful movement, “tucked up belly,” vomiting, refusal to eat, bloody diarrhea, and squinting and tearing of the eyes are some of the acute symptoms in an affected dog.

- **Leptospirosis** This disease is caused by a bacteria that enters a dog’s system through a break in the skin, or via the mouth when the dog drinks water or eats food contaminated by infected urine. Leptospirosis primarily affects the kidneys and the liver. Ulcers form on the membranes of the mouth and tongue; vomiting, diarrhea, and bleeding from the mouth are some symptoms of the disease.

- **Rabies** A fatal disease that can occur in nearly all warm-blooded animals. The virus is present in infected saliva, and usually enters at the site of bite. Skunks, raccoons, bats, foxes, and other wild carnivores can carry the disease. The signs and symptoms of rabies are
caused by encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Personality changes, avoiding light, and seeking seclusion are some symptoms of the disease.

- **Canine parvovirus (CPV)**’s hair and feet, as well as on contaminated cages, shoes and other objects. Severe depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, profuse diarrhea, and a high fever appear after the virus’s incubation period.
- **Kennel cough (tracheobronchitis)** Virusess and bacteria, alone or in combination, are causative agents. A harsh, dry spastic cough is a characteristic sign of illness. Kennel cough gets its name from the fact that often dogs are exposed to it while boarding where other dogs have it. We vaccinate with Bordetella or Intra Trac II (intranasal) against this virus.

**Heartworm prevention**

Heartworm prevention is given on the first day of each month. Start this preventative after the pup is 8 weeks old. Enough medication has been included in the puppy kit for the entire year you will have the pup. Please issue the dosage according to the pup’s weight. (See “Heartworm Prevention” information in this manual for details about the disease.) It also is used for the control of adult hookworm, roundworm, and whipworm infection.

**Flea prevention**

The Guide Dog Foundation currently provides our puppy raisers with flea prevention. One dose is administered on the first day of each month. Flea prevention protects your pup and home against fleas as well as flea-borne parasites.

**Fecal checks**

Fecal checks are often required by your pup’s veterinarian to ensure your pup is healthy. Fecal checks are done to make sure your pup does not have any intestinal parasites that can cause vomiting, diarrhea, lethargic behavior, and weight loss.

We provide you with one fecal container and you will collect approximately a dime size amount of fecal matter before the vet appointment so they can check a fresh sample.

**Spaying and neutering**

If it is time for your dog to be spayed a representative of the Guide Dog Foundation will contact you. **Do not have the pup spayed, neutered, or X-rayed without permission from the Guide Dog Foundation.**

When we call, we will request that your vet takes hip X-rays of the pup (possibly elbows and shoulders, too). Please set up a date with your vet after you hear from the Foundation, and notify the puppy department of the date the X-rays and/or surgery will occur.

The Guide Dog Foundation’s staff veterinarian needs to have a copy of any X-ray for evaluation to determine if the hips are acceptable for guide work. Please drop them off in our lobby or have them...
mailed to us, to the attention of the puppy department if they are not sent electronically. We will notify you if the pup is released from the program for an orthopedic reason at this time. (Please see section on orthopedics for more information.)

**Heartworm Disease and Prevention in Dogs**

You have to hand it to that pesky mosquito. Not only does he annoy man and beast alike, but he also carries an especially nasty scourge to unprotected dogs.

The malady is called heartworm disease. It is caused by a parasite that literally lives in the dog’s heart! The microscopic larval stages are passed from one dog to another when the mosquito takes a blood meal. The immature heartworms migrate to the heart and lungs as they develop over the next few months. The presence of the worms interferes with the heart’s ability to pump blood to the rest of body. Consequently, the heart and lungs fail to function properly, and the dog becomes very sick.

Because we live in an area where heartworm prevention is recommended, we advise that you protect your dog against this threat. It’s easy to do. And since it only takes one mosquito to pass along heartworm disease, even indoor dogs can benefit from prevention. A simple blood test is needed* before preventative medication is started to make sure your dog does not already carry the parasite.

> *Prevention can be started without a blood test if the puppy is less than 6 months of age.*
4-3 COMMON AILMENTS

Vomiting
Vomiting may be a sign that the puppy has swallowed something that doesn’t agree with him, such as grass, cigarette butts, or garbage. Sometimes puppies will retch and bring up a yellowish substance. This is fairly normal and a sign that something did not quite agree with him.

If he vomits for more than 3 hours, vomits blood, or seems very depressed, contact your veterinarian or the Foundation. Withhold food and all oral medications until his system has settled down. When you clean up the mess, check it for foreign material. This may give you a clue as to what he chewed or swallowed, and if any action is needed. Save the remains of any chewed package material or plants for poison control information.

Vomiting Treatment
1. No food or water for 6–8 hours, or you will upset the stomach more.
2. Give water in the form of ice cubes, just three or four in the pup’s dish.
3. Afterward, give small, frequent feedings of a bland diet, such as Science Diet’s ID (the canned or dry food), or a mix of 2/3 rice to 1/3 boiled or cooked chicken.
4. If there is no change in the pup’s condition within 24 hours, see your veterinarian! Smaller puppies generally can get dehydrated quicker and require attention sooner.

Diarrhea
The cause of diarrhea, a common problem with puppies, can be difficult to determine. The puppy may have swallowed garbage or eaten rich food, or bacteria, parasites, or an infectious virus could be the cause.

Diarrhea treatment
1. Drop off a stool sample at the Foundation or with your veterinarian.
2. If pup has diarrhea, but no vomiting, give three or four ice cubes every hour.
3. Follow steps 1, 3, and 4 in the vomiting treatment section above.

Weaning the puppy back to dry food
If the puppy is on chicken and rice or an I.D. diet, keep feeding until stool is solid for 3 days. After 3 days of solid stool, follow this regimen:
1. Feed 3/4 chicken & rice with 1/4 dry food (for 3 days)
2. Feed 1/2 chicken & rice with 1/2 dry food (for 3 days)
3. Feed 1/4 chicken & rice with 3/4 dry food (for 3 days)
4. Switch to 100 percent dry food

If diarrhea recurs at any point during the transition, please call the Guide Dog Foundation.

**Skin**

There are several common skin conditions and remedies.

**Hot spots**

Hot spots are an oozing, ulcerated area of the skin that appears plaque like. They are triggered by an underlying allergic reaction (such as insect hypersensitivity or inhalant allergies). They often arise on the head or trunk.

**Basic treatment for “hot spots”**

- Clip hair over area if possible. (Do not use scissors, only clippers, if available.)
- Soak area two to three times daily with Burrows Solution (aluminum acetate) OR Gold Bond powder or ointment OR hydrogen peroxide. All of these products are available at your local pharmacy.
- Keep your dog distracted for several minutes so they don’t lick the area after application.

If the hot spots do not seem to be improving, oral medication may be necessary. If you have any questions, please call contact your advisor or area coordinator

**Pyoderma**

Pyoderma are pustules found in small numbers on the surface of the abdomen on almost all puppies (known as puppy pyoderma). They go away without treatment. Adolescent dogs (5 to 8 months old) often get pimples on the chin (chin acne). If they spread, they may need antibiotic treatment.

**Sarcoptic mange/scabies**

Scabies has zoonotic potential, which means it can be transmitted from animals to people. Usually, it is picked up in wooded areas or from other dogs and wild animals. It is a microscopic mite that bites the dog and triggers intense itching. These mites are too small to be seen with the naked eye.

**Demodectic mange/demodex**

Demodex does not have zoonotic potential. A mite that resides in the hair follicles creates patchy hair loss; they generally do not create intense itching. Usually demodex is diagnosed in younger
animals (under 1 year of age) or older animals that are immune compromised. These mites are too small to be seen with the naked eye.

**Ringworm**

A fungal infection causing patchy hair loss, generally with a circular, ring like appearance. Some species glow under an ultraviolet light (determined by a veterinarian). This is transmissible to humans!

**Lick granulomas**

Also known as lick sores, they are usually are seen on the front legs above the toes up to the mid-leg area, or on the hind legs below the hock. The dog licks and chews at the same area until a hairless, thickened, scar-like tissue area develops. The sores vary in size from approximately 1 centimeter up to several centimeters. Boredom or stress often plays a role in their formation.

**Cheyletiella**

A skin condition that is also known as “walking dandruff.” This is often transmitted by rabbits and appears as very large flakes of dandruff. They make the dog itchy.

Please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator to learn more or if you suspect your dog has any of these conditions.

**Eye Conditions**

Many dogs experience eye issues and they are easily treated if caught early on so treatment can start.

**Conjunctivitis**

This is an inflammation of the conjunctiva of the eyes. Causes are usually infections or allergies.

**Entropion**

When you see “rolling in” of any part of one or multiple eyelids creating squinting, tearing, and even corneal ulceration from the hairs rubbing the eye.

**Cataracts**

Are seen as opacity of the lens of the eye and/or its capsule.
Please contact your puppy advisor or area coordinator if you suspect your dog may have one of these conditions.

**Intestinal Parasites**
Intestinal parasites are extremely common in puppies and adult dogs. They primarily live in the dog’s intestines. Signs of parasites may vary from diarrhea/soft stool, to blood or mucus in the stool.

Please contact the Foundation if you suspect the puppy may have a parasite. Parasites are diagnosed through microscopic analysis of a stool sample. Oftentimes they can be detected prior to outward signs of infection. Your veterinarian or the Guide Dog Foundation can analyze a sample for you.

If the pup is diagnosed with worms, the proper medication will be dispensed.

It is very important to clean up after the dog to decrease transmission of gastrointestinal parasites.

**Parasites visible with the naked eye**

- **Tapeworm**
- **Roundworm**

**Parasites that generally are detected microscopically**

- **Whipworm**
- **Giardia**
- **Hookworm eggs**
- **Cocidia**
**Roundworms and Ascarides**

These are relatively large worms that live in the small intestine as adults. It is a “spaghetti-like” worm seen in the stool. Eggs are seen via fecal flotation. Dogs acquire roundworms via the oral route through soil that contains the eggs. (A female can lay up to 200,000 eggs per day. Because the eggs are protected by a hard shell, they can live for months in the soil.) The eggs migrate to the intestine and hatch there. Adult roundworms live in the intestines of the dog.

Roundworms are more of a health risk in young puppies than in adult dogs. Periodic fecal checks will alert your veterinarian to their presence. A dewormer will be prescribed as treatment.

Note: Please make sure children wash their hands thoroughly after handling the puppy. In rare cases, roundworms can be transmitted.

**Hookworms**

Hookworms are small, thin worms approximately ¼-inch to ½-inch in length that fasten to the wall of the small intestine and draw blood from the host. Dogs acquire the parasite through contact with larvae in contaminated soil or feces. The typical signs of hookworm infestation are diarrhea and blood in the stool. The stool may also appear dark in color.

If you suspect the pup may have hookworms (e.g., loose stool, etc.), please give a stool sample to the Guide Dog Foundation for analysis. Periodic fecal checks may also alert your veterinarian to the parasite’s presence.

**Giardia**

Signs of giardiasis may be diarrhea, occasionally mixed with mucus and blood. Diagnosis of giardiasis is more difficult and generally is made through fecal lab tests (not on routine fecal flotation). A dog may obtain giardia from drinking contaminated water. Please contact the Guide Dog Foundation if any of the above symptoms occur. species.

**Coccidia**

Coccidia is a protozoan disease of the intestinal tract caused by microscopic organisms called coccidia. Signs of coccidia may be mild diarrhea or mucus like stool that may be tinged with blood. Puppies may get coccidia from contaminated premises, or if still nursing, from their mother. Puppies can reinfect themselves from their own feces. Good sanitation is important!

Coccidia can be found in the stools of puppies but may not cause problems until some stress factor reduces the pup’s resistance. If you suspect the pup has coccidia (e.g., loose stool, etc.), please give a stool sample to the Guide Dog Foundation for analysis.
Whipworms

Whipworms live in the first part of the large intestines in dogs. They fasten themselves to the wall of the gut and feed. A dog may get the parasite by ingesting eggs from contaminated soil. The female lays fewer eggs than most worms. Infestations are frequently light. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to detect the presence of the worms, even after several stool checks.

Whipworms may cause diarrhea, particularly colitis, weight loss, and poor appearance in the dog. When clinical signs occur, they generally include colitis with dark blood and/or mucus in the stool. Eggs are seen in fecal flotation.

Please contact your advisor or area coordinator if you suspect the pup has whipworms.

Tapeworms

Tapeworms live in the small intestine. The head of the parasite fastens itself to the wall of the intestine, and the parasite feeds on matter that passes through the intestine. The most common way a dog gets tapeworms is by biting or swallowing a flea that harbors the immature tapeworms in its intestine. Fleas acquire the parasite by eating tapeworm eggs.

The body segments of tapeworms that contain the eggs are passed in the feces. When dry, they resemble kernels of rice. They can be seen as segments on the surface of the stool; they appear “rice granule like.” Eggs are generally not seen via fecal flotation, so it is important to observe/inspect the surface of the stool after the dog defecates.

The common tapeworm rarely causes significant ill effects. Mild diarrhea, loss of appetite, itchiness around the anus, or reduction in weight may be some noticeable signs of ingestion.

Please contact the Guide Dog Foundation if you suspect the pup has tapeworms.

External Parasites (Fleas, Ticks, and Mites)

There are dozens of products on the market that will kill fleas, mites, and lice. Some may even kill ticks, but there are special preparations for ticks alone. The important thing is to use them regularly. They come as aerosol sprays, powders, soaps, shampoos, or liquids that can be rubbed into the coat. Liquids, aerosols, and even the shampoos may be flammable and are dangerous if someone is smoking, or if there is a stove or heater operating when you are using them. Be sure to follow all directions on the product. Use rubber gloves when applying chemicals.

Fleas are biting insects that live on blood sucked from their hosts. They spend only 15 percent of their lives on the dog or cat, and the rest of the time in the environment. Thus, if one dog or cat in a household has fleas, all the dogs and cats and the entire household will have fleas.

Flea eggs drop into bedding, furniture, carpet, and grass. Since a single adult pair of fleas can produce an infestation of more than 6,000 eggs, larvae, and adults in only 4 weeks, you have no time to waste if the pup has fleas.
Scratching, skin irritation, and self-induced skin infections are most common. Besides being an annoyance, fleas can transmit tapeworms and cause anemia in young animals. A more severe variant of skin disease, flea allergy dermatitis, is found in dogs that become allergic to flea saliva. These unfortunate puppies itch severely, lose hair, and inflict injuries on themselves, usually around the rump or groin area, necessitating veterinary care.

Fleas may be hard to find. Not finding fleas in the puppy’s coat does not rule out flea allergy dermatitis. Flea excrement or “dirt” (small black specks of digested blood) on the skin mean they’re there.

**Treatment for external parasites**

Treatment should involve both the internal (house, car) and external environments. There are a variety of sprays, powders, shampoos, dips, and rub-on products for the pup that have varying degrees of effectiveness. Your veterinarian will advise you as to which product the vet has had the most success with, or depending on the severity of infestation, which is suitable.

For the household, you may turn to aerosol or pump residual sprays, fogging devices (flea-bombs), or a professional exterminator. Be sure to use a product containing an insect growth regulator, such as methoprene or fenoxycarb. Frequent, thorough vacuuming is very important, especially in the area where the puppy sleeps. Discard your vacuum cleaner bags so fleas can’t hatch in them.

There also are outdoor sprays. These are liquid concentrates that, when diluted with water, may be applied using a commercial sprayer or garden hose spray attachment.

Prevention is the least expensive and easiest method of flea control. Early in summer, before populations have a chance to build, take precautions to ensure a flea-free year.

If all dogs and cats in the household are treated, the number of fleas can decrease greatly in a short time.

**Ticks**

If you spot a tick on the puppy, remove it with tweezers. Apply Neosporin or peroxide to the wound. Check the area periodically to make sure the wound is healing properly (drying up and scabbing over).

**4-4 SEXUAL MATURITY**

The onset of sexual maturity (puberty) is triggered by hormonal changes that lead to physical and behavioral changes. Generally speaking, puppies will start to mature sexually between 7 and 10 months of age. There is some variation among breeds and even among bloodlines within a breed.
The Adolescent Female Pup

Normally, females have twice-yearly cycles, but there are some females who will come into heat only once a year. A bitch’s first heat may come as early as 6 months of age and as late as 18 months. Most have their first heat at about 10 months.

How to tell when your female puppy is in season

- Swelling of the vulva (external genitalia).
- Frequent licking and cleaning of the vulva.
- A red discharge from the vulva when heat begins. This will continue for approximately 21 to 28 days and will change during the course of the heat from bloody red, to watery thin red, to nearly colorless.
- Increased urination frequency.
- Behavior changes such as unusual playfulness with other dogs or the appearance of some jumpiness, anxiety, or perhaps intolerance. Sometimes bitches get quirky and show insecurities before or during their heat.
- Excessive coat shedding 4 to 6 weeks prior to the start of heat (may be difficult to detect).

When females can get pregnant

The female can potentially be impregnated any time she will accept a male to mount. This is usually at its peak from days 7 through 18 of the heat, but it can be at any time.

Female puppies may have their first season anytime from 6 months of age on, although a later season is more usual in Labradors and Goldens. Signs to look for are swelling or licking of the vulva, or small droplets of blood on the floor or on the puppy’s bedding. If you suspect your female is in season, do not take them out in public, and this includes puppy meetings. Even if males are neutered, the female in season experiences hormonal changes and can act differently than they would normally.

If the puppy is in season, call your advisor or area coordinator. The puppy will board with us for exactly 4 weeks to prevent any chance of unwanted pregnancy.

Female health issues

Frequent urination may indicate a urinary tract infection. If your older female puppy is urinating frequently, it may signal that she is coming into heat. Contact the Foundation for assistance.

Vaginitis is a yellowish discharge from the vulva (external female genitalia), and it is especially common in young female pups. It tends to clear up after heat but if it is accompanied by excessive licking or frequent urination, oral antibiotics may be used. Call the Foundation for assistance.
young female pups. It tends to clear up after heat but if it is accompanied by excessive licking or frequent urination, oral antibiotics may be used. Call the Foundation for assistance.

The Adolescent Male Pup
A male pup may exhibit objectionable behavior as he reaches maturity. If he mounts your leg or those of children or chairs, let him know that this is unacceptable. The best way to dissuade the dog is to give a correction and to distract him by giving him something else to do at the time. Give him a toy, or a bone, or do a little obedience – anything to take his mind off it. If he persists, notify your point of contact with the Foundation to receive support regarding the issue.

The male pup may become more territorial as he matures, and you may notice that he may want to start “marking his territory” by lifting a leg and leaving a squirt of urine. We cannot have our guide dogs marking. Correct the pup for this. Prevention of this can often be successful by allowing urination only on flat surfaces and not near bushes or trees. To learn more about correcting this behavior, see the training section of this manual or consult your puppy advisor.

With puberty, the pup’s behavior toward other dogs may change as well. He may become less friendly in approaching and might bark or raise his hackles, especially when on his own territory. Consult the puppy department for ways to help control this behavior.

If your mature male puppy has a copious discharge from his penis, notify the Foundation. Occasionally such a condition requires medication, but most times a small amount of discharge is normal.

4-5 ORTHOPEDICS
Lameness or limping
There are many possible causes of lameness, including developmental causes (as in hip or elbow dysplasia), infectious causes (Lyme disease), and trauma (sprains and strains). Unless a leg is obviously broken, we ask that you confine the pup in its crate and call the Foundation for advice.

Many lameness problems are transient and resolve within 2 to 5 days of crate rest. If the problem worsens, is severe, or persists beyond 5 days, please call the Foundation right away.

If a veterinary workup is needed, we usually transport the dog to the Guide Dog Foundation for X-rays. This is because if anything is found, we will need to provide prompt, expert care with our orthopedic specialist.
Panosteitis
This is common cause of lameness in 4- to 12-month-old puppies. Sometimes described as “growing pains,” it is characterized by lameness that wanders from one leg to another over a few weeks to months. It is an inflammation in the long bones of the legs. The lameness may last on any particular leg for days to a few weeks. Although you should never assume this is the cause, panosteitis is a frequent and, fortunately, non-harmful cause of lameness.

The affected dog may favor one or more of its legs, sometimes limping severely or to the point of even carrying the leg. Frequently, the dog will seem to recover completely from whatever was bothering him. A few days or weeks later, it may show the same signs on that or even a different leg.

Please call the Guide Dog Foundation if your dog shows any signs of limping.

Osteochondritis dissecans (OCD)
This is caused by a defect in the cartilage overlying the head of one of the long bones. The cartilage has a tendency to be easily damaged. Repeated stress to the joint perpetuates the condition.

X-rays are used to determine if there is a loose piece of cartilage in the joint or if there is fragmentation of the joint cartilage. Surgical removal of the piece of cartilage or bone fragment is usually recommended.

Elbow dysplasia
This is of developmental origin. It produces an elbow joint that articulates poorly, wears badly, and causes degenerative joint disease (arthritis). Loose fragments of bone or flaps of cartilage in the elbow joint may act as an irritant and abrasive.

If surgery is needed, loose pieces of bone may be removed, or a scraping of the joint space to remove devitalized cartilage and connective tissue may be done to afford some relief.
Hip dysplasia

This is a major problem in large-breed dogs. It is the result of birth defects and growing deformities of the pelvis and hip joints. It is inherited. The “ball and socket” of the hip joint fit poorly, causing abnormal movement of the involved legs and pain.

Early signs of hip dysplasia include:

- Lameness in one or both of the rear legs.
- Reluctance or difficulty in getting up after lying down.
- Reluctance to run and/or jump.
- A swaying appearance to the rear legs when viewed from behind.

Signs may vary considerably. The dog may show no signs, even though severe hip dysplasia is present, or the animal can be totally crippled and disabled by the condition. Signs usually are not detected in the newborn puppy, but often appear during the period of rapid growth between 6 months and 1 year of age.

Diagnosis is by X-ray examination. Sedation is usually necessary to restrain the dog for proper film exposure. Since the disease is hereditary, affected dogs are not used for breeding.

Unfortunately, there is no way to predict how hip dysplasia will develop in each individual animal or how severe the signs will be. And, unfortunately, there is no cure for hip dysplasia.

There are, however, several types of treatments available, including:

- Medications for pain and stiffness.
- Maintenance of proper weight, diet, and exercise. The animal must not be allowed to become overweight!
- Medications to improve the joint fluid that lubricates the joint surfaces.
- Various surgeries are available if necessary.

Osteochondrosis

This is disorderly process of development at the cartilage and ossification centers of the joint. A flap of articular cartilage becomes partially or totally detached from the underlying bone. It most commonly is seen in the shoulder but also can be present in the elbow, hock, and stifle joint.

Lyme disease

This is a bacterial infection transmitted by the deer tick. A systemic illness that often has articular manifestations, Lyme disease can cause any combination of lethargy, fever, anorexia, vomiting, and lameness. The Long Island area is endemic for Lyme disease. Generally, 3 weeks of appropriate antibiotic therapy will resolve the infection.
Degenerative joint disease (DJD)
This is a disorder that results in articular cartilage destruction and other underlying changes that create secondary joint inflammation, decreased range of motion, muscle atrophy, and pain.

4-6 POST-SURGICAL CARE

Daily Routine
1. Walk the puppy on a leash for 5 to 6 days; do not permit free running and jumping.
2. In the house, limit strenuous activity; do not permit jumping or running up and down stairs.

At the incision site
1. Incision area needs to be clean and dry for proper healing to take place. If any soiling should occur, wipe area gently with gauze pad moistened with hydrogen peroxide. Do not use soap and water at any time on or near the suture area until sutures are removed.
2. Discourage the puppy from licking or biting at the sutures. If necessary, an “Elizabethan” or E-collar can be used.
3. There may be some redness and/or slight swelling at the suture site. Any unusual redness or swelling, however, should be reported.

4-7 HOW TO GIVE MEDICINES

Many times during your life with the puppy, your veterinarian will prescribe medications. This information will help you give them to the puppy.

Liquids
Usually the veterinarian will give you a small dosing syringe to hold liquid. Have the puppy sit. Then pull out their cheek to make a pouch. Put the dosing syringe into this pouch and let the medicine drain into their throat. The puppy will have to swallow it. Be sure to keep the pup’s head slightly tilted back.

Pills
Have the puppy sit. Grasp their upper jaw with your left hand and press their lips against their teeth until they open their mouth. Use your longest finger to force the pill far enough down their throat, on the middle of the tongue so that they have to swallow it. Hold the mouth closed for a moment, blow on their nose and stroke the throat from the outside until you are sure the pill has gone down. Large pills can be moistened with peanut butter or wrapped in cheese for easier swallowing.
4-8 EMERGENCIES
Does the pup require medical attention not listed on the vet schedule? If it is an emergency, please see this and the following page. If it is not an emergency, please contact the Guide Dog Foundation before you call your vet. The Foundation may be able to remedy the situation (such as an ear infection) without the need for a vet appointment.

What is an emergency?
1. Severe trauma. Uncontrollable bleeding, compound fracture, hit by a car, trauma causing a non-weight-bearing lameness.
2. Reaction to a vaccine. Swollen face and eyes, hives.
3. Severe burns of any kind (chemical or physical).
4. Ingestion of antifreeze
5. Unconsciousness or weakness. Inability to stand, collapsing episode.
7. Difficulty breathing.

What is not an emergency?
1. Ear infection
2. Flaky/red skin
3. Persistent scratching
4. Limp/weight bearing

Please call your puppy advisor or area coordinator if the pup exhibits any of these symptoms

What to do in the event of an emergency
1. Above all, remain calm. This may be very hard to do, but it is important that you remain calm and in control of the situation as best you can in order to be able to get the pup the immediate proper attention it needs.
2. Call your vet hospital or the animal emergency center first so they can prepare for your arrival.
3. Get the pup to the nearest vet hospital.
4. When the situation has stabilized, call your puppy advisor or area coordinator. If it is after hours, listen carefully to the menu, and our after-hours service will reach the puppy coordinator or another employee.
5. After making your puppy advisor or area coordinator aware of the situation, the hospital may bill the Guide Dog Foundation directly (Attention: Accounting Department). Some emergency hospitals want payment immediately. Please pay the bill and submit the receipt to the Foundation; we will reimburse you promptly.
Animal Emergency Services – Long Island

Nassau Animal Emergency Group. 740 Old Country Road, Westbury; 516-333-6262. Hours: Monday through Friday 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. and from 8 p.m. on Saturday until 8 a.m. on Monday. The clinic is also open 24 hours a day on holidays.

Animal Emergency Service. 6320C Jericho Turnpike, Commack; 631-462-6044. About ¼ mile west of Commack Road. Hours: 5 p.m. to 9 a.m. Monday to Thursday; 5 p.m. Friday to 9 a.m. Monday (24 hours holidays). Services: Trauma hospital center for dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, and wild animals; pharmacy, surgery; radiology.

Animal Emergency Service. 280 L Middle Country Road, Selden; 631-698-2225. On Middle Country Road (Route 25), at the southeast corner of the intersection with County Road 83 (North Ocean Avenue). Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services: Trauma hospital center for dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, wild animals, pharmacy, surgery, radiology, intensive care, ophthalmology, dermatology, orthopedics.

Long Island Veterinary Specialists, 163 South Service Road, Plainview; 516-501-1700. Located on South Service Road of the Long Island Expressway. Get off the LIE at Exit 46 (Sunnyside Boulevard). From eastern Long Island, make left at traffic light at end of the off ramp. Make a quick left onto the South Service Road of the LIE, heading east. Continue on the service road for 1.2 miles. From western Long Island, continue straight ahead on the service road for 1.2 miles. Hours: Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to noon.

East End Veterinary Emergency Center. 1149 Old Country Road, Riverhead; (631) 369-4513.

Poison Control: If your dog gets into something potentially poisonous, the National Animal Poison Control can be reached at all times. There is a $30 charge to your credit card. If your dog gets into something potentially poisonous, the National Animal Poison Control can be reached at all times. There is a $30 charge to your credit card.

Animal Emergency Services – Out of Area

If you do not live on Long Island, please identify and locate the veterinary emergency services in your area in case of emergency.

Poison Control: 1-800-548-2423. If your dog gets into something potentially poisonous, the National Animal Poison Control can be reached at all times. There is a $30 charge to your credit card.

Bee stings/insect reactions

Remove the stinger with tweezers. Apply cool compresses to the area. Make a paste of baking soda and water, and apply it to the area of the sting (keep away from eyes). Notify your veterinarian so they can provide assistance in case the puppy shows signs of a reaction. If the puppy experiences difficulty breathing, call your veterinarian and transport the pup immediately.
Car accidents
If the puppy is hit by a car, make a loop of gauze bandage or similar material. Slip it over the pup’s muzzle and tie it (not too tightly) to prevent the dog from biting you. Slide a board under him. If you don’t have a board, use a blanket to make a stretcher. Talk calmly to the puppy and try to keep him quiet. Get the puppy to a veterinarian immediately.

Wounds
Wash the area thoroughly with peroxide removing all debris, dirt, etc. Apply an antibiotic cream such as Bacitracin or triple antibiotic ointment (cover with a loose bandage only if necessary).

Heat stroke
Never leave the puppy in a car! On an 85° day, the temperature inside a car with a window slightly open will go up to 102° within 10 minutes. In 20 minutes, it can reach 120°. The puppy can suffer brain damage and death in a very short time. Symptoms of heat stroke include panting, staring, mental confusion, collapse, vomiting, and diarrhea. Begin cooling by running tap water over the puppy’s body and legs. Do not use cold water or ice. Call the veterinarian and transport the pup immediately.

Drowning
Pick up the puppy by his hind legs and hold him upside down to drain the water out. Give artificial respiration until he resumes regular breathing. If it is a small puppy, you can give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation by cupping your hands around his muzzle and blowing into his mouth and nostrils (small puffs of air if the puppy is small). Take the pup to your veterinarian immediately!

Electric shock
Pups that are allowed to chew on electric cords may get a shock. Remove the plug from the outlet immediately. If the puppy has stopped breathing, give artificial respiration. Call your veterinarian immediately.

Seizures
Seizures can be very frightening to observe, but they are rarely damaging. If the puppy begins to have a seizure, do not attempt to interfere or touch them. Leave them alone until the seizure passes. Stay calm and call the veterinarian for further instructions. You can speak to the puppy in a calming voice.
Swallowing objects/objects lodged in throat

Always watch the puppy to make sure that they don’t pick up inedible objects while playing. Puppies have been known to swallow all sorts of things, including rocks, small balls or toys, socks, and bones. If you think the pup has swallowed a foreign body, call your veterinarian. Watch carefully to make sure that the object has been passed, as it could become lodged in their intestine and require major surgery. If something is lodged in the pup’s throat, talk calmly to the pup so they will know you are trying to help. Try to remove the object. Make sure your hands are dry so they will not slip. Remove it quickly; don’t push the object further down into his throat. If you can’t remove the object, get to a veterinarian immediately.

4-9 POISONING

Poisonings in the home can be prevented if the environment is poison-proofed. Young Retrievers tend to chew or eat anything they can. Your vigilance will help to keep the puppy safe.

The following items are poisonous to your dog:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Name</th>
<th>Toxic Portion</th>
<th>Signs of Poisoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amaryllis flowers</td>
<td>Stems, leaves</td>
<td>Vomiting, abdominal pain, tremors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Crocus</td>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>Vomiting, nervous stimulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castor Bean</td>
<td>Leaves, beans</td>
<td>Diarrhea, shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyclamen</td>
<td>Leaves, tubers</td>
<td>Stomach irritation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delphinium</td>
<td>Stems, leaves</td>
<td>Vomiting, diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumb Cane (Dieffenbachia)</td>
<td>Stems</td>
<td>Salivation, laryngitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Ivy</td>
<td>Leaves, berries</td>
<td>Vomiting, diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistletoe</td>
<td>Leaves, berries</td>
<td>Vomiting, diarrhea, rapid breathing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>Part</td>
<td>Symptoms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleander</td>
<td>All parts</td>
<td>Heart irregularities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philodendron</td>
<td>Stems, leaves</td>
<td>Salivation, swollen tongue and lips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poinsettia</td>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>Salivation, heart irregularities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhododendron</td>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>Vomiting, diarrhea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>Nervous stimulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Important Note:* If the puppy ingests any of these poisons or anything that you think might be poisonous, contact your veterinarian or animal emergency clinic and the Foundation immediately! Time is of the essence to prevent death or serious injury!
5-1 TRAINING AND PHILOSOPHY

Now that you have your puppy home and understand how to care for them you must start building the foundation of appropriate behaviors. The best way to teach a puppy is to understand how they learn and show things in a way that puppies understand.

Our dogs learn behaviors that can continue to be reinforced by reward and corrected to prevent the behavior from being repeated. For example, we reward our pups for stopping before entering through a doorway. That is a learned behavior that we reward to create repetition and understanding.

How a Dog Learns

Dogs are instinctual and are influenced by patterned behavior.

- Trial and error is the most common way that they learn.
  - Example: A dog that is investigating a porcupine might not get hurt the first couple of times. However, the time they get hurt by a quill they will learn not to bother the porcupine again.
- Dogs will continue behaviors that offer reward or favorable outcome.
  - Example: A puppy that investigates the countertop because it can smell something good jumps up and steals the food. They are more likely to counter surf again in search of a reward for their behavior.
- Any behavior that is met with praise and reward teaches the dog to repeat the behavior.
  - Example: Your puppy is barking in their crate out of boredom and you continue to ignore them. Then, they choose to be quiet and you let them out of the crate. You just showed them they have to be quiet to be let out.
  - Example: When you call your puppy’s name from across the room they come over and will receive a food reward. Your puppy gets out of the house later that day, but you are able to safely recall them by calling their name and they respond expecting a reward.
- Dogs learn to avoid behaviors that have negative outcomes or correction.
  - Example: Our trial-and-error friend sees a porcupine again and chooses to move out of its way.
  - Example: Your puppy lunges at another pup while walking to class and causes uncomfortable tension on the leash. He continues pulling several times and continues to cause tension each time he lunges. After several times he chooses to stand relaxed on your left side.
- Dogs learn by rewards and corrections. They adjust their behavior accordingly.
  - Example: A dog rewards itself by sniffing and scavenging the ground when walking if they are not redirected by their handler. They will continue to do so because they might find food or objects when scavenging.
  - Example: Your puppy eagerly lets you slide the puppy coat over their head at an early age because you praise and reward them every time you place it over their head.
Always correct or reward behavior as soon as they occur. Remember that correction and reward affect the outcome of later behaviors.

- You cannot correct a dog that got into the trash 10 minutes ago when you just discovered the trash on the floor. They will not understand why they are being corrected.
- Your puppy bites another puppy too hard when they are playing and the other pup snaps their teeth quickly in your pup’s face as a warning. The correction was timed well so your pup understand that the other pup doesn’t want to play roughly.

Never correct behaviors like housebreaking accidents, counter surfing, getting into the trash, or destructive chewing if you did not see them do it.

**Being the Leader**

An effective leader is well functioning, responsive, and content. They follow through with expectations, offer reward for good behavior, and correction for poor behavior. A strong leader is confident and comfortable in their leadership role. However, if a dog doesn’t have a strong leader there can be chaos, which can create an insecure environment for a pup to grow and learn social behaviors.

Dogs seek out strong leadership – they look for someone to set up boundaries and give direction with feedback. Being consistent, understanding behavior, and being confident will create a peaceful household for everyone.

**An effective leader does the following:**

- Understands that dogs and humans think differently.
- Speaks in a confident and calm manner.
- Uses body language and voice confidently.
- Maintains a confident demeanor.
- Establishes rules for the puppy’s interaction and behavior and maintain them.
- Does not give in when the puppy challenges or tries to control the situation.
- Follows through on verbal cues.
- Corrects poor behavior.
- Praises and rewards appropriate behaviors.

The most important of those characteristics is rewarding and praising appropriate behaviors and correcting poor behavior. When your puppy enters your home they are in a time in their life where they’re learning social behaviors, how to respond to authoritative leadership, and boundaries. The more you reinforce good behavior as an effective leader the more your pup will seek out to do the desired behavior.
On the other hand, pups don’t know that certain behaviors are unacceptable yet. It is up to you to establish rules and consistently follow through with them. Good house manners and training are all learned behaviors. The more information you give to your puppy through praise and correction the better their understanding of what you expect from them.

**Effective Verbal cues**

- When you give a verbal cue say your puppy’s name first. This ensures you that their attention is focused on you and ready to listen. For example, if you want your pup to sit you would say, “*Name, Sit*” to tell them to sit.
- Be sure that you give a verbal cue only once. Repeating verbal cues only teaches your pup to ignore what you are telling to them.
- Give one verbal cue at a time. Let your puppy think through and fully complete the task before you move on to the next verbal cue.
- Praise your puppy every time they do what you have told them to do.
- Release your puppy by saying the release word **OK** and not by praising them. Your pup should continue working throughout and after being praised.

**Tone of Voice**

- Your tone of voice can influence how your puppy responds to the verbal cues you are giving them.
- All verbal cues need to be given in a way that is clear and confident.
- Do not shout at your puppy.
- Whispering or being unsure about the verbal cue does not set your puppy up for success.
- If you want your puppy to be livelier, speak in a happy, excited tone.
- Speak to an energetic puppy in a calm, lower-energy tone of voice.
- Give each verbal cue with authority and calmness.

**Teaching your puppy to respond in a reasonable manner**

Puppies are not robots, nor are they fast thinkers all the time. Give your puppy time to think through the verbal cue given, but don’t let them hesitate or test your authority.

- Encourage your pup to think through each verbal cue. We want every guide dog to be independent and able to think through various scenarios. If they were raised to react on reflex instead of thinking about the response it will be hard to encourage initiative and thinking during formal training.
- Learn your dog’s body language and mannerisms.
- Speed up stubborn responses by correcting hesitation or refusal and then praise enthusiastically when they obey.
Always praise generously and consistently

- Verbal cues are only effective if followed by praise for the successful follow through.
- Guide dogs need to be obedient, but they also have to trust and understand and respect leadership.
- Praise is the most effective way to produce an excellent guide dog.

Patterning Behaviors for Effectiveness

Patterning behaviors requires repetition and consistency. It helps a puppy learn necessary behaviors and is complete when the behavior is ingrained. Patterning takes at least 30 days of constant, accurate practice and may take longer for some puppies.

Guide to patterning behaviors

- Have several short practice sessions every day.
- Keep the sessions short and positive. Use lots of praise and don’t be afraid to stop so you end on a positive note.
- Have consistent expectations for each training session.
- Reward all of the expected behavior even if you didn’t ask for it.
- Reward all spontaneous behavior, such as a puppy that stops before walking through a doorway without you asking them to do so.

Teaching one step at a time

- All training sessions need to be taught in a style and pace that suits your puppy so they can learn what you are teaching them.
- Only move onto the next step when your puppy understands the first step.
  - For example, if you are teaching your puppy Down by luring them to slide down with a piece of kibble and saying the word **Down**, do not stop using the kibble until they respond to the use of both cues.
- Teach only one behavior at a time.

Teaching in a sequence

- You can teach in a sequence to ensure the puppy will meet the expectations you have set for them.
  - For example, when you first teach a puppy to relieve on concrete you start by saying the **Busy** verbal cue as they start to relieve so they can associate the verbal cue with the action.
• Move to the next step when the pup responds each time in the correct way
• Only move to the next step when the pup is focused and understands the step you’re currently working on
• If your pup has any problems understanding what you are trying to teach them, take a step back on what you are trying to teach.

![Paw Print]

• Dogs learn differently from humans. Communicate in a way they understand with reward, correction, and consistency.
• Don’t be afraid to go back a step with training to ensure your pup understands your expectations.
• Short, positive training sessions will keep learning fun for you and your pup!

5-2 REWARD
Reward can be a variety of praise: verbal praise, physical touch such as petting, and food reward. Our training philosophy and policy heavily relies on positive training with a high rate of reinforcement. That means reward needs to be used more frequently than correction. Good behavior needs to be rewarded frequently throughout the puppy’s training with you so they understand how they should act in the home and in public.

Consistency
As previously stated, dogs need their correction and reward timed correctly. To learn to avoid a behavior, correction must occur. To learn to perform a behavior a dog must be rewarded consistently. Guide dogs have to learn to avoid behaviors and perform the correct behavior to keep their partners safe. If a guide dog never learns that stealing objects in the house is not permitted, they will become a nuisance and possibly hazardous to their partner. Also, a guide dog that is consistently rewarded by their trainer to avoid overhead obstacles will learn to always stop and move around the obstacle for their partner. There needs to be a balance between reward and correction for all dogs and their handlers but especially working dogs that are entrusted to keep their partners safe.

As you start training and teaching your pup keep these guidelines in mind
• Always be prepared to catch behaviors, good or bad.
• Anticipate and predict behaviors. Have a plan for correcting and rewarding to control the outcome that you desire.
• Develop a plan to deal with and avoid inappropriate behaviors will make rewarding easier. If you can avoid inappropriate behaviors by anticipating and planning, rewards will be more frequent than corrections.

Dogs are intelligent animals. They learn quickly, and they are eager to please. Your puppy was bred to be responsive, willing to work, and intelligent. What makes a wonderful guide dog is one that responds appropriately to the rewards and correction they were given and learns how to behave based on their handler’s response to their actions.

• Do not repeat verbal cues if your puppy did not do the verbal cue the first time you instructed them.
  o Repeating verbal cues teaches your puppy that they can ignore you and choose when they perform the verbal cue they were told to do.
• Do not repeat verbal cues if you think your puppy did not hear you the first time.
  o Dogs have wonderful hearing.
  o Your puppy hears what you are saying even if they are distracted or seem like they aren’t listening. They are choosing not to respond.
  o Do not continue to raise the volume of your voice. It teaches your puppy to only respond when you are shouting.
• Make sure your puppy performs every verbal cue you give them.
  o Do not let them ignore some verbal cues and obey others. It teaches them that they can pick and choose what they listen and respond to when you give instruction.
• Make your puppy do each verbal cue correctly.
  o Do not let your puppy choose where to position himself and decide when he will listen.
• Always praise all good behaviors.
  o A puppy that is consistently rewarded and praised for performing what was asked learns that you are the leader and will repeat good behaviors to please you.

Acceptable Rewards
Praise and reward need to motivate your puppy so they continue to repeat their good behavior. Guide dogs have to work for a variety of rewards and be motivated by their partner. A combination of food reward, petting, interactive play, and verbal praise can be highly motivating and rewarding to your puppy.

• Reward is more important than correction. One of the ways a dog learns is through reward; it is the most effective way to teach your puppy. A happy, well-balanced puppy will make a happy, well-balanced guide dog.
• Emphasize reward more than correction. Your puppy will be more motivated to work if reward is frequent and emphasized in training.
• Praise your puppy every time they do something right or carry out an appropriate behavior on their own (such as walking through the house calmly, lying down next to you, or sitting before mealtime).
• Praise in the appropriate tone of voice.
  o Muttering or using a dull tone of voice will not motivate your puppy to work with you.
  o Use a combination of excited and loving tones. For example, if your puppy just sat when you told them to do so in a high-distraction environment say, “GOOD DOG!” Or, if you’re in a quieter environment such as a restaurant and your pup ignored food on the floor say in a more soothing tone, “Gooooood dooooggg” to keep them motivated but calm.
  o Praise does not need to be loud or shouted. Changing the tone and inflection is what’s important. Loud praise will often overstimulate young or excitable puppies.
• Use praise to reinforce any attempts at the correct behavior. If your praise is timed correctly and motivating, your puppy will work harder to earn your approval.
• After your puppy starts understand a verbal cue or behavior praise only the best responses. For example, when teaching Sit you’ll reward any attempt whether the pup is in front of you, beside you, or wiggling a little bit. As your puppy gets older you can start refining the verbal cue by only praising the correct behavior of your puppy on your left side with their attention focused on you. This will help create consistency and teach your puppy your expectations.
• Time your rewards to occur either during or immediately after the behavior you are teaching. Puppies have short attention spans and need to be rewarded as soon as possible so they understand why they are being rewarded.
• Vary the intensity of praise to fit the effort made by the puppy. When your puppy is learning a new verbal cue give very reassuring, confident praise. Praise should affirm that your puppy did the correct behavior.

Food Reward
The following guidelines must be used when giving food reward. If you have any questions or have not been instructed and guided through how to give food reward please contact your advisor or area coordinator. Videos with further instruction can be viewed on our YouTube Channel YouTube channel (YouTube.com/GuideDogFoundation; look for the “Puppy Raiser Training Series” playlist).
• Never have the food in your pup’s sight. The food needs to be in a treat pouch on your hip or back.
• Your hand should never be “preloaded”. Only reach into the pouch to get food after the puppy has completed the verbal cue or is offering the correct behavior.
• When giving the reward place it in the desired position. If the dog should be standing place it on your left side at their mouth level.
• Do not offer food in front of you. This encourages the puppy to remain in front of you. If that behavior continues they can become a hazard for someone visually impaired.
Food reward is a wonderful tool when puppy raising. It can reinforce good behavior effectively in a way the puppy will understand. However, please speak to your advisor or area coordinator if you would like to consistently use food as reward with the puppy.

- Reward needs to be given frequently for your pup to learn good behavior.
- Change your tone and level of excitement when praising your puppy to give them a clear understanding that what they did was the desired outcome.
- Praise all attempts when the pup is first learning a verbal cue or behavior and then start praising the exact behavior you wanted.

5-3 CORRECTIONS

Part of your pup’s time with you will be learning how to respond to correction. As raisers we all have a desire to love and care for animals. However, correction is needed and will help shape your puppy into a successful guide dog.

Correction is an important balance to reward and praise when training your guide dog puppy. It needs to be done effectively and correctly so the pup understands why they are being corrected. Guide dogs have to be extremely well behaved and follow directions. Guide dogs have to learn there is a consequence for their unacceptable behavior. Giving correction will motivate your pup to change the behavior and teach them acceptable boundaries.

In order to be an effective teacher to your puppy you have to understand that there is a difference between how people communicate and how you communicate with your puppy. Dogs do not speak a language. You cannot explain to them what they did wrong and how they can fix it. Dogs are not capable of grasping explanations that humans are able to relay to each other.

In order for your guide dog puppy to learn that they have done something unacceptable there must be physical consequence. The difference between enjoyable rewards and correction will give your puppy the guidelines to understand what acceptable behavior is and what will not be tolerated. Correction is not physical abuse, and under no circumstances is physical abuse allowed! That includes and is not limited to hitting, spanking, grabbing the muzzle roughly, slapping, or anything that would be painful. Physical abuse is not tolerated or effective training. We will immediately remove the puppy from the raiser if physical abuse occurs.

Learning how to understand your puppy’s temperament and emotional strength is necessary to raise a successful guide dog. In order to correctly motivate, praise, and correct your puppy you
need to recognize what they respond to best in each situation. At different times in their lives you will only need a quick verbal reprimand as correction, but at other times you might need a strong leash correction to redirect your pup. If you have any questions or you are unsure about corrections please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

The only acceptable and approved corrections are leash/collar corrections and verbal correction.

**How to Give an Effective Leash and Collar Correction**

The leash correction should be given by a quick snap back on the leash. It will not hurt or frighten your pup, but it will distract and redirect their attention or stop them from an unacceptable behavior. It helps your pup engage and focus on you.

The leash should start off loose without tension before the correction and be loosened immediately after the correction has been administered.

- Snap the leash back, not up, and then return the leash back to its slack position.
- **KEEPING A TIGHT LEASH WITH TENSION WILL ALLOW YOUR PUPPY TO RESIST AND DECREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CORRECTION.**
- Your goal is to stop the behavior with one correction. If the pup does not direct your attention to you it was done ineffectively. You either need to correct with better timing or deliver it with stronger movement.
- Frequent or ineffective corrections will cause your puppy to ignore them, and eventually they will become ineffective.

Never use a leash correction on a dog that is wearing a head harness like a Halti, Gentle Leader, or an 8-collar. They are not designed to allow corrections and can hurt your puppy.

**Effective Correction**

- The goal of an effective correction is to immediately stop your pup from their inappropriate behavior with one correction. If it takes more than one correction, you did not correct properly or you were not firm enough.
- Corrections should not be emotionally charged. If you are correcting out of anger, frustration, or because you have lost your temper it will affect your puppy and your role as their leader.
- Use enough force to redirect your puppy’s attention and stop their behavior but not enough to frighten or scare them. They should respect and understand correction, not feel afraid.
- Follow your correction with praise for directing their attention toward you. Offering praise will motivate your puppy to engage with you after corrections. It will establish that what they were previously doing was inappropriate, and listening to your correction was the right thing to do.
• Wait to see if the pup stopped their behavior completely before offering the praise or if they just stopped briefly and then went back to the previous behavior. For example, if your puppy is pulling toward dropped food on the floor and you gave them a correction, but then they went right back to focusing on the food, that is not an acceptable response to correction and should not get praised. However, if your pup stopped pulling and stood next to you politely after correction, that would justify praise afterward. The pup was doing something inappropriate, responded to the correction, and stopped doing the undesirable behavior and replaced it with an acceptable one.
• Never strike your puppy for any reason. The only effective corrections are verbal and leash corrections.

Understanding leash corrections

• The administration of collar correction should start and end with a loose leash.
• A quick, sharp pop on the collar through the leash is correct. Do not give long, constant pulls.
• Timing is everything. The correction should right before or during the action.
• Leash corrections need to be administered correctly based on the pup’s size, focus on the poor behavior, emotional state, and body sensitivity.
  - Little pups need little corrections.
  - Big dogs usually need stronger corrections.
  - Little dogs with strong focus on the behavior might need a slightly strong correction.
  - Big dogs with high emotional sensitivity need less correction.
  - Mild distraction or focus on the poor behavior need mild corrections.
  - Intense focus or extreme poor behavior should get a bigger correction.
  - A young puppy that doesn’t understand what is expected of them yet should need a light pop.
  - An adolescent or adult dog that knows what is unacceptable should receive a stronger correction.
• If your pup did not respond to the first correction, administer one firmer than the first correction.
• Understanding your pup’s strength, focus, sensitivities, and emotional state is very important to give effective corrections and communicate your expectations for behavior to your pup.

Remember that reward is more important than correction. Work harder to praise correct behavior than correcting poor behavior. If you are an effective leader and trainer, your puppy will want to please you and offer good behavior.
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5-4 SAYING YES TO “NO”
As a puppy raiser the tool you always have with you for training and puppy raising is your voice and body. Using body language can be an effective training tool as well as using your voice to communicate expectations. Oftentimes, when people interact we often use “NO!” “Don’t” or “Stop” to effectively communicate with each other. However, those are all words that can become ineffective when overused with dogs.

When raising your puppy it is necessary that you avoid overuse of negative, ineffective terms. They can be effective only when used infrequently and successfully. In public you are a liaison of the Guide Dog Foundation and the public should hear and see more praise than correction. This gives yourself and the public a positive experience of puppy raising.

Teaching “No” to Your Guide Dog Puppy
- “No” should be taught and not used when your pup is out of leash. Remember that all verbal cues need the raiser’s follow through.
- When using “No” it should be used in conjunction with a leash correction. It should be said just before or as you are giving the physical correction.
- “No” should be said at a normal volume with a firm and serious tone.
- Like other verbal cues it should not be repeated over and over for the same behavior. Saying it repeatedly will teach the pup to ignore the word as a correction.
- An effective “No” should stop the inappropriate behavior immediately and then be followed by praise – just as a leash correction used alone.

The word “No” should be used sparingly and only when warranted. It should not be used instead of collar corrections or repeatedly. Using the word “No” can be used in serious situations such as stopping a loose puppy from running into the street or from ingesting something dangerous. Remember, however, if this verbal cue is used frequently and ineffectively, it will not be useful in detrimental situations because you have taught your pup to ignore the verbal cue when it is given.

- Reward is more important than correction.
- Work harder to praise correct behavior than correcting poor behavior.
- If you are an effective leader and trainer, your puppy will want to please you and offer good behavior.
6-1 IMPORTANT BEHAVIORS

In section 2-6 we outlined the behaviors necessary for a dog to become a successful guide dog. In this section we will go over how to teach your puppy good behavior. Remember that guide dogs have an important career ahead of them. Some behaviors that might be okay and normal for pets is not allowed for guide dog puppies.

Behaviors That Need to be Reported

- Mouthing behaviors such as nibbling, mouthing, grabbing, snapping, and biting.
- Fearful behaviors such as hackling, slinking, cowering, submissive urination, excited urination, growling, or whining.
- Dominant behaviors such as biting, growling, snapping, mounting objects or people, rough play, lunging, guarding any objects.
- Inappropriate on-leash habits such as pulling, lunging, tripping you, picking up objects, holding the leash in their mouth, stopping frequently, refusing to walk, chasing objects (cars, leaves, children, other animals).
- Poor house manners such as counter surfing, searching in trash cans, stealing food, jumping on people, getting on the furniture, destructive chewing, stealing objects.
- Other behaviors that need to be reported such as excessive barking or vocalizing, rude behavior toward dogs and other animals, distraction or obsession with other animals or objects, excessive chewing or licking, chasing lights or shadows, digging, aggression toward other dogs, submission toward other dogs, charging through doors, busying on route.

If there is any behavior or activity you are unsure of, please alert your advisor or area coordinator as soon as possible. The faster we resolve the issue, the easier it will be to fix.

Descriptions of common oral behaviors

- **Mouthing** When the dog takes your hand or your arm in his mouth very gently. This is most common. It can be playful or an attention-getting mechanism for the dog. The dog takes your hand or your arm in his mouth very gently. This is most common. It can be playful or an attention-getting mechanism for the dog.
- **Grabbing** When the dog reaches out and takes hold of your hand, the back of your pants, or the ear or tail of another animal. This could lead to injury. The dog reaches out and takes hold of your hand, the back of your pants, or the ear or tail of another animal. This could lead to injury.
- **Nipping** This usually occurs when the pup is afraid or concerned. It also manifests itself when the pup is soliciting play. Usually occurs when the pup is afraid or concerned. It also manifests itself when the pup is soliciting play.
• **Biting** Where the puppy is more aggressive than nipping. This could be done out of fear or aggression, and it can lead to injury. The puppy is more aggressive than nipping. This could be done out of fear or aggression, and it can lead to injury.

**Descriptions of common inappropriate behaviors**

• **Cowering** The puppy does this when it is fearful of something such as a person or another animal. The dog may move away or actually move behind you or another object to get away. If the pup is overly concerned, it may also shake, cry, growl, or relieve itself.

• **Hackling** This is when the fur on the pup’s neck and back rises. This could be exhibited because of excitement, aggression, or tension. Hairs on the neck and back rises. This could be exhibited because of excitement, aggression, or tension.

• **Lunging** The puppy deliberately lunges toward another animal, individual, or object. This behavior is most often benign, but it is not desirable and could pose a safety problem for a guide dog user. The puppy deliberately lunges toward another animal, individual, or object. This behavior is most often benign, but it is not desirable and could pose a safety problem for a guide dog user.

• **Posturing/Stalking:** The puppy stares at another animal or person in challenge. Usually, the hackles rise, the tail is up and held stiffly. Sometimes the tail wags quickly and stiffly.

• **Slinking/Cowering** The puppy walks with its body low to the ground. The tail is usually tucked under. This could indicate concern, fear, or submission.

• **Soliciting** The puppy is looking to do what he wants at inappropriate times. Many puppy raisers encounter this with meeting and greeting or at playtime.

• **Submissive urination** The puppy urinates or defecates to show its submission to another animal or person. The puppy should never be disciplined for this behavior. Please speak with your puppy advisor if this is happening.

• **The scoots** Also known as the “crazies,” these are common to the Retriever breeds. During play the puppy may suddenly break into a running frenzy. These “spells” only last a few minutes and are generated as a tension release. These are common to the Retriever breeds. During play the puppy may suddenly break into a running frenzy. These “spells” only last a few minutes and are generated as a tension release.

**Descriptions of inappropriate attitudes**

• **Timidness** The puppy lacks self-assurance, courage, or boldness. The shy dog indicates fear or lack of assurance. This may be inherent in the puppy’s personality. However, a dominant handler could cause “handler suspicion,” which can also result in this behavior.

• **Submissiveness** The puppy submits in order to appease the individual or animal they encounter. This could pose a problem if it is excessive. This may be inherent in the puppy’s
personality. However, a dominant handler could cause “handler suspicion,” which can result in this behavior. Submissive urination can be a sign of being submissive but not to be confused with happy peeing.

- **Assertiveness** The pup misinterprets their role. They feel that they are the top dog. This is shown by inappropriate behavior like pulling on the leash or excessive noise or back talking.

- **Dominance** Again, the puppy misinterprets its role as the top dog and exhibits top dog behavior. It demands to be groomed, played with, and given your attention when they want it. The dominant puppy must be shown their place in the family. Again, the puppy misinterprets its role as the top dog and exhibits top dog behavior. It demands to be groomed, played with, and given your attention when they want it. The dominant puppy must be shown their place in the family.

- **Aggression** True aggressive tendencies in a puppy or dog may lead to biting in some situations. Aggressive dogs intend to maim or to hurt their victim. True aggressive tendencies in a puppy or dog may lead to biting in some situations. Aggressive dogs intend to maim or to hurt their victim.

If you notice any of these temperaments in the pup, please speak with your puppy advisor or area coordinator.

### Essential Behaviors

Your job as the puppy raiser is to provide your puppy with a solid foundation of learning and behaviors so they can be a successful guide dog. There are a number of behaviors that your pup needs to learn. Once they have become established, your pup is well on their way to being a guide dog.

#### Staying home alone

**Goal:** The puppy should be quiet and calm when left alone. They should not be destructive to themselves or the environment.

All of our dogs that become guide dogs must be trustworthy when left unsupervised. Their new owner will expect them to be well behaved when left alone in the house in or out of the crate.

If your pup is left alone before they are ready they might vocalize, chew things up, get in the garbage, climb on the furniture, or potentially injure themselves. It’s important that your pup is set up for success the first time they are left out of their crate unsupervised.

#### Setting up for Success

- Make sure your pup understands and exhibits suitable house manners when you are supervising them. If they can’t follow the rules when you are there they are not ready to be left unsupervised.
- Give your pup experience on the tie-down. Remember you need to be present, but tie-downs teach your pup to remain calm and relaxed in one area of the house.
- Leave your pup in a room alone with a closed door or gate up for short periods, building up to longer periods of time. Be close enough to periodically check on them or hear if your pup is vocalizing or being destructive.
- Remove all dangerous or potentially harmful objects from the room(s) your pup will have access to. Trashcans, laundry baskets, cords, wires, and tempting items should be out of your pup’s reach.
- Check all doors and windows to make sure they are secure.
- Before leaving your pup alone make sure they have a comfortable place to lie down, have had water to drink, and have relieved themselves outside before being left alone.
- Give your pup physical exercise before you leave. A tired puppy is a well-behaved puppy.
- Make sure your pup is calm and relaxed before you leave. Do not make a production or feel anxious about leaving because your pup will sense your uncertainty and possibly get upset.

**Staying alone successfully**

- You want to start with very short increments of time staying nearby in case anything should happen: walk down the driveway, take a quick walk, or spend a few minutes around the outside of your home.
  - Leave your pup with a fun toy like a Kong or Nylabone with peanut butter the first few times they are alone to distract them from your departure.
- Return calmly and quietly, praise your pup for their good behavior without allowing them to get too excited.
  - Only correct your puppy if you catch them being destructive. If you did not catch them in the act of doing something wrong simply clean up the mess.
- It is important that your pup spends time **completely** alone if you have other dogs in the house. Your pup needs to be comfortable without another dog present, because most people with guide dogs do not have another dog in the home.
- After you have successfully left your pup alone for several minutes while being close by, start leaving your pup for longer periods of time starting with 15 minutes.
  - If you experience setbacks and your pup shows any anxious or destructive behaviors, go back to beginning so they are successful. It is important your pup is successful being left alone.
Coping with distractions and exhibiting self-control

Goal: Your pup has the end goal of helping someone with visual impairments. Throughout their career your puppy will face a variety of distractions every single day. Therefore, your pup needs to learn how to behave and exhibit self-control in all situations.

Dogs are naturally observational animals, and they are aware of their environment. It can be very difficult to teach your puppy when they are distracted. Oftentimes, when you’re alone with your pup their behavior will be much different from when you are in public and there are distractions. Remember that guide dogs aren’t just expected to behave in the home. They need to have superb behavior in public as well so they can guide safely.

While you are raising them, your pup should be exposed to many distractions and learn how to ignore them. You might see a variety of reactions ranging from fear to excitement to curiosity. Your job is to observe and learn how your pup reacts in order to help them overcome the reaction they’re exhibiting. Repeating exposures will help your pup regard the distractions as normal and an everyday sight.

Setting up for success

- Remember to put your puppy only in situations that you are both prepared to cope with in a calm and relaxed manner. Be prepared and focused to offer support or give necessary corrections so the learning experience can be positive.
- Approach the distraction calmly and slowly.
  - Do not tighten the leash, give unnecessary corrections, or become nervous. All of those actions will only cause your pup to react while approaching.
- If necessary, let your puppy observe from a distance.
  - If your pup seems nervous or scared talk to them in a soothing voice, lower to their level while they’re viewing the object, or approach from a different angle.
  - If your pup is excited redirect their attention by practicing obedience to focus their attention, walking slowly away and then reproaching, or giving a leash correction if necessary. If at any point your pup becomes uncontrollable or you can’t easily redirect their attention you are too close to the distraction and need to give your pup more space to observe.
- Do not approach until your puppy is relaxed and focused on you.
- Approach the distraction one step at a time.
  - Offer praise and reward for a loose leash and calm behavior to reinforce the behavior you expect from them.
- If your pup becomes frightened or excited with the approach stay in the same place and don’t approach again until they become calm.

Distractions should never be an excuse for poor behavior. Your pup should behave the same way whether a distraction is present or if they are in a calm environment. Distractions should be
used as training tools and learning opportunities. If your pup is responding to distractions do not ignore or excuse their behavior. Setting your pup up for success as they grow and mature will only make facing distractions easier down the road. Sometimes, a pup will be become too distracted to behave properly. It is best to leave the situation and try again later.

Seek out distractions your puppy can handle, and only progress or leave the situation when your puppy has calmed down and understands the behavior that is expected of them. The more you reward the good behavior they more they will offer that behavior to seek out your praise and approval. Remember, a strong leader is one who praises often; dogs seek out a leader who gives boundaries and guidelines to them. When your pup chooses to listen to you instead of engaging with the distraction it shows that they are using self-control, and you are being an effective leader.

### Teaching your puppy self-control

**Goal:** A puppy that exhibits self-control in exciting, new, or very stimulating situations. Guide dogs need to exhibit self-control in every distracting or tempting situation when they are working. By communicating what is acceptable behavior and how you expect your puppy to behave, you will teach them how to control themselves and listen to their handler.

### Communicating as an effective leader

- Use effective praise.
  - Remember each dog is a little different. Each one needs a different level, type, and frequency of praise.
  - Verbal praise is something you always have with you so use it often when your puppy is exhibiting good behavior.
  - Adjust your praise as needed and experiment to find what works best for your puppy.
    - A quiet, reserved pup might need energetic, frequent praise to motivate them.
- A boisterous, lively pup might need quieter praise to keep them calm and less excitable.
  - Praise communicates what you are pleased with, so use it often to convey to your puppy that they’re doing a good job!
- Keep the leash and collar loose and relaxed.
  - Only have the leash tightened when a correction is necessary.
  - Tightening the leash will increase tension, anxiety, and resistance from your puppy.
- Relay to your puppy that you are the leader and in control.
  - Do not rush, pull, or drag your puppy past distractions.
  - Be deliberate and follow through with the verbal cues you give your puppy.
  - Speak in a calm, quiet voice to verbal cue their attention.
  - Give effective corrections.
  - Praise often and adjust it to the situation.
- Pay attention to your pup.
  - Watch their body language for any cues that they are becoming excited or distracted.
    - Perked ears, a tense body, and lowered head usually relay that your pup is focused on something.
    - Whining, vocalizing, or barking.
    - Lunging, pulling, or leaping toward distractions.
  - Try to redirect a poor behavior before your pup gets out of control.
    - Say their name, ask them to focus on obedience, or do a quick about to leave the situation.
    - Anticipate poor behavior in stimulating environments and be ready to leave, correct, or redirect.

**Teaching your pup to be comfortable and confident in all situations**

**Goal:** Your puppy should be accepting of all sights, sounds, smells, and objects without becoming frightened, distracted, or overwhelmed.

Guide dogs go everywhere with their partners; they need to accept things a pet dog normally wouldn’t see on a regular basis. They will see unusual people, travel in public transportation, and be with their partner for everyday situations.

Understanding and responding to behavior and body language is important to help support your pup and help them feel comfortable in every situation they are introduced to while you are raising them.
Teaching your pup how to remain calm in new situations

The first thing to do is observe your pup’s body language. What are they telling you? Are they scared, distracted, excited, or overwhelmed?

- A scared or overwhelmed pup might exhibit the following:
  - Lowered tail
  - Ears pushed back to the side
  - Worry lines on their head
  - Panting when approaching new exposure
  - Lowered body
  - Hesitant or slower pace
  - Coping by distracting themselves by sniffing or scratching themselves

- A distracted or excited puppy might exhibit the following:
  - Higher tail set
  - Alert, perked ears
  - Vocalizing such as whining or barking excitedly
  - Inability to focus on you
  - Tense, forward body posture
  - Pulling or lunging

If your puppy is afraid, take several steps away from what is scaring them until their body language returns to normal again. It is best not to acknowledge the change; feeding into their anxiety might make a pup even unsure of the situation. Remember to be a confident leader.

- Give the pup time to observe the situation from a safe distance.
- Try approaching from a different direction.
- Never force the pup to approach something they are fearful of – let them decide to move closer. You might have to encourage them some, but you want it to be their decision.
- Keep an upbeat, positive attitude.
  - Use a happy voice and relaxed body language.
  - Touch or reach over to the object to encourage your pup to investigate.
- Praise the pup for any effort to investigate and become comfortable.

If your puppy is distracted or excited it’s best to take several steps away and try to redirect their attention. This is a good opportunity to practice self-control and working through distractions.

- Ask your puppy to sit and praise them with a happy voice so their attention stays on you.
- Walk several steps closer and ask for the sit again.
- Continue this exercise until you reach the new exposure.
- If your pup becomes distracted again turn back around and start several steps back again.
Praise any calm, acceptable behavior.

- Give your puppy time to adjust to new situations. The world can be a big, stimulating place. We don’t want your pup to feel scared or overwhelmed.
- Be a confident leader that reads and understands your pup’s body language.
- Be patient. Most pups get too excited or too overstimulated in new situations. Setting them up for success the first time will make exposures after that easier.

Teaching your puppy to trust people

Goal: Your puppy needs to be comfortable in all situations with people – whether they know them or not – and trust that they’re safe.

Guide dogs will meet a variety of people when they are in training and with their partner. They will have to learn to trust a new handler when they come in for training and again when they meet their partner. Socializing your pup to be comfortable with all people is necessary in order to make their training and career successful.

We always encourage our puppy raisers to do the following exercises to help the pup become more comfortable and trust a variety of people:

- Allow the public to pet your pup when they are well behaved in public. This activity will help your pup practice self-control and learn that people are safe and trustworthy.
  - Only allow petting when your pup will be successful. Otherwise, please tell the public your pup is working and cannot be pet today.
  - Keep your pup calm by rubbing their chest and keeping their bottom on the ground.
- Have other raisers handle your pup in class.
  - Your advisor or area coordinator will often ask you to swap pups with another raiser during classes. This allows us to observe your pup’s behavior and get them used to being with other people.
  - While the other raiser is handling your pup do not focus on them, offer advice, or give verbal cues to your pup. Let your pup adjust to listening and responding to someone else, even if they have a different skill level or handling style from yours.
- Buddies.
Many of our raisers are college students. Because pups aren’t safe in all classroom environments another puppy raiser will watch them. This is another opportunity to switch handlers and build trust and a relationship with someone else.

- Puppy camps/overnights.
  - One requirement of puppy raising is that your pup completes a 2- to 3-week session living with another puppy raiser after they have reached 9 months of age. The other raiser will be asked to give a report on your pup’s house manners, obedience, and social behaviors. Pups will occasionally act differently or become stressed in a new environment if they are with a different handler. Getting your pup used to swapping handlers will help your pup’s overnight and camp go smoothly.
  - If your pup had a hard time adjusting to another lifestyle your advisor may ask the camps be repeated in shorter increments and then built up to a longer time again. It’s essential that your pup can adjust to new environments with a new handler when they go home with their new partner.

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**Prevent Obsessions**

**Goal:** The puppy can continue working without becoming obsessed or distracted.

Obsessive behavior is when your puppy becomes so distracted that you cannot redirect their attention, they will not engage with the handler, and they can’t seem to think of anything else. You’ve probably seen a dog like this – maybe a Labrador obsessed with his tennis ball or a border collie obsessed with small animals such as cats moving around them. An obsessed dog gets to the point that they cannot think of anything else. It’s extremely dangerous for a guide dog to become obsessive because it means they cannot make safe decisions and observe their surroundings and handler’s instructions.

**How to avoid obsessive behaviors**

- Do not let your pup become overly fixated or focused on certain objects.
• Intervene and redirect their attention quickly. Give them something to do such as verbal cues or playing a game.
• Never allow or encourage behaviors such as chasing light reflections, flashlights, laser pointers, other animals, leaves, bikes, etc.
• Be a calm, consistent leader.

**Good House Manners**

A puppy raiser’s most important job is to create boundaries and help your puppy learn excellent house manners and behaviors.

Even if a dog is well socialized and has wonderful obedience they cannot become a guide dog with poor house manners. If a dog has poor or unacceptable house manners they cannot become a guide dog because they will be unsafe or destructive in the home. Guide dogs have to be trustworthy when left alone in all situations: their handler’s home, hotels, office settings, and other people’s homes.

A puppy raiser’s most important job creating boundaries in the home and teaching excellent house manners. Even if a dog is well socialized and obedient they cannot become a guide dog with unacceptable house manners. A dog with poor house manners is unsafe and unreliable and therefore unsuitable to become a guide dog for someone with visual impairments or blind.

It is harder to correct poor house manners than it is to prevent them from happening so it’s our job to teach good house manners.

Guide dogs must be trustworthy in all settings including their partner’s home, hotels, office settings, and other people’s homes.

Our job is to teach the puppy correct and acceptable house behavior and then test their skills as they mature and age. In order to do so a solid foundation must be given to the puppy at a young age in the home.

**Set up for success**

When you first get your puppy they should always be tethered to your person, on a tie down in a clear area while you’re in the room or nearby, or in their crate.
By limiting your puppy’s access to the home you can reward the puppy’s good behavior and correct what is undesirable. Then, as the puppy matures and proves to be trustworthy tethered they can be given independence in small, monitored steps.

Independence in the house is earned with consistent and reliable behavior. It is not automatically given because the dog seems old enough or good. Independence should be given in small increments and by following the age appropriate parameters.

By following the guidelines below you will teach your puppy correct house behaviors and your puppy will be trustworthy in the home when they are with their partner.

**Three to six months:**

This time period is the most important time to teach correct house behaviors. A pup is still learning and inquisitive. The puppy will often try to jump, scavenge, and pick up objects to explore their environment. Because of their naturally inquisitive mindset a young pup must be with their raiser at all times or in their crate.

- **The puppy must be tethered to your person, on a tie down in a clear area while you’re in the room or nearby, or in their crate.**
- The puppy should never be unsupervised for any amount of time. If you are not capable of rewarding and correcting behaviors the puppy needs to be in their crate.
- The pup’s leash should be attached to their collar and attached to you in some way.
  - When you’re walking around the house the leash can be tethered to your belt, treat pouch, or in your hand.
  - When you’re in a stationary position the pup can be on tie down nearby or the leash attached to you in some way.
- The crate should be used as a tool to keep your home and the puppy safe. If you don’t have time to monitor the pup’s behavior they need to be in the crate.
  - Crate time gives the puppy an opportunity to rest and recharge alone.
- Reward desired behaviors throughout the day to establish boundaries and teach your puppy correct house manners.
  - Because the puppy is attached to you on leash you can catch all good behavior and praise it quickly!
  - Verbal praise and food reward can be given when the puppy settles quietly, ignores an object on the floor, doesn’t jump on the furniture, etc.
  - An effective leader establishes boundaries by acknowledging and praising and good behavior from the puppy.
- Praise your puppy frequently when they are doing the correct behavior without your guidance such as lying down calmly, walking through the house calmly, settling after playtime, chewing on an appropriate toy, etc.
- Anticipate puppy behaviors such as chewing, jumping on furniture, and picking up objects.
  - Prevent these behaviors by rewarding good behavior.
- Remove tempting objects from the environment. Objects like rugs with fringe, items on low shelves, trash cans with open lids, or clothes on the floor.
- The puppy can be easily redirected because they are on leash attached to you.
- Always redirect unacceptable behavior in this age period.
  - Good house manners are established by reward and redirection.
  - Young puppies don’t know what they are doing is wrong or unacceptable so it’s our job to redirect them and provide the correct behavior to them.
  - Here are some examples on how to redirect a puppy’s poor behavior:
    - Your puppy picks up an object and starts chewing on it. Replace the object with a Nylabone instead.
    - Your puppy likes to jump on people when they enter the house. Place your puppy in a sit position when people come to the door and praise their sit position instead of jumping.
    - Your puppy hovers and likes to beg while you’re eating dinner. Instead, place the puppy on a tie down or short leash in a down position and praise their down position instead of begging.
  - Once boundaries are established and understood by your puppy, you can correct undesirable and unacceptable behaviors to teach your puppy correct house manners.
    - Because your puppy is attached to you on leash you can catch all undesirable behaviors and correct or redirect them quickly.
    - Verbal corrections, a firm “NO”, are effective if the pup is doing an undesirable behavior.
    - If the puppy continues the behavior the correction was ineffective and needs to be more drastic such as a light leash correction or a firmer verbal correction.
- Tie down introduction can begin to teach settling
  - The tie down, like the crate, is an opportunity for the puppy to recharge and rest.
  - At this age the tie down should only be used when the raiser is in the same room or nearby to observe the pup’s behavior.
  - Make sure the area is clear and free of objects the pup can pull down, chew on, or ingest.

**Six to nine months**

At this age your puppy has boundaries in the home and is learning good house manners. During this time period your puppy is still inquisitive and going through a teenager phase. They might test boundaries and see what they can get away with in the home. Because of these changes it is important to give freedom in the home once it’s earned and the dog has proven they are consistently reliable.

At this age we are testing our pup’s house manners by giving them more freedom. If at any time your pup regresses please take a step back and assess why the mistake happened. Was the pup busied before allowed in a room? Did they get enough exercise? Was the pup rewarded enough
for correct behavior? Was your correction for undesirable behavior effective and understood by the puppy?

- As stated previously, the pup needs to be supervised, have their leash attached to their collar or on a tie down. If you cannot supervise the puppy they need to be in their crate.

- At six months the pup can start being introduced to dragging the leash in the home instead of being tethered to you.
  - Stepping on or picking up a leash is much easier than catching a puppy.
  - Pups in this age range tend to play games like keep away testing boundaries. Having a leash attached to them can stop that behavior almost immediately.

- Start setting the pup up successfully by closing doors to the room you’re in with them or using gates.
  - As the pup matures and has proven they are trustworthy you can start expanding the area they’re allowed in with you nearby.

- As the pup starts to mature and has proven they are trustworthy in a room with the leash on you can start keeping the puppy in the same room you’re in with the leash off.
  - Start with a smaller room with the door closed or gate up so you can directly supervise their behaviors.

- Consistently praise your puppy for offering the correct behavior without your guidance.

- Start testing your puppy by using the following guidelines:

  **Seeding the floor**

  - Pick out a few items that might be of interest to your puppy such as shoes, paper, remote controls, books, clothing, food containers, plants, kid toys, socks, etc. Do not use more than three or four objects.

  - When seeding the floor, train in all rooms of the house so your puppy learns to ignore these items everywhere, not just one specific room.

  - Place the items on the floor with varying distance with approved toys as well. Use as many or more chew toys than forbidden items. Each time you practice this activity use different forbidden objects, chew toys, and distance between the items.

  - Bring your pup into the room on a leash or dragline and allow them to investigate the items. It is best to stay on the floor so in the beginning you can respond if the puppy starts to pick up an object. Quickly progress to sitting, standing, and doing normal activities so your puppy does not learn to only ignore objects during training sessions.

  - If your puppy chooses a toy allow them to play with it for a few minutes and end the training session because they made the right choice. You can try again later that day or with different items.

  - If your puppy attempts to choose a forbidden item immediately interrupt the unwanted behavior. This may include a verbal "NO" or a leash cue or correction depending on the temperament of the puppy. Remember that timing is everything with correction – make sure you give the correction the moment they start to mouth or nose the object, before it
reaches their mouth. If your expectations are clear your puppy will learn they cannot place the objects in their mouth.

- If the pup does get a forbidden item in their mouth, simply remove the item. Do not give a correction or verbal cue or praise when you remove it. Take the item away, place it back on the floor, and ignore the pup. Puppies will often pick up items for attention so it’s important not to make a fuss about it.
- Continue the training exercise with consistent and firm corrections. Praise when they choose the right items and ignore the forbidden items.

Some pups are too smart and understand when they are being supervised in a training session and when they are not. You might have to outsmart the pup by setting up scenarios that don’t look planned or supervised. If your pup falls into this category please follow these steps for setting them up:

- Always have your pup with a leash attached so interruption can be occur if necessary. Some pups learn that they have the leash attached only during training sessions. They will need to wear it all the time for a setup to be effective.
- Use one or two objects your puppy cannot resist. For example, if your puppy cannot resist socks, leave several socks near you while you appear to be on the computer, reading, etc. Anytime the pup goes near the socks to investigate give them a firm leash correction. Before the correction it is important to appear calm and disinterested about the puppy’s behaviors and to give the correction before the pup takes the object.
- If they do pick the object up reel them toward you using the leash, remove the item, and ignore the pup again.
- The purpose is to give enough understanding to your pup and create boundaries that they understand. It is important to reward the desirable behavior of ignoring the forbidden objects and correct the undesirable behavior of even sniffing the forbidden objects and praising when they choose an appropriate toy.
- Remember to use all rooms in the house and keep the pup’s leash on at all times.

**Nine to twelve months**

By this age most puppies have settled into the home and understand house behavior expectations. Your pup should be reliable when you are present in the same area. The pup should understand they cannot race through the house, pick up or chew on forbidden items, beg for food, jump on people, or jump onto furniture. The pup should know what behaviors are acceptable because of your balance of reward, correction, and training exercises seeding the floor.

If your pup is reliable while you are present we can start testing them in small steps with the end goal of being left home alone unsupervised. As we start allowing the dog to have more independence in the home follow these guidelines:

- The dog must be fully relieved before being off leash in the home.
The dog has been recently exercised
The rooms the dog is allowed access are clean and free of temptation.
You are committed to supervising the dog and paying attention to their behavior.

Once the above steps are completed you can follow this protocol:

- Continue seeding the floor with varying objects to maintain and reinforce your expectations in the home.
- Start allowing the pup freedom to wander in several rooms.
  - When you start this process leave the leash attached to the dog’s collar. Follow the dog room to room the first several times they’re allowed in a room to make sure they are not doing anything unacceptable like jumping on furniture, counter surfing, or stealing objects.
- Occasionally check on the dog if they have left the room you were in.
  - More frequent checks need to occur in the beginning to ensure correct behavior.
- Practice recall intermittently if the dog wanders out of the room you were in.
  - This practice enforces a behavior their handler will utilize in their home when they need their dog with them.
- Starting with five-minute intervals leave the house with the dog unsupervised.
  - Refer back to the guidelines above when allowing unsupervised independence.
  - To guarantee success leave the dog in a room free of debris, tempting objects, and with several chew toys.
  - Continue adding small amounts (5-10 minutes) of time as the dog proves they are safe and reliable in one room until you reach two hours of time left alone.
- If at any time your dog is destructive, vocal, has an accident, or jumps on furniture continue crating the dog or leave them alone for significantly less time than before to set them up for success.
- Once a habit with poor behavior is created it is very hard to correct so it’s important these guidelines are followed to guarantee success and safety of the dog.

Twelve months and up
At this age your puppy should be reliable in the home off leash and left unsupervised. Your dog should not chew on inappropriate objects, beg for food, jump on furniture or counters, or race through the house. Your dog should understand your expectations of house behaviors.

A twelve month and older dog can continue to be tested on their house manners and independence granted based on their prior history. A dog this age still needs to be relieved, exercised, and set up for success before being left alone.

- Continue to practice seeding the floor with various objects throughout your home.
- Once the dog has been proven reliable up to two hours in one room you can offer more of the house that is clean and free of tempting objects for up to two hours.
- Remember to offer more time in small increments to ensure success.

- One or two tempting objects can be left in the room while the dog is unsupervised if practice with seeding is continued to be successful. Trashcans with one or two items, a sock, or pieces of paper are good objects to start testing with.
  - Leave the dog in one room unsupervised with a leash attached. Return to the room two minutes later after walking away from the room or leaving the house for a short amount of time.
  - If at any time the dog chooses the forbidden object when you return the dog needs to be interrupted and you need to stop the exercise and return to a safe room free of forbidden objects on the floor.

- Continue testing the dog unsupervised in different rooms of your home as the dog proves to be trustworthy with the current challenge.
- When a dog is recalled for formal training the dog should reliably be left in a clean home for up to four hours. They should also have basic understanding to avoid forbidden objects and display appropriate house behaviors.

**Teach your puppy to not jump on people**

Puppies that jump on people and are allowed to continue the behavior become dangerous and a nuisance. Pups always need to keep “four on the floor,” especially when greeting people.

Our pups always need to be in a sit or a down before they are allowed to be pet by people. They cannot jump on people from those positions. If they get too excited and stand up give them a correction and ask them to sit again. It will be easier for your pup to learn how to be polite while sitting if they’re corrected for standing up instead of being corrected for jumping on people. Remember that once your pup is in a sit or down position again to praise them. The praise will enforce the desired behavior of remaining calm.

If your pup is too excitable or loses focus on you when new people approach please ask people not to pet him until they are mature enough to remain sitting. Practice at home, with people you know who won’t over excite your pup, and offer praise and reward for sitting or lying down when being pet.

**Teach your pup not to get on furniture or beds**

Many pet dogs are allowed to get on furniture and that might be the case in your home. However, the puppy you are raising is not allowed to get on furniture or beds. As a guide they will be traveling in public with their owner, and jumping on furniture is not acceptable for a guide dog. Also, some people are not comfortable with having dogs on their furniture.

The easiest way to enforce this behavior and create boundaries is to play, pet, and interact with your pup on the floor for the first 12 weeks. Pups want to be close to you and investigate and will most likely start attempting to get on furniture at that age. If they attempt to get on the furniture when you’re on the bed or furniture firmly tell them no and correct the behavior by giving a
leash or collar correction. Allowing your pup to drag their leash around the house will allow you to give a leash correction if the pup attempts to jump on furniture that is in the room.

Praise your puppy enthusiastically and frequently for keeping all four feet on the floor after you correct them or when they approach furniture and don’t attempt to climb up.

**Teach your puppy not to race through the house**

Puppies that are allowed to run through the house can be a safety hazard while they are living with you. They become even more dangerous when it happens near someone with visual impairments. Your pup should learn that running is an outdoor activity and should never be allowed in the house. As your pup grows and matures they need to understand that they should move through the house calmly.

Again, allow your pup to drag their leash around the house. If your pup becomes active and starts running you can correct them by stepping on the line and asking them to sit until they regain self-control. Periodically praise your puppy when they are walking room to room or around the house with you.

If your pup persistently runs through the house and rough houses they might not be getting enough exercise. Increase their playtime and exercise to prevent their desire to do so in the house and help them relax.

**Teach your puppy not to chew on objects that are not their toys**

Puppies need an outlet for chewing. Not only are they teething, but chewing helps relieve stress and boredom. It’s a common behavior and can become a nuisance if not directed toward appropriate toys.

Before you received your pup they were in the nursery and kennel with their littermates. They were allowed to chew on everything in their environment because it’s all puppy proofed! They were constantly surrounded by toys, their littermates, and beds that are often used for teething. However, in your home the rules have changed, but they don’t know it yet. It is your job to establish boundaries and show them what is allowed and what is unacceptable.

When you bring the puppy home, your house should be puppy proofed. Remove any hanging wires, plants, or objects that could potentially be chewed on and harmful if chewed or ingested. Always supervise or confine your puppy to protect both your home and the pup. Provide enough chew toys and time with them to allow your pup to create healthy habits. If your pup is chewing on something inappropriate, firmly tell them “No” and replace it with a chew toy. If they are persistent about a particular object you can give them a leash or collar correction, offer a chew toy, and praise them once they start chewing on the toy. Using bitter apple spray is often useful to help deter your pup from chewing on furniture.
Teach your puppy not to pick up objects

Guide dogs must not pick up objects or be destructive. They need to be safe and accountable in every home environment. It is important that they do not pick things up because it can become dangerous to someone who is visually impaired. Also, if your pup chews or destroys things, someone visually impaired might not be aware that the dog has been destructive. This can put the dog at risk for gastrointestinal obstruction or becoming ill.

A trustworthy puppy is one that does not chew, steal, pick up, or destroy household objects. They should not chew or move anything that is not their own chew toys. Once your puppy is trustworthy with a puppy-proofed home you can start “seeding” the floor to enforce good behavior even when potentially tempting house hold objects are left around your home.

Seeding the floor

- Pick out a few items that might be of interest to your puppy such as shoes, paper, remote controls, books, clothing, food containers, plants, kid toys, socks, etc. Do not use more than three or four objects.
- When seeding the floor, train in all rooms of the house so your puppy learns to ignore these items everywhere, not just one specific room.
- Place the items on the floor with varying distance with approved toys as well. Use as many or more chew toys than forbidden items. Each time you practice this activity use different forbidden objects, chew toys, and distance between the items.
- Bring your pup into the room on a leash or dragline and allow them to investigate the items. It is best to stay on the floor so in the beginning you can respond if the puppy starts to pick up an object. Quickly progress to sitting, standing, and doing normal activities so your puppy does not learn to only ignore objects during training sessions.
- If your puppy chooses a toy allow them to play with it for a few minutes and end the training session because they made the right choice. You can try again later that day or with different items.
- If your puppy attempts to choose a forbidden item immediately interrupt the unwanted behavior. This may include a verbal "NO" or a leash cue or correction depending on the temperament of the puppy. Remember that timing is everything with correction – make sure you give the correction the moment they start to mouth or nose the object, before it reaches their mouth. If your expectations are clear your puppy will learn they cannot place the objects in their mouth.
- If the pup does get a forbidden item in their mouth, simply remove the item. Do not give a correction or verbal cue or praise when you remove it. Take the item away, place it back on the floor, and ignore the pup. Puppies will often pick up items for attention so it’s important not to make a fuss about it.
- Continue the training exercise with consistent and firm corrections. Praise when they choose the right items and ignore the forbidden items.
Some pups are too smart and understand when they are being supervised in a training session and when they are not. You might have to outsmart the pup by setting up scenarios that don’t look planned or supervised. If your pup falls into this category please follow these steps for setting them up:

- Always have your pup with a leash attached so interruption can be occur if necessary. Some pups learn that they have the leash attached only during training sessions. They will need to wear it all the time for a setup to be effective.
- Use one or two objects your puppy cannot resist. For example, if your puppy cannot resist socks, leave several socks near you while you appear to be on the computer, reading, etc. Anytime the pup goes near the socks to investigate give them a firm leash correction. Before the correction it is important to appear calm and disinterested about the puppy’s behaviors and to give the correction before the pup takes the object.
- If they do pick the object up reel them toward you using the leash, remove the item, and ignore the pup again.
- The purpose is to give enough understanding to your pup and create boundaries that they understand. It is important to reward the desirable behavior of ignoring the forbidden objects and correct the undesirable behavior of even sniffing the forbidden objects and praising when they choose an appropriate toy.
- Remember to use all rooms in the house and keep the pup’s leash on at all times.

**Teach your puppy to avoid food**

Puppies should be taught in the same manner to avoid food as seeding the floor.

- Start with food in another person’s hand where it can easily be reached.
- Give a leash correction when the puppy is within 12 to 6 inches of the food.
- Do not allow the approach to sniff or eat the food.
- If your pup chooses to turn away or stop approaching, praise them! Our dogs are food motivated and love it, so be consistent and persistent when teaching food avoidance.

These exercises need to be started early on so the behaviors do not continue. Consistent seeding and setups will help your puppy understand appropriate house manners and what is allowed. Your puppy should always have appropriate supervision at all times to prevent inappropriate behaviors. As they get older you can test them with harder-to-resist objects or more in the room at a time. Seeding and setting up are wonderful ways to teach self-control and solidify your pup’s understanding of acceptable behavior.

Remember that praising the good behavior of avoiding food and forbidden objects needs to be praised vigorously so the puppy understands the boundaries and correction when given.

**Teaching your puppy not to bark or whine**
Puppies will often bark, whine, or vocalize when they are excited. Some vocalization is normal, but it is important to teach your puppy to be quiet when in the house, public, or when they are confined.

Use leash and collar corrections when your puppy becomes too noisy. Follow up the correction with a sit to help them regain control and praise them for being quiet. If your puppy continues to bark give a firmer correction so they realize the severity of their poor behavior. Always be consistent and patient when addressing vocalization. Sometimes puppies make cute noises, but it is important not to allow or reward the vocalization when it’s cute and reprimand when it’s a nuisance.

If your puppy persistently barks or whines when confined or on a tie-down they might be uncomfortable and trying to communicate. Before they were confined did they busy, have enough exercise, or water?

**Guidelines for vocalizing while in the crate**

- Expect your puppy to whine and vocalize their first days home. Ignore the crying because they’re most likely overwhelmed, anxious, and unsure about being in a new environment. If you correct them it will only make them more anxious and afraid.
- Do not soothe your puppy when they vocalize – that is only rewarding the behavior.
- Praise your puppy when they are quiet.
- Take your puppy out of the crate or off the tie-down just after they stop crying. Young puppies have short attention spans and low tolerance for confinement.
- Be patient, reward quiet behavior, and build up confinement time gradually.
- After a few days start correcting the vocalization by threading the puppy’s collar through the kennel while they are in it. Stay close by and give a gentle but firm correction with the leash.
- Do not leave the leash and collar on the puppy if you leave the room.
- Slowly build up time that they are in the crate when you are present to give corrections so your pup learns to be comfortable confined.

**Other behaviors can be corrected by consistent interruption and effective correction and followed up with praise when the right choice is made. Your puppy should not engage in the following:**

- Inappropriately sniffing people, other animals, or objects
- Bolting or charging through doors
- Mouthing people or clothing
- Obsessing or showing interest in people food

If you are struggling with your pup’s house behaviors and manners please contact your advisor or area coordinator.
Even though there are so many rules and regulations with guide dog puppies they can still have fun! They are allowed to play with you and your family, run in the yard, play with other dogs, play with toys, chew on toys, and visit places pet dogs aren’t allowed. All of our current puppy raisers have happy pups that get plenty of love, playtime, and affection.

- Guide dogs travel everywhere with their partners, even other people’s homes. They must be well behaved in every environment.
- Puppies learn quickly through reward so praise your pup frequently when they’re choosing to be calm in the house.
- Always cuddle and pet your pup when they are on the floor.

6-2 SOCIALIZATION

It’s time to take your puppy out into the world! The purpose of socialization is to create positive experiences and teach your puppy how to behave in public. In order for your puppy to become a guide dog, they will need to be comfortable and confident in all situations and scenarios.

Puppy coat guidelines

Your puppy is required to wear their puppy coat in all public settings. Our coats come in two sizes. One will be provided to you when you get your puppy, and when they get bigger, your advisor or area coordinator will swap the coat out for a larger one.

- Keep your puppy’s coat clean and free of stains, tears, or dirt. If your pup’s coat becomes dirty you can wash it cold water and lay it flat to dry. If your puppy’s coat becomes damaged in any way please return it to your advisor or area coordinator to get a new one.
- The coat represents the Guide Dog Foundation and puppy raising to the public. Remember to interact in a positive manner with the public when in social settings with your pup.
- Never allow another dog or puppy to wear your puppy’s coat in any situation. Removal of your puppy and all supplies will happen if this occurs. We pride ourselves on our positive public interactions, breeding dogs with suitable temperaments, and having upstanding volunteers. Misrepresentation can damage our relationship with the public and potentially harm yourself, dog, or the public.
- Always remove your puppy’s coat before busying them. If they start to busy in coat, remove it so it does not get soiled.
Public places

State laws vary in regards to granting access to guide dog puppies. Access is allowed in public and private places by the management or staff of a business, facility, or service.

The Guide Dog Foundation will not make any effort to achieve access for puppies where they are not welcome. This could potentially harm service and guide dog user’s relationship with the public. Puppy raisers are asked to not demand, coerce, argue, or attempt to enter a business where they were not allowed access.

If you are asked to leave or not permitted access with your guide dog puppy, please calmly and briefly explain the importance of guide dog puppy socialization, thank them for their time, and quietly leave. If they do choose to cooperate, please thank them for understanding and helping your puppy succeed. Please notify your advisor or area coordinator if you are not allowed access somewhere so they can notify the other raisers in the area and it can be avoided.

Be mindful on how the public is treating your puppy. Do not allow people to tease your puppy by throwing food, making noises, or calling them. Politely ask them to stop and explain that your puppy needs to remain focused on you. Do not allow your puppy to get “special” attention from people. Oftentimes puppy raisers will hear individuals excuse poor behavior because “they don’t mind it.” Remind them that all interactions with the public need to be positive, and the pup needs to be well behaved. If they cannot follow your guidelines do not allow them to interact with your puppy.

- **Never leave your puppy unattended, even for a moment. Puppies are not 100 percent reliable. They can get up and cause problems, be stolen, or have a negative experience.**
- **Never leave your puppy in the car unattended, regardless of the outside temperature, how long you’re going to be gone, if the windows are down, etc.**
- Never force your puppy into a situation that is overwhelming or scaring them.
  - Allow your puppy to observe and become comfortable with the exposure at their own pace.
  - Allow your puppy to observe from a distance if they stop walking or try to leave the situation.
  - Use consistent, calm praise to reassure your pup. Praise any movement toward what is scaring them.
- Always observe your puppy’s body language and take note and respond to any changes.
  - Puppies like to observe and explore before they are fully comfortable with something new. Some take just a few seconds while others need more time to observe before becoming comfortable.
- Never reinforce negative behavior.
  - Do not coddle, pet, or reassure a puppy that is acting afraid. Allow them to observe at their own pace, but coddling them will reassert this fearful behavior.
  - If they do become frightened calmly move away from the exposure and wait for your puppy to become comfortable again. Motivate or distract them by practicing
verbal cues, interactive play to improve their confidence, or just letting them observe.

- Allow your puppy to set the pace of the reproach. Do not force them to investigate if they are not ready.
- Praise your puppy when they become comfortable and want to explore.

**Socializing your puppy**

- Choose one exposure at a time in the beginning by just picking one new thing: things that move, new smells, new sounds, new strange objects, etc.
- Be patient and confident. Let your puppy move at their own pace.
- Give your puppy strong leadership. Be confident and effective with your corrections and praise.
- Keep the exposures short and positive.
- Do not console them if they are fearful.
- Remain calm and neutral if your pup becomes overwhelmed or scared.
- Praise your puppy for confidence and desire to investigate.
- Read your puppy’s body language and their reactions. Respond to how your puppy is acting to better support and motivate them.
- Don’t be afraid to take a step back or try again. If your pup becomes too excited, scared, or overwhelmed remove them from the situation and try again.

**Guidelines for socializing under 5 months**

- Follow the puppy socialization guidelines list on below
- Always be prepared to leave, clean up messes, or spend time observing from a distance. Pups have accidents at this age so always have cleanup supplies!
- Make the outings quick and positive. Some can even be walking two or three steps inside the door, allowing your pup to become comfortable, and walking back out.
- Sitting or standing in a new setting with a young puppy is an effective way for them to observe and still feel safe. Walking around adds the risk of them becoming overwhelmed, having an accident, or getting frightened.
- If your pup is not fully vaccinated, do not take them to areas other dogs are allowed: public parks, pet stores, grooming stores, pet dog friendly businesses, and dog parks.
- Always carry your puppy into the vet office before he is fully vaccinated. Do not allow them to relieve outside or walk into the office. They should be held until they are fully vaccinated.

If you are unsure about an outing or exposure please check with your advisor or area coordinator. Some types of outings or socializations are not safe for young puppies; they could become overwhelmed, frightened, or put at risk for contracting disease.
<table>
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<th>9–10 weeks</th>
<th>10–11 weeks</th>
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<th>12–16 weeks</th>
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<td>Crate</td>
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<td>Elevators</td>
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<td>OK</td>
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<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flags/tarps blowing</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household appliances</td>
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<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shopping carts</td>
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<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slippery floors</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<td>Stairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tie-downs</td>
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<td>Balloons</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Traffic</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oncoming residential traffic with sidewalk and light traffic</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential traffic from behind and light traffic</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK if held</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>City sidewalk or no sidewalk with moderate traffic</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>OK</td>
<td>OK</td>
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</table>
If you are unsure if an outing is suitable and age appropriate for your puppy you must contact your area coordinator or advisor for approval.

Before you get your puppy, a diligent team of volunteers socializes them in their homes and while they’re still living in the puppy kennel. Every day your puppy is played with, taught new things, and their behavior is observed and recorded. Your puppy learns many things before you get them, but they still might need to be shown again to gain your trust and feel comfortable in new surroundings.

Teach your puppy to politely walk up and down stairs

Guide dogs must negotiate stairs calmly without any hesitation or fear. It is your job to show your puppy that stairs are not scary and they should walk up and down in a quiet, controlled manner. To introduce your puppy to stairs follow these guidelines:

- Going up: It is best to place your puppy’s front paws on the first step. You may even carry them to the middle of the staircase to start the procedure. Using a happy voice, encourage them to investigate the stairs up, going down to their level, and praise any attempts to go up to the next step.
- Going down: Move your puppy closer to the landing so they don’t face a whole flight of stairs on their first attempt. Place their front paws on the landing or last step to encourage them move their back legs onto the same step as their front. Again, use a happy voice and praise all attempts to move down the steps.
- Never force a puppy to go up or down stairs. It can create a fear of steps and staircases.
- Introduce new types of stairs as your puppy matures. Start with easy, carpeted, or smooth steps that have a back.
- Do not let your puppy charge up the steps once they are comfortable. Keep a short, relaxed leash.
- Walk at a steady, slow pace and expect your puppy to do the same. When they become a guide dog they will need to match their partner’s pace.
Teach your puppy to be relaxed on new surfaces

Once your puppy is a guide dog they will have to be comfortable and feel safe on all surfaces. They cannot be suspicious, fearful, or change pace when walking on a variety of surfaces. Your pup will need to be comfortable on sidewalks, shiny floors, stairs, grates, manhole covers, tile, and any other odd surface you might encounter. Your puppy should never veer, jump off, or avoid any surface.

- Slow down and allow your puppy to investigate the new surface.
- Hold your leash in a relaxed, short position.
- Be prepared to stop and do not force your puppy to continue walking until they are ready.
- Praise your pup for investigating the new surface. It will encourage him to continue moving toward it.
- Do not allow your pup to jump around the new surface. If they want to do so take your time and let them investigate.
- Don’t forget to keep your leash relaxed and use lots of praise!

Teach your puppy to be comfortable near traffic

Guide dogs are exposed to a variety of traffic throughout their career with their partner. They need to be aware, confident, and comfortable with oncoming traffic and traffic coming from behind. If you rush traffic exposure it could create sensitivity toward the exposure. Take your time and make sure each exposure is positive and age appropriate.

- Avoid exposing young pups to heavy traffic. The combination of loud noises, fast-moving objects, and the exhaust smells can easily overwhelm them.
- Viewing traffic from a safe and comfortable distance is best.
- Always have a way to safely leave the area if your puppy becomes overwhelmed and you need to remove them from the exposure.
- If you observe any signs of your puppy becoming stressed or worried, calmly walk away, carrying your pup if you are able to.
- Talk to your puppy in a confident tone. Do not soothe or console them because that can only feed into their insecurity about the exposure.
- Don’t be afraid to start from a far distance away. This will allow you to set your puppy up for success and give them plenty of time to observe from a safe distance without becoming overwhelmed.

It is best to start traffic exposure on a familiar, residential street and only progress to heavier traffic once your puppy is comfortable with the previous scenario. Sitting on the ground or lowering to their level while allowing your young pup to view the traffic will make them feel comfortable and at ease. Slowly move back up to a standing position after a few minutes. Observe your pup’s reaction to receiving less support. If they still seem comfortable start walking toward the traffic with a slow, relaxed pace. Talk to your pup and praise them for
Teach your puppy to ride calmly in vehicles

Your puppy needs to be comfortable and well behaved when riding in vehicles. It is the puppy raiser’s responsibility to acclimate their pup to riding in the car. Once they are in formal training, the dogs are transported to each training location in crated vans so it is not possible to improve or work on their car etiquette after they arrive for formal training.

Please follow these guidelines for teaching car riding

- Introduce your pup to the car in a calm, confident manner just as with every other new exposure.
- Make sure your pup has been exercised, busied, and hasn’t eaten recently. Riding in the car with a full stomach can sometimes cause your puppy to become carsick. Carsickness can lead to fear of cars or reluctance to ride in the car.
- Until your puppy can safely get in and out of the car on their own, always place them in and out of the car. Falling out, bumping into, or scrambling can lead to a fear of cars or to your pup becoming uncomfortable in a vehicle. Do not allow your pup to attempt to jump into the car until you are sure they can do it themselves in a safe manner.
- It is best to place a large item like a box or bag on the passenger seat so your puppy cannot climb onto it.
- Give your puppy a chew toy and use a tie-down if necessary to keep them in a safe position and occupied.
- Praise all calm behaviors!

Please follow these safety rules when travelling with your guide dog puppy

- Never leave your puppy unattended in the vehicle.
- Do not allow your puppy to climb or move around. They need to be sitting or lying down in the passenger foot well.
- Do not allow the driver of the car to interact with the puppy other than verbal praise for calm behavior.
- Never allow your guide dog puppy to travel in the bed of a pickup truck in any form or fashion including being tied down, loose, or in a crate.

Make sure your puppy is exposed to and rides in all types of vehicles. Different cars feel different, sound different, and give a different view from the passenger foot well. Your pup needs to be comfortable with all different types of vehicles.
If your puppy experiences carsickness or a reluctance to get into a vehicle, please contact your advisor or area coordinator. While carsickness issues can escalate quickly and be responsible for a puppy’s release from our programs, it is a fairly easy problem to fix.

**Socialization and Exposure**

By the time your pup is ready for formal guide dog training they should be comfortable with and exposed to all (and more) of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Animals</th>
<th>Stores</th>
<th>Vehicles/Machines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elderly people</td>
<td>Cats</td>
<td>Fur coat department</td>
<td>Bicycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowds (mall, school, parade to view only)</td>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Kitchen appliances (e.g., mixer, dishwasher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in uniforms</td>
<td>Rabbits</td>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>Construction equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Babies</td>
<td>Squirrels</td>
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<td>Planes overhead</td>
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<tr>
<td>People wearing hats</td>
<td>Farm animals</td>
<td>Vehicles/Machines</td>
<td>Lawn mowers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toddlers</td>
<td>Stores</td>
<td>Automatic doors</td>
<td>Vacuums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People wearing sunglasses</td>
<td>Pet store</td>
<td>Car travel</td>
<td>Brooms/mops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life-sized cardboard/dummy</td>
<td>Florist</td>
<td>Elevators</td>
<td>Office equipment (e.g., copy machine)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crying children</td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>Motorcycles</td>
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<tr>
<td>People yelling/clapping</td>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>Garbage trucks</td>
<td>Hair dryers</td>
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<tr>
<td>People in costumes</td>
<td>Hair salon</td>
<td>Trains</td>
<td>Skateboards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statues</td>
<td>Hair salon</td>
<td>Van travel</td>
<td>Hand dryers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Walking by (not on) escalator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>Trash cans</td>
<td>Shopping carts</td>
<td>Wheelchairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noisy toys</td>
<td>Changing floor surfaces</td>
<td>Streets without sidewalks</td>
<td>Thunder (while inside)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiddie rides</td>
<td>Wood floors</td>
<td>Ceiling fans</td>
<td>Sirens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strollers</td>
<td>Manholes</td>
<td>Sprinklers</td>
<td>Beach</td>
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6-3 VERBAL CUES

In order to teach verbal cues effectively you have to be a confident trainer and leader. See section 5-1 for more clarification if needed. Puppy raising will help you become a more effective teacher and leader. Your puppy will need to learn verbal cues and understand how to be obedient and do what is asked of them. To become a good guide dog, it is important that your pup is not only well socialized but also obedient.

Training Verbal Cues Used for Guide Dog Puppies

Each of these verbal cues are necessary for guide dog puppies to learn before coming in for training (IFT). Please do not teach your puppy any extra verbal cues or “tricks.” Teaching them anything extra can affect their formal guide dog training and cause them to be released from our programs.

1. Sit: The verbal cue used to make your puppy place their bottom on the floor.
2. Down: The verbal cue used to make your puppy lie on the ground in a relaxed manner.
3. Stand: The verbal cue used to make your puppy stand with four feet on the floor, usually from a sit or down position.
4. OK: The verbal cue used to release your puppy from any prior verbal cue.
5. Under: The verbal cue given to get your puppy under a table or chair and lie down.
6. Come: The verbal cue given to make your puppy come directly to you
7. Stay: The verbal cue given to make your puppy stay in the position and spot that you told them to until you release them
8. Leave it: The verbal cue given to make your puppy stop whatever they are doing and pay attention to you.
9. About: The verbal cue given to completely turn around and walk in the direction you were coming from.
10. Heel: The verbal cue given to make your puppy move into the proper heel position
11. Kennel/crate: The verbal cue given to make your puppy move into their crate or kennel
12. Enough: The verbal cue given to make your puppy stop playing or being too active.
13. Go busy/get busy/busy: The verbal cue given to tell your puppy to relieve themselves.
Setting up for success

When training and teaching your guide dog puppy it is important that you are setting them up for success and that they are absorbing what you are trying to teach them.

- Make sure you can always follow through with a verbal cue given.
- Always give praise if your puppy did what you asked them to do.
- Use an excited, quiet voice and hold a relaxed leash.
- Start in a quiet, low-distraction environment. Once your puppy is older and more reliable you can start asking for verbal cues in more stimulating environments.
- Say the verbal cue once and give your puppy time to respond. They need to hear the verbal cue, process what you said, and then move their body into the correct position.
- Make sure you have your puppy’s attention before giving a verbal cue. Say their name, make a quick noise, or pat your thigh if you aren’t sure their attention is on you.
- Keep learning sessions short. If your puppy was struggling and finally got something right, end with that. Always end on a positive note!
- Stop the session if you become frustrated or angry at any time.

OK

Age appropriate: Your puppy can begin to learn this verbal cue at 8 weeks. By the time they are 3 to 4 months old they should be able to obey this verbal cue consistently.

Purpose: Dogs respond to leadership, and guide dogs need to respond to the verbal cues given to them. They need to learn that they cannot perform an action unless directed to do so by their handler. The OK verbal cue releases them from the action. This enforces the handler’s leadership and decision to end the action, not the dog’s.

Objective: Once the verbal cue OK is given the puppy can release from the previously given verbal cue.

Procedure:

- Use this verbal cue at the end of all verbal cues once you have told your dog to do something. It can be given after Sit, Down, Stay, Come, Stand.
- Give your dog a verbal cue, and after several seconds give the verbal cue OK.
- Lure the dog to get up or move out of the position you told them to get into. Once they start moving praise them verbally with a happy voice.
- Never let the puppy decide on their own when the exercise is over. If you asked your pup to sit they need to remain sitting until given the OK verbal cue. Make sure the duration of verbal cues given are age appropriate and a task your puppy can complete successfully.
- The puppy still needs to remain calm even when they’re released from the verbal cue. No lunging, jumping, vocalizing, or pulling should be allowed.
**Enough**

**Age appropriate:** You can start teaching this verbal cue immediately. By the time your pup is 5 months old they should understand and fulfill this verbal cue completely.

**Purpose:** Puppies need to learn when to stop certain behaviors like playtime. Playing is acceptable, but they need to learn to stop it when told to do so.

**Objective:** When given the verbal cue *Enough* your puppy should stop what they’re doing and no longer continue the behavior.

**Procedure:**

- You will introduce the verbal cue by have your puppy on leash. Engage them in play while you are sitting on the floor or in a chair.
- To stop the play give the verbal cue *Enough* and remove yourself from the puppy by standing up.
- When the puppy stops playing praise them with verbal praise only. *Do not touch them because that will most likely reengage your pup in play.*
- If your puppy continues trying to initiate play with you take several steps away or give a leash correction that relays you want them to stop the behavior.
- Once your puppy has settled down again you can resume play and repeat the above process. The goal is for your puppy to learn that playtime is allowed, but only when you are controlling it. Playtime needs to be stopped reliably on verbal cue.
- Next, play with your puppy while they are on leash. Before they become tired give the verbal cue *Enough*. If the puppy continues to play give a leash correction until the play has stopped.
- Praise the puppy for stopping the play with verbal praise.
- After rest continue playing.
- If your puppy becomes too rough, give a leash correction and stop the play immediately. Your puppy needs to learn that rough play is not acceptable in any way, but acceptable play is allowed. It is critical that you return to playing after the correction is given so your pup can learn the distinction.

- **OK** and **Enough** can be introduced right away when you get your puppy.
- Praise should always be given when the puppy does what you told them to do.
- Your pup should start understanding and reliably responding to these verbal cues by 5 months of age.
**Sit Verbal cue**

**Appropriate age**: Your puppy can start learning this verbal cue as soon as you get them. By the time your puppy is 6 months old they should understand and obey this verbal cue consistently.

**Purpose**: Guide dogs need to be able to sit calmly with their partners when asked.

**Objective**: The puppy will learn to sit from a verbal cue without moving or lying down.

**Procedure**:

- Luring your puppy into a sit with a chew toy or piece of kibble is an effective way to teach sit. You can also lightly place your hand on their rump to offer more encouragement. Do not push down or apply pressure; just place your hand there as you say **Sit** to encourage their bottom to move toward the ground.
- Once your puppy places their bottom on the ground praise them by saying **Good Sit**, offering the kibble you used to lure them, or giving them a quick pet. Your pup will most likely stand up with the enthusiastic praise so you can practice sit again once you have regained their attention.
- If your puppy does not sit do not repeat the verbal cue without correction. Firmly push their bottom down and tell them **Sit** as you place pressure on their rump.
- Once your puppy has successfully sat for you several times without your having to place pressure on their rump, you can give a gentle, firm collar correction when they don’t sit and repeat the verbal cue.
- Do not expect your puppy to sit for a long amount of time. They might slide on some surfaces or attempt to lie down.

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**Down**

**Age appropriate**: Your puppy can begin learning this verbal cue once they understand sit. Puppies learn at different paces so that can be anywhere between 4 and 6 months. By 6 months they should understand and reliably lie down when given the verbal cue.

**Purpose**: Guide dogs need to lie down calmly when asked to do so by their partners, often for extended periods of time.

**Objective**: The puppy will learn to lie down when given the verbal cue from a sit or stand without getting up or moving.

**Procedure**:

- Start to teach the Down verbal cue only once your puppy understands and responds to the Sit verbal cue.
- Ask your puppy to sit and from there lure them with a chew toy or piece of kibble down to the ground. Keep the lure between their front paws so they slide down. Do not move the kibble in front of them; that will only encourage them to stand up and walk toward the lure.
• As your puppy is moving down from the sit position say Good Down and give them verbal praise or a quick pet.

• Once your puppy responds to the down verbal cue with a lure, start saying it without using the lure. Remember to say the verbal cue only once and give your pup time to think through the verbal cue.

• If your puppy does not respond and lie down, give them a gentle, firm collar correction and give them the verbal cue Down again. If they do not lie down they need to go back to luring.

Progression to giving the verbal cue Down on leash once they fully understand the verbal cue

• On leash have your puppy sitting on your left side, facing the same direction as you.
• Place the leash in your right hand and hold the leash close to the snap with your left hand.
• Give the Down verbal cue in a normal tone of voice. Say the verbal cue only once.
• You can place your hand lightly on the pup’s shoulders but do not bear down or apply pressure.
• Once your puppy is down verbally praise them in a happy, enthusiastic tone.
• If your puppy does not lie down give a quick leash correction in the downward position with your left hand, which is close to the leash snap.
• Once they lie down verbally praise them!
• Your puppy might roll on one side to get more comfortable. One roll is okay, but do not allow them to move around or roll on their backs in an effort to avoid doing what was asked of them or to play.
• If your puppy curls around in front of you, correct the position by sliding their body over to your left side again. As they get older they can be given a leash correction for curling around you instead of lying parallel with your body.

Stand

Age appropriate: Your puppy can start learning Stand at a very early age – as young as 8 weeks. By the time they are 9 months old they should understand and respond reliably.

Purpose: Guide dogs need to stand at the vet, while being groomed, and when having their harness placed on them. This verbal cue prepares them to stand when being handled and to move from a down or sit position.

Objective: The puppy will learn to remain standing without moving, sitting, or lying down.

Procedure:

• Start teaching this verbal cue while walking slowly with your puppy on your left side. Hold the leash close to the pup’s collar.
• Slowly stop and at the same time place your hand on the top of their outside leg where their leg meets their belly. Put just enough pressure to stop them from moving while giving the verbal cue **Stand** after they have come to a complete stop.
• Rub your puppy’s belly to keep him standing while saying **Good Stand**. This will enforce the verbal cue and reassure them.
• If your puppy tries to sit or lie down pull lightly forward with the leash and place your hand gently under their belly to prevent them from moving. Do not roughly grab or push their belly.
• Keep your puppy standing for several minutes while you talk to them in an enthusiastic voice and rub their belly to keep them in the standing position.
• Once your puppy understands the stand verbal cue start moving your hands all over their body like you are giving them an exam so they become accustomed to standing during exams and grooming.

**Under**

**Age appropriate:** Your puppy needs to start learning this as early as possible. Dogs can become uncomfortable lying under a chair or table if they aren’t accustomed to it at a young age. By 6 months your puppy should reliably respond to the under verbal cue.

**Purpose:** Guide dogs need to be comfortable lying under the chair or table where their partner is seated. It is a hazard for a guide dog to be lying in aisles, shared space, or pathways that prevent other people from moving safely.

**Objective:** The puppy should reliably go under a seat or table when asked and remain there until instructed to move elsewhere.

**Procedure:**

• First find a seat or table that your puppy can comfortable walk under and lie down.
• Sit down, and with your puppy on leash lure them with a piece of kibble or chew toy underneath where you are sitting.
• As your puppy walks under the seat or table say **Under** and praise them once they have completely gone under.
• Remain sitting for a few moments while petting and praising the puppy.
• After the pup has become acclimated to lying under the chair or table, stand up and ask your puppy to **Stand**. Remember to praise them for responding!
• Sit back down and repeat the above steps. Continue with luring your pup under until you feel they understand the verbal cue.
• Once you say **Under** without a lure and your pup responds, praise them with an enthusiastic voice.
• If they do not respond give a quick leash correction and repeat the verbal cue.
• Start using different chairs, tables, and settings to teach your puppy this verbal cue.
Young puppies can be given a chew toy to occupy themselves if they are under a table or seat for an extended period of time. However, by 6 to 8 months of age they should reliably lie under the table or seat calmly without chewing on a toy.

**Steady**

**Age appropriate:** Your puppy can be introduced to this verbal cue at 8 weeks. Around 6 months of age your puppy should understand and obey this verbal cue. Between 9 and 10 months of age this verbal cue should be used infrequently as your puppy should have a basic understanding of loose leash walking and impulse control.

**Purpose:** Guide dogs must walk forward in a calm manner beside their partner. Occasionally, your puppy will need reminders to slow their pace and not create tension on their collar through the leash.

**Objective:** Your puppy should learn to walk on your left side without lunging, pulling, or refusing to walk with you.

**Procedure:**

- This verbal cue should be taught with your pup on their leash. The end goal of this verbal cue is to have the puppy slow their pace to match yours and release the tension caused by their pulling on the leash.
- Start with your puppy walking on your left side.
- This verbal cue is only given as needed, but still needs to be taught to your puppy. Practice by slowing your walking pace at the same time you give the verbal cue Steady in a calm tone. Your puppy should slow their pace to match yours to be rewarded and praised.
- Continue practicing by varying your pace. Each time you slow your pace give the verbal cue Steady before expecting your puppy to match your pace. Praise any attempt to take the first step.
- Once your puppy fully understands the steady verbal cue when you slow your pace you can use it as a reminder to reengage and match their pace with you.
- Give the verbal cue Steady at the same time you slow your walking pace and wait for your puppy to respond. *Remember, do not repeat the verbal cue if your puppy does not respond immediately.*
- If they do not respond by slowing their pace down and maintaining a loose leash stop walking and come to a complete stop. Wait for your puppy to focus on you before proceeding.
- If you have given the verbal cue Steady and your responds by slowing their pace and maintaining a loose leash praise them and offer reward.

This verbal cue should be used infrequently. It is a reminder to your puppy to slow their pace down and focus on you. The end goal is to have a puppy that walks on a loose leash that can focus on the handler without excessive pulling or becoming distracted by the environment. If
excessive pulling and tension on the leash is a consistent issue please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

- **Stand** and **Under** are both verbal cues that your pup can be taught with luring and association. They won’t have the mental maturity to understand them right away.
- Reward, reward, reward in order to get a happy, attentive pup!

### Come

**Age appropriate:** You can start introducing Come as soon as you get your puppy. They should learn stay on leash and then progress to long-leash and off-leash recall at 4 to 12 months. By 6 months old your puppy should reliably respond to come on leash and long leash. By 12 months your puppy should respond to come in any on- or off-leash situation.

**Purpose:** A reliable recall is one of the most valuable verbal cues that you will teach. Your dog will be a partner to someone who is visually impaired; therefore, the recall needs to be consistent and reliable every time because the individual might not be able to see the dog responding to the come. The **Come** verbal cue can be used to recall your puppy from a potentially dangerous situation.

**Objective:** Your puppy should always happily come directly to you when they are called, even with distractions. They should make gentle contact with their handler and allow them to hold the collar. A puppy needs to learn to make contact with their handler when they recall so an individual who is visually impaired can understand where the dog is in position near them.

**Because this is one of the most important verbal cues you will teach your puppy, please follow these guidelines:**

- Never use a head harness when teaching this verbal cue. The puppy should have only their flat collar on when you are teaching recall.
- Always have food reward for the puppy. This can be a portion of their meals for the day, a high-value treat, or small treats. Speak to your advisor or area coordinator about what food reward you should use based on your puppy’s food drive, temperament, and the environment.
- You always want to be the most exciting, important thing in the puppy’s environment when practicing recall. If your puppy isn’t responding or is distracted, there are too many distractions in the environment. You need to practice somewhere less stimulating.
- Use a calm, enthusiastic voice when calling your puppy to you.
- Praise your puppy enthusiastically for coming to you every time, even if you had to “reel” them in or give a correction to redirect them.
• Reach for your puppy’s collar and praise them as they approach. This will create a positive association with their handler’s outstretched hand and encourage them to approach.
• Never call your puppy to correct or discipline him. Recall should always be positive.
• Do not run after, lunge for, or grab your puppy.
• Do not recall your puppy if you’re about to do something they don’t enjoy like cleaning their ears, giving a nail trim, or giving a bath.

On-leash recall
• Always start with teaching your puppy this phase. Do not move on until they come reliably every time. Use food every time to lure your puppy toward you and praise them enthusiastically.
• Have a piece of kibble ready in your hand.
• Start by calling your puppy while they are about half a leash length away from you.
• Start in a familiar environment with no distractions. Allow your puppy to wander, and when they are no longer paying attention to use give the verbal cue **Come** once in a happy voice.
• If your puppy makes any attempt to move toward you, start praising them to encourage them to continue moving toward you. If they don’t come immediately gently reel the pup in with the leash. Once the pup starts paying attention to you, praise them!
• Walk several steps backward with your puppy following you to teach them to keep moving toward you.
• Stop walking and continue praising your puppy as they approach you. Hold the piece of kibble near their nose and draw them toward you. When they are close enough take hold of their collar with your free hand as they get the kibble for reward.
• Verbally praise and pet your puppy while still holding their collar.
• Repeat this exercise several times. Make sure not to overstimulate or exhaust your puppy; keep these learning sessions brief.

Step 2 in Recall
Once your puppy understands that **Come** means to walk toward you for reward, praise the puppy verbally and by petting them for 7 to 10 seconds before giving them their food reward.
• Give your puppy the verbal cue **Come** while they are on leash and not paying attention to you.
• Gently reel your puppy toward you if they don’t respond to the verbal cue.
• Praise your puppy as they come toward you and continue walking backward so they follow.
• Calmly hold their collar while petting them with your other hand for 7 to 10 seconds.
• After you have finished petting your puppy, place the food reward directly on your knees and praise them while they are eating the kibble.
• Once your puppy becomes familiar and reliable with the verbal cue, start adding distractions.
• When the puppy comes reliably without the need to reel them in, start adding more distractions. If they become too attentive to the distractions start with the lesser distractions again until they are reliably coming when called.

At this point your puppy should always be given a food reward when they come to you when they are called. You should be able to reach out to grab their collar and they should make contact with you to receive the food reward. Your puppy should not need the leash to guide him at this point. If you still have to reel your pup in for recall, and you are not relying on just your voice, consider the following:

• Is the environment too distracting for your puppy?
• Is your tone of voice wrong or are you not praising them enough when they come?
• Does your puppy have lower food motivation? Could using a toy or high value treat be more effective?
• Some puppies are very independent and aloof. Spend time solidifying your relationship with your puppy and leadership skills if you continue to have problems with recall on leash.

If you feel your puppy is not progressing as they should, please contact your advisor or area coordinator to better understand the issue.

**Long-line recall**

Do not begin long line recall until your puppy is reliable with on-leash recall with distractions. They need to respond the first time they are called without being reeled in toward your legs. If you are not familiar with long line recall, please receive instruction from your advisor or area coordinator.

The long line should be 15 to 30 feet in length. It can be a rope, nylon leash material, or retractable leash. Be cautious to prevent rope burn with different materials!

• Begin in an area with no distractions. Allow your puppy to wander and drift, but don’t allow too much slack so you can still gain control if needed.
• Once your puppy is no longer paying attention to you use the verbal cue **Come** once with an excited tone of voice.
• If your puppy responds and moves toward you, praise them generously.
• As before, take hold of your pup’s collar, pet them for 7 to 10 seconds, and then give the food reward with verbal praise. Remember to give the food low enough so the puppy can reach it without jumping and making contact with your legs.
• If your puppy does not respond or starts to and loses focus on you give a quick collar correction. Once they focus on you and move toward you, verbally praise them to encourage their approach.
• Start adding minor distractions once the puppy is reliably coming when called from 15 to 30 feet away. As your puppy succeeds with the minor distractions move to a more stimulating environment or add more distractions.

**Transitioning to random reinforcement**

At this stage in teaching recall you can begin random reinforcement. That means that your puppy will not get a food reward every time they respond to recall; it becomes a random event. You will still praise your puppy with pets and verbal praise every time, but food reward is only given occasionally. Sometimes, a pup will stop responding to recall when random reinforcement has started. If you see that occurring, that means you started with random reinforcement too soon and need to step back to rewarding every time. With random reinforcement your pup should still get food reward several times throughout the training session. It is not necessary to fully wean them off food rewards.

Once your puppy is comfortable and reliable with random reinforcement on the long leash you can move to the next step of off-leash recall.

**Off-leash recall**

*Once you start off-leash recall you must go back to food reward every single time.* You can start using random reinforcement again once your pup responds immediately every time you call them.

• The transition to off leash needs to be done gradually and only when your dog’s recall is solidified on leash. You don’t want to create issues like the “keep away” game and not be able to enforce the verbal cue you have given.

• In a safe, enclosed area allow your pup to drag the long leash (15 to 30 feet) and allow them to explore the environment. When they are no longer paying attention to you, call them to you and praise them when they respond and start walking toward you. As before, take several steps back to encourage them to follow you. When you have taken hold of their collar, give them quick pets, verbal praise, and then food reward.

• If your puppy does not respond to your verbal cue pick up the long line to reel them toward you. Reward and praise as above.

• If your puppy is not coming when they are called you need to step back to holding the long line instead of letting the pup drag it. Sometimes there are too many distractions for a puppy to be off leash, and they need more time solidifying the verbal cue with you.

• If your pup is responding well you can start shortening the long line they are dragging behind them. Remember they are only ready to shorten the leash when they are immediately responding to your verbal cue every time.

• After several weeks of training sessions the pup should reliably come when called off leash in a safe, enclosed area with random reinforcement.

• Your puppy must be reliable with distractions in any environment. If you feel they are too distracted or not responding to your verbal cue immediately go back to the longer, handheld
line until needed. You do not want to create the habit of allowing the puppy to ignore your verbal cue and being reeled in or needing a leash correction to get their attention.

If you have any questions or need support regarding recall please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

| Guide dogs must have reliable recall because their partner will have visual impairments. |
| Recall should always be a positive experience. |
| Take the training of this verbal cue slowly and one step at a time. |

Stay

Age appropriate: Your puppy can begin learning Sit and Down Stay around 3 to 6 months of age. Add distractions at 5 months or older.

Purpose: Guide dogs are expected to be reliable when left on their own for short periods of time when their partners are away from them. They need to remain in the same position regardless of their environment and distractions.

Objective: The end goal of the verbal cue **Stay** is for your puppy to be left alone for several minutes without moving. However, the objective will vary based on your pup’s age and maturity. It can vary from you taking one step away with the leash still in your hand to leaving the room for several moments.

It is very important that you only expect your puppy to meet goals that are age appropriate, that you can enforce, and at which they will be successful. All puppies learn at different rates so your pup might be more or less advanced than other puppies in your group. Do not rush or accelerate the process if your puppy is not successful at the current phase of training.

Stay

You will be giving your pup the verbal cue **Stay**. When your puppy is young you can also use a hand signal of a flat hand with your palm facing the pup. The hand signal and verbal cue will be given at the same time.

Distractions can be added to the environment slowly to teach your puppy that they are expected to stay regardless of what is happening in their environment. This needs to be done slowly and
only advanced when your puppy is successful with the current level of distraction you are currently using. Guide dogs are expected to be trustworthy and stay where they are placed in any environment their partner leaves them.

Use this guideline for the intensity of distractions that can be given and progressed to once your puppy has mastered each level.

**Level 1**

No distractions in the environment. Just the puppy and the handler in a familiar room. The handler can talk to the pup.

**Level 2**

Another person the pup knows walks toward the puppy to talk to him. They can say the pup’s name but not give any verbal cues.

A familiar toy can be placed near the puppy within 10 feet.

Kibble can be placed near the puppy within 10 feet.

**Level 3**

Another person approaches the puppy and offers a toy or food.

A toy is gently tossed or rolled near the puppy.

Kibble is dropped near the puppy within 5 feet.

The environment can be changed to a more stimulating environment like a quiet store, parking lot, or park.

**Level 4**

Another dog or puppy can approach within 5 feet while on leash.

Food or toys can be placed right next to the puppy.

The environment can become more stimulating such as a mall, busy store, or in a crowded area.

**Level 5**

The handler can move around in a quick manner: jumping up and down, clapping their hands, jogging, making silly noises, etc.

Other puppies are playing on leash with their handlers and the other pups.

Other animals such as birds, cats, or squirrels can be nearby.

The environment can be a busy park, crowds, and people nearby.

**Level 6**

Other dogs can play off leash nearby (such as inside a dog park when you are training outside).

Toys can be tossed around or kibble being given to other pups.
Teaching Stay

Begin with the following steps and make sure your pup is responding appropriately before adding distractions and moving to the next phase.

Phase 1

- Place your puppy on your left side in a sit. Your leash should be in your right hand. Give your puppy your full attention.
- Give your puppy the verbal cue **Stay** in a calm, confident tone.
- Remain in place with your puppy at your side.
- If your puppy starts to move, tighten the leash by pulling straight up until they relax. Once they relax again release the tension. Your puppy should not slide to lie down on the floor. They should remain in the position you placed them until you give them the verbal cue to release the position.
- If your puppy continues to move, reposition them and control them as they start to move. Pay attention to your pup’s movement and catch it the second that they start to move.
- Be sure to give your puppy lots of praise and verbal encouragement in a quiet, happy voice. The time frame at which the stay is kept should start at 10 seconds and then vary in time up to 1 minute as your puppy progresses.
- Calmly praise and pet your puppy, and then give them the **OK** verbal cue to release them from their position.
- Start adding distractions as in levels 1 to 3 as described above. Remember to add only one at a time and continue on that level until the pup is comfortable with all of the scenarios in each level.

Phase 2

- Place your puppy in a sit on your left side. Your leash should be in your right hand.
- Give your puppy the verbal cue **Stay**.
- Step directly in front of your puppy. At this point you can also use the hand signal: hand flat with your palm facing the pup.
- If your pup makes an attempt to move give them a quick, light leash correction. Do not use any verbal correction. Simply give the leash correction and reposition your pup as needed with your hands.
- Pay full attention to your puppy and correct them the moment that they start to move. Start over from the beginning and always return the puppy to the place where you started regardless of where the pup moved to.
- Praise and pet your puppy while they remain in place and then release them with the **OK** verbal cue.
- Add distraction levels 2 to 4 as described above.
- Remember to balance any correction with the same or more praise. If you feel your puppy is not succeeding go back to phase 1 until your puppy is successful every time.

**Phase 3**

- Place your puppy on your left side in a sit. Your leash should be in your right hand.
- Give your puppy the verbal cue to **Stay**.
- Step directly in front of your puppy. While facing them, give them the hand signal verbal cue and take one step back.
- Add distraction levels 2 to 4.
- Once your puppy is successful in keeping their position with those distractions while you are one step away, start adding more distance between you and your pup by taking one more step back and repeating the distractions until you are eventually at the end of your 6-foot leash.
- Should your puppy make any attempts to move, give a quick collar correction and place them back into the original position with your hands and start again.
- When your puppy is comfortable with all of the distraction levels you can begin moving around your puppy as described in level 5.
- After your puppy remains in a stay with your movement around them continue adding the rest of the distraction levels 5 and 6.

**Phase 4**

- Following the same instructions for phase 3, use a longer leash or long line for increasing the distance between you and your pup.
- As your distance increases you will not be as able to give timely and effective physical corrections so make sure your puppy is proficient in phase 3 before moving to this phase.
- Continue adding distractions and distance between you and your pup. Take your time, use lots of verbal praise, and reward after you have given the release verbal cue **OK**.

**The Down and Stand Stay**

The down stay is usually more difficult for puppies because they are closer to the ground and can sniff and easily become distracted. Do not attempt the Down Stay until your puppy is completely proficient with phase 3 of the Sit Stay.
The Stand Stay should only be attempted after your puppy is completely successful with the Sit Stay and Down Stay. Some puppies only reach this level after they are 12 months old. It is crucial that this is not attempted until the pup is ready. This is the hardest stay to enforce by the handler because the pup is given the most freedom in their position – they don’t have to move from a sit or stay to start moving toward a distraction.

- The most common mistake puppy raisers make when teaching stay is moving faster than the dog is capable.
- Focus on your pup’s progress and success rather than trying to match another pup’s level.
- In order for them to be successful, Stay should be taught after your pup learns to ignore distractions and has self-control.

**Leave It**

**Age appropriate:** Your puppy can be introduced to this verbal cue at 8 weeks. You should start seeing a consistent response to the verbal cue around 4 to 5 months of age. By 9 months your puppy should fully understand and respond to this verbal cue.

**Purpose:** Guide dogs aren’t perfect nor are they robots. They have active, intrigued minds and need to be aware of their environment. Occasionally, they will become distracted by something in their environment. Their partner can use the verbal cue *Leave it* to redirect their dog’s attention to them and tell the dog to ignore whatever was distracting them.

**Objective:** Your puppy should redirect their attention toward you and ignore the distraction upon hearing the verbal cue.

**Procedure:**

- Leave it should be a conditioned response. Meaning, the response you desire is established by training in a normal environment with no extra stimulus. Then, when you are using the verbal cue the response will be the same as taught without any stimulus.
- Start with your puppy on leash and with the leash in your hand. You will need kibble for reward as well. Allow the pup to lose interest in you and then say their name and the verbal cue *Leave it*. When the puppy turns to look at you reward them by giving them a piece of kibble. Continue allowing your pup to explore the environment and then reengaging them by saying their name and rewarding the eye contact. Remember to only say the verbal cue once and give it with a tone of voice that is happy and catches your pup’s interest.
- Once the puppy understands that **Leave it** means to make eye contact stop saying their name before giving the verbal cue. Continue reinforcing with reward every time you verbally praise them.
- Start requiring longer periods of eye contact (more than 3 seconds) before giving the food reward. Vary the time between 3 and 15 seconds so your puppy fully understands that full focus and eye contact is required when you use this verbal cue.
- After the pup understands **Leave it** in a familiar environment with no distractions start placing low distractions such as a toy or several kibbles 4 to 5 feet away. Place your puppy in a sit on your left side with your leash in your right hand. Then, give the puppy the verbal cue **OK** to release them. If they make an attempt to move toward the object, give the verbal cue **Leave it** and verbally praise and food reward their eye contact.
- If your puppy did not respond to the verbal cue they do not fully understand leave it yet. You need to continue without distractions.
- **Random reinforcement** should start occurring once your puppy can leave a variety of low distractions. You will stop giving food reward each time your puppy makes eye contact. Continue giving verbal praise and pets, but only give food reward every couple of times during a training session.
- Continue increasing the distraction. Remember that the more distracting the situation or exposure, the more reward the pup should get. You can do interactive play for several minutes, give them a long pet, or praise them verbally and with kibble.
- If your puppy becomes fixated or obsessed over the distraction give a gentle tug on the leash to redirect them and then praise their eye contact with you. From there use a lesser distraction and then build up to that one again.

Leave it can be used when your puppy becomes distracted by something in their environment and you need to have them refocus on you. Remember to only give a verbal cue that you can enforce. If you have any questions or issues, please contact your advisor or area coordinator.

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**About**

**Age appropriate:** You can start teaching About as soon as your puppy is comfortable walking on your left side on the leash. Your pup should understand and respond appropriately to the verbal cue by 6 months of age.

**Purpose:** Guide dogs respond to the verbal cues given to them by their partner. If their partner would like to turn around and go back the direction they came they can use this verbal cue to prepare their dog’s body position so they are moving safely together.

**Objective:** The end goal is your puppy should initiate the movement to the direction that you both came from.

**Procedure:**
• Walking at a steady pace your puppy should be at your left side. As you give the verbal cue you will pat your right leg with your right hand several times and give the verbal cue About. Your puppy might show some resistance or be confused so wait for them to follow you. Adding tension to the leash or giving a correction will only add to their resistance.

• Right after you have given the verbal cue turn toward your right and encourage your pup to follow with verbal praise. Remember that your pup should always be on your left side and when you are performing the verbal cue they should be forming the outside of the semi-circle.

• After you have turned 180 degrees and are facing the direction from which you were previously walking, the pup should be on your left side. Start walking again.

• Continue practicing the about verbal cue using verbal praise and encouragement. The first couple times a pup practices this verbal cue with you they can be clumsy or confused so take your time and be patient while they navigate this movement.

• As your pup gets older you can stop patting your leg to encourage their movement around you. Just give the verbal cue About and expect them to follow your movement in a semi-circle.

• By 9 months of age your puppy should not only anticipate the movement around when given the verbal cue About, but they should also initiate the movement in a semi-circle. Remember that eventually they will be guiding their partner in this movement and should be comfortable initiating the action. If your pup seems unsure and only takes one or two steps, verbally encourage and praise them. Let them think through the task and verbal cue that you are giving them.

Advanced Verbal cues
Advanced verbal cues are given to each puppy raiser and puppy on an as-needed basis. Because advanced verbal cues require the puppy to take more control and show initiative in a situation, we only start teaching these verbal cues when the team is fully ready and capable to take on the task.

Your advisor and area coordinator will often introduce and demonstrate these verbal cues at class, but please do not attempt them until instructed to do so.

7-1 SAYING GOOD-BYE
The hardest part (even harder than the potty training!) is when you have to return your guide dog pup to begin formal training. All your hours of hard work, care, joys, frustrations, and success have shaped your pup into a well-behaved, well-socialized dog. You have most likely formed a strong bond of love and connection with the pup that grew up in your home and by your side. We thank you for being willing to make this sacrifice so someone can experience independence with a guide dog.

When your puppy is between 14 and 18 months of age you will receive notification from your advisor or area coordinator that your puppy will begin formal training. If you live near campus
you will have the opportunity to take the puppy to our training center. Our puppy raisers who
don’t live near our facilities will have their pup flown or transported via van. Our program staff
coordinate the drop-off and pick-up times. We will do our best to keep you informed throughout
the process.

Before your puppy comes IFT your advisor or area coordinator will ask you to complete a report
to inform your pup’s trainer about the behavior, verbal cues, and exposures your puppy
experienced during the past 2 months.

Many of our raisers find the best way to ease the sadness of returning their puppy is to get a new
one! Speak to your advisor or area coordinator about receiving a new pup when you return your
current one. Some of our raisers choose to only provide temporary care for a puppy that hasn’t
yet been assigned to a raiser while others jump back in with raising their next puppy.

**Items that need to be returned with your puppy**

- Small and large Tufflock collars
- Puppy coats
- Fully completed IFT report
- Any veterinary records on your puppy’s health
- Any unused heartworm prevention
- Any unused flea prevention
- Stainless steel feeding bowl
- Brush
- Nylon puppy leash
- Leather leash
- Crate or kennel provided
- Any other supplies given to you such as a head harness, snappy trainer, martingale, etc.

It is important that we receive all supplies you received when you started. We often reuse
supplies that are still in good condition to remain fiscally responsible with donor dollars.

If you are planning to raise another puppy shortly after you return this one you can speak to your
advisor or area coordinator about keeping and replenishing supplies for your new puppy.

**7-2 THE START OF THEIR CAREER**

Once your pup arrives at the training center they will be taken by a canine care representative to
have a brief look over, their weight recorded, and food prepared for their next meal. Many of our
dogs arrive on weekends so the vet will give a complete exam the following week after your pup
arrives at the training center.

Your pup will be assigned one instructor with a training string. Our trainers usually have four
dogs on their string that will start their training process together. Your pup will begin their
training and will be given evaluations by their trainer and the rest of the training staff as they
progress to make sure they are progressing adequately.
Our trainers write weekly notes on each dog on their string with information on how each dog is progressing through the week. The puppy program staff will then share this information with you biweekly or monthly. The updates will usually include some of the following information:

- What locations your dog trained at during the week
- What training stage they are on with guide work
- How their attention level, pace, and strength has been progressing
- Any fears, suspicions, or uncertainties your dog faced
- Positive feedback and information on their personality
- Obedience exercises practiced throughout the week

We always encourage visits to our campus; however, we highly discourage you from visiting the training center if you have a dog that is currently in formal training.

It is important that each dog forms a strong bond with their trainer, just as it was important for them to form a strong bond with you when you were their puppy raiser. It may be confusing if your dog sees you or a family member in the training center.

Not all puppies make it as guide dogs no matter how hard you have worked. Please know that whatever the outcome or success of your pup, we acknowledge and appreciate all of the time and effort you have done to prepare your puppy to be a guide dog. We always welcome feedback and suggestions if you feel our program could have better prepared you or your pup.

**The Basics**

Our training department comprises our directors of training, certified instructors, and apprentice instructors, along with our canine care staff who provides the day-to-day care of the dogs housed in the training center. This team handles the training, exercise, and care of the dogs. We also have a team of volunteers and veterinary staff who supports the training center in many activities.

Throughout training each dog is kept in the best physical and mental state possible. If any problem (physical, behavioral, temperament) occurs it will be evaluated by our staff. If they feel the problem is unable to be corrected, then the dog will be released from our training program. It is always a tough decision and is thought through by all of the staff involved. However, we have very high standards that we have set to serve our students and ensure the safety of each dog and student that we work with.

If your puppy continues to do well and completes our 12-week training cycle, they will be matched to a student and assigned to a class. A dog is placed on class with a student when the training team feels the dog is fully trained, has met our standards, and will meet the needs of the student.

Occasionally, a dog will progress through training but will take longer than the expected 12 weeks before they are “class ready.” That means the dog was passed back to another trainer while their previous trainer completes class with the rest of the dogs on their string and starts
with new ones when class is over. Passing back happens frequently and does not mean your dog is not “good enough” to become a guide dog. It just means that they might be learning at a different rate or met different obstacles in their training than the rest of the string. If they are still progressing and showing progress, our training team will place them with another team. Sometimes, dogs are passed back because there was not a student that matched the dog’s temperament and behavior. Because we take our matching very seriously and want to create the best team possible, we will not place a dog with a student if the dog is not suitable.

Dogs that are passed back will continue training at the level their new trainer is on. For example, if a dog completed the 12-week training cycle but wasn’t a good fit for any of the students attending class, they might be passed back. For example, they might be passed back to someone on the sixth week of the training cycle. Even though the dog is class ready, they will have some of their training reinforced and repeated to stay at the same level of the trainer’s string.

**Training Phases**

The Guide Dog Foundation always strives to give the best dogs to our clients and train our dogs in the best way possible. Every dog that graduates successfully completed each phase of training and is ready for class. Below are brief descriptions of our 12-week training cycle. Each week new exposures and behaviors are taught and built upon to produce a confident, effective guide dog.

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<td>• Introduction to time-outs</td>
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<td>• Introduction to platform training</td>
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<td>• Introduction to impulse control training</td>
<td>• First walks in public with trainer</td>
<td>• Introduction to obstacle training</td>
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<td>• Introduction to collar yielding</td>
<td>• Introduction to superstores with trainer</td>
<td>• Walks in Smithtown</td>
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<td>• Walks on campus to develop bond with trainer</td>
<td>• Continued obedience in the kennel</td>
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<td>• Continued time-outs practice</td>
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• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued time-outs practice  
• Continued obedience in the kennel  
• Continued recall practice  
• Continued escalator training | • Matching process begins to select student  
• Continued subway training  
• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training  
• Continued time-outs practice  
• Continued obedience in the kennel  
• Continued recall practice  
• Continued escalator training | • Trainer blindfold walks  
• Student specific training  
• Continued subway training  
• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training  
• Continued time-outs practice  
• Continued obedience in the kennel  
• Continued recall practice  
• Continued escalator training |
| Week 10 | Week 11 | Week 12 |
| • Trainer blindfold walks  
• Introduction to revolving doors  
• Student specific training  
• Continued subway training  
• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training  
• Continued time-outs practice | • Introduction to student residence  
• Trainer blindfold walks  
• Student specific training  
• Continued subway training  
• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training  
• Continued time-outs practice | • Focus on class preparation  
• Focus on student residence training  
• Student specific training  
• Continued subway training  
• Continued traffic training  
• Continued country walks  
• Continued obstacle training  
• Continued height obstacle training |
7-3 IN CLASS

Once a dog has successfully completed training they will be assigned to a student in class. Class training is offered on the Guide Dog Foundation campus and is 2 weeks long. Occasionally, our certified field representative instructors will provide home training to a student who is unable to travel to our campus.

The instruction the student receives is intensive and thorough. They will learn the following:

- Dog care
- Dog grooming
- Dog nutrition
- Veterinary care
- Basic obedience
- Public access and ADA regulations
- Traffic
- Harness work without a dog
- Guide work with a dog

During the 2 weeks that students are on campus they will receive daily instruction and training so they can be ready to go home with a guide dog. Even if they have used a guide dog before, our returning students are required to participate and attend class so they can be updated and learn about their new dog.

Home Training

Some students who receive guide dogs are unable to attend class on our campus in Smithtown. A certified instructor will place the dog and complete the guide dog training in the student’s home environment. If this is the case with your dog you will not have the opportunity to attend Celebration Sunday. In this instance, we do offer the following:

- An in-for-training certificate will be sent with a photo of the dog while they were on campus.
• You may attend another Celebration Sunday to celebrate other teams who have accomplished the same partnership.
• With the graduate’s consent, you can receive a phone call or Skype call while the instructor is completing the home placement.
• A graduation certificate will be sent as an appreciation of all you have done to help the team succeed.
• With the graduate’s consent you will be given the phone number and/or email address of the graduate to continue communication.

Remember that the end goal of puppy raising is to serve our clients and give them independence through a guide dog. While home trainings don’t always offer the same closure that a Celebration Sunday can offer, know that your dog has fulfilled their purpose. We appreciate the love and support you offered while puppy raising.

**Celebration Sunday**

Once your dog has gone through their guide dog training and is matched with their new partner, we invite the puppy raisers and sponsors of the dogs on class to attend a celebration. The puppy program staff will notify you that your dog is on class with the possibility of graduating. Once your dog is matched and has completed training with their new partner, your advisor or area coordinator will invite you to attend Celebration Sunday.

Celebration Sunday is an opportunity for everyone who has worked hard to make this guide dog team successful to meet and celebrate their success. You will arrive and be given a few reminders by the puppy program staff member. From there you will be introduced to your puppy’s new partner. We will have a slideshow of photos throughout the ceremony as well as video of the students on class training with their dogs.

**Help make Celebration Saturday enjoyable**

• It is natural for everyone to be nervous! Just try to relax and enjoy yourself.
• Always introduce yourself to the student first before acknowledging the dog. Don’t be afraid to initiate a handshake!
• If the dog recognizes you and gets excited, let their new partner calm them down before reproaching. Do not offer any advice or give verbal cues to the dog.
• Take a few minutes to greet the dog: give them pets and speak to them in a calm voice. Please do not sit on the floor with the dog.
• Start conversation with the student. You have at least one thing in common: the love for the dog sitting with you. Tell funny stories, describe exciting places your puppy visited, ask the student about their life and family.
• Keep in mind that we want to keep the information given to the student positive. You had the dog when they were a puppy. Raising puppies is very hard and can be frustrating at times.
However, the dog sitting with you has matured, learned guide work, and is now someone’s independence. Any challenges you faced have long been resolved.

- Feel free to take pictures, but always ask the student beforehand as a courtesy. Please do not post any photos on social media including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram without receiving consent from the graduate.
- The student might hand you the leash to greet your dog, but we ask that you do not offer any verbal cues, corrections, or walk away with the dog.
- Thanks to technology it is easy to quickly find information on someone. We ask that you refrain from sharing phone numbers, email address, physical addresses, or contacting the student in any way until you both receive the needed information from the puppy program staff.
- It is important that the team goes home and is given time to bond and work in a new environment together. Having the added distraction of a new friendship might be overwhelming to some students.

7-4 CAREER OPTIONS OUTSIDE OF GUIDE DOG WORK
The Guide Dog Foundation expects and prepares for some of our puppies to be released from our programs for one reason or another. We are very selective because we want to ensure that our students are getting the best possible dogs.

Service Dogs
Occasionally, we will see more potential for a dog to be successful in another career field. The Guide Dog Foundation’s sister organization, America’s VetDogs, provides guide dogs for veterans with visual impairments, service dogs for veterans and active duty personnel with disabilities other than visual impairment, and hearing dogs for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. A service dog can aid with balance, stability, and retrieval. If we feel your dog would be better suited to be a service dog we will let you know if they are transferred to train as a service dog.

Sometimes the dogs that we breed are not suitable to be a guide dog or a service through our programs. We are part of Assistance Dogs International Breeding Cooperative (ABC) and occasionally will donate dogs to guide dog or service dog schools in need of dogs for training or have a program more suitable for the dog we are evaluating.

Detection Work
We also provide dogs that are suited for detection work to outside agencies. We currently work with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and Michael Stapleton Associates (MSA). A number of our dogs have gone on to become detector dogs. ATF is based in Virginia,
and MSA is based in Connecticut. They come to the Foundation several times a year to evaluate dogs for their programs. If the dog is transferred to ATF or MSA, you will be notified and asked to come send the dog off with well wishes. ATF does have a graduation that you may attend in Virginia. We will contact you when the dates are given to us. Unfortunately, MSA does not have a graduation.

Even if your dog does not achieve any of these careers we still recognize and commend the effort that you have put into raising one of our dogs. You helped the puppy reach their full potential and put selfless effort into raising and caring for them.

If the dog you raised is released from our programs and is not suitable for another program we will contact you as soon as possible. By following the rules and instructions of the puppy department, you will be offered the opportunity to adopt as a pet the dog you raised, free of charge. However, if you find the dog is not a suitable fit for your lifestyle we have an adoption waiting list with people eager to welcome one of our career-changed dogs into their home as a pet. If your dog is released from our programs and you have a friend or family member interested in adopting them, please contact your advisor or area coordinator. Friends and family do have to pay the adoption fee we find appropriate. It ranges from $500 to $1,000 to cover the cost of health care and veterinary care the Foundation provided for the beginning of the dog’s life.

8-1 GENERAL INFORMATION

About the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind®
Since 1946, the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc. has provided guide dogs free of charge to people who are blind or visually impaired and who seek renewed independence and enhanced mobility.

Students come to the Foundation from all over the United States and Canada for the quality of our dogs and our innovative training techniques. Every future guide or service dog gets its start with volunteers called puppy raisers. Pups live with puppy raisers for about a year, learning basic obedience, good house manners, and vital social skills, before they return for formal training as guide or service dogs.

The Foundation offers a variety of training options so students can work with their dogs, bonding and learning to work as a team for independence.

About America’s VetDogs® – the Veteran’s K-9 Corps®
In 2003, the Guide Dog Foundation created America’s VetDogs to expand the services it offered to veterans of all eras, and with the military, to meet the need for innovative assistance dog training. VetDogs provides guide dogs for veterans who are blind; service dogs for those with
other physical or emotional disabilities; hearing dogs for those who are deaf or hard of hearing and lost their hearing later in life; physical and occupational therapy dogs to work with amputees in military and VA hospitals; and combat operational stress control dogs that were deployed overseas.

In 2015, America’s VetDogs expanded its services to first responders and those who had otherwise honorably served our country or their communities.

The Guide Dog Foundation and America’s VetDogs are supported entirely by donations from generous individuals, corporations, and foundations. They receive no government funding.

**Guide Dogs**

A guide dog is an assistance dog trained to find and follow a clear path, maneuver around obstacles, and stop at curbs. A user with a guide dog gains enhanced mobility and independence.

**Service Dogs**

A service dog is specially trained to help people who have disabilities other than visual impairment. For example, this dog can be trained for a number of specific tasks depending on an individual’s needs: provide balance; fetch and retrieve dropped items; open doors; aid an amputee getting in and out of a chair; seizure alert response for someone with seizure disorder.

**Hearing Dogs**

Hearing dogs are specifically trained to assist an individual by alerting their handlers to sounds such as a doorbell, a door knock, warning of an intruder, a smoke alarm and a timer (cooking timer, microwave, etc.). During class, the student and their new hearing dog will work together in environments that mimic everyday interactions. Each dog will be specifically trained to meet each individual’s hearing needs, and additional tasks can be added by request.

**PTSD Service Dogs**

PTSD service dogs are specially trained service dog that may help in reducing the effects of PTSD. In addition to tasks that can help mitigate a veteran’s physical limitations, these dogs can be trained to perform tasks that will help reduce anxiety or stress levels, thereby providing a calming effect and sense of security for its veteran handler.

**Combat Operational Stress Control Dogs**

These specially trained canines are deployed in theater with combat stress control teams. They offer emotional support for active duty servicemen and women dealing with combat stress, home front issues, and sleep disorders.

**Specialized Facility Dogs**

These dogs are trained to provide physical and occupational therapy assistance at military or VA hospitals for wounded soldiers. They may also make visits to VA nursing homes or hospices.
8-2 ASSISTANCE DOG ETIQUETTE

Service dogs are assistance dogs for people with disabilities other than blindness. They are specially bred and trained for this most important job.

There are several guidelines people should follow when a guide or service dog is present so that the dog and the handler remain safe and the dog can focus on its job. Disregarding these guidelines can distract the dog, which can create a dangerous situation for the service dog team.

Under the Americans With Disabilities Act, people with disabilities are allowed to be accompanied by their service dog in all places the public is permitted.

- **Don’t** touch, talk, feed, or otherwise distract the dog while he is wearing his harness or vest that identifies him as an assistance dog. As much as possible, ignore the presence of the dog.
- **Do** allow the dog to concentrate and focus on its work for the safety of his handler.
- **Don’t** pat the dog on the head. Ask permission first, but don’t get offended if the handler says no. The dog (or handler) might be having a bad day, or he might be in a hurry. Remember, an assistance dog is as vital to a disabled person as a wheelchair or cane. You wouldn’t ask to pet their wheelchair or get mad if they wouldn’t let you pet their cane.
- **Do** stroke the dog on the shoulder area but only with its handler’s approval.
- **Do** teach your children to NEVER pet a strange dog – any dog – without first asking permission.
- **Do** teach them to follow your lead.
- **Don’t** treat the dog as a pet.
- **Do** give it the respect of a working dog.
- **Don’t** give the dog verbal cues.
- **Do** allow the handler to do so.
- **Don’t** try to take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or handler.
- **Do** assist the handler upon their request.
- **Don’t** feed the dog – this includes dog and people food.
- **Do** respect the handler’s wishes.
- **Don’t** tease or abuse the dog. This includes barking, meowing, whistling, and making other rude noises.
- **Do** allow it to work or rest undisturbed.
- **Don’t** allow pets to challenge or intimidate a service dog.
- **Do** allow them to meet on neutral ground when all parties can be carefully supervised.
- **Don’t** allow the dog on your furniture or in areas of the home where the handler doesn’t want it to go.
- **Do** ask the handler to correct any misbehavior or trespassing.
- **Don’t** let the dog out of the house unsupervised. It is a very valuable animal!
8-3 BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF PUPPY RAISERS

All puppy raisers are required to:

- Ability to follow instruction, pay attention to detail
- Ability to work independently in a structured environment
- Ability to work with others in a group setting
- Physically capable of bending and standing for a minimum of 30 minutes at a time, lifting and carrying 20 lbs.
- Physically capable of safely leash-walking a puppy and an adult dog
- Comfortable with large breed dogs.
- Be approved by the Guide Dog Foundation puppy program staff members.
- Agree to abide by all instructions, guidelines, and procedures given by all Guide Dog Foundation staff, area coordinators, and group leaders provided written or by other means.
- Undergo a home visit by a Guide Dog Foundation staff member or approved volunteer.
- Use Guide Dog Foundation approved training, care, and management techniques when working with all Guide Dog Foundation dogs and puppies.
- Raise the puppy inside as a house dog.
- Provide an environment free of dogs with history of aggression.
- Provide direct supervision when the puppy is with other dogs.
- Provide a safe, enclosed area for free running, play, and exercise.
- Provide a hard, dry surface for your puppy to regularly relieve themselves at least every 4-5 hours during the daytime until they are six months of age. After six months of age they can be relieved every 5-6 hours.
- Provide appropriate food and grooming as directed by the Guide Dog Foundation.
- Maintain your puppy at a healthy weight as directed by the Guide Dog Foundation.
- Administer heartworm prevention, flea control, and any additional medications provided by the Guide Dog Foundation for your puppy.
- Keep the puppy healthy, up to date on vaccinations, and report any health issues to your area coordinator or advisor.
- Leave the puppy in a safe, harm-free environment that is inside the house.
- Attend and participate in required monthly classes, meetings, and outings.
- Report any behavioral, physical, or health related issues or problems to your advisor or area coordinator.
- Complete quarterly reports, C-BARQ reports, and any other data needed by the Guide Dog Foundation in a timely manner.
- Communicate openly and promptly with your advisor or area coordinator.

The above list of requirements is not inclusive. Puppy raisers and volunteers are required to follow all instructions, guidelines, policies, and procedures given by Guide Dog Foundation staff in written documents and other means.
The above list of requirements is not inclusive. Puppy raisers and volunteers are required to follow all instructions, guidelines, policies, and procedures given by Guide Dog Foundation staff in written documents and other means.

8-4 Guide Dog Foundation Communication Policy

**Background:** Throughout the year, the Foundation receives request for interviews and information about our programs and services from the media. We value these opportunities to speak about the work that the Foundation does and the many people who make our programs possible. We work closely with reporters, editors, and producers to see that the Foundation is represented in the best possible light.

The Foundation also takes a proactive approach to publicity, actively seeking ways in which we can be featured on broadcast programs, in newspaper or magazine articles, or online. The Foundation is always looking for ways to increase our name recognition and spread the word about our programs and services.

We often look to staff members and volunteers to assist with this ongoing endeavor by participating in interviews. While we encourage everyone to participate, we recognize that not everyone is comfortable in these situations, and we will not force or require someone to participate against his/her will.

Members of the Foundation family who have a contact in the media business, or who have an idea for publicity that they believe the Foundation should pursue, are more than encouraged to work with our communications team. We would love to discuss your ideas and perhaps turn them into reality.

To successfully manage the numerous requests and ideas that we generate, as well as the ones we do not solicit, the Foundation has developed the following communications policy. The policy is not just to manage media inquiries, but also to ensure that the information provided is accurate and complete, and to determine if participation is in the Foundation’s best interest.

**Policy:**

1. The Chief Executive Officer is the official spokesperson of the Foundation. In his absence, the Chief Marketing Officer acts on his behalf.

2. All requests made to the Foundation from a member of the media should be handled through the Chief Marketing Officer, Communications Manager, or Assistant to the CEO. This includes calls or visits to the Foundation from a reporter, editor, photographer, or producer. It also includes calls made from the media to an individual member of the Foundation family, such as a staff member, Puppy Raiser, volunteer, graduate or Board member.
If a member of the media asks you questions about the Foundation, and to your knowledge the interview has not yet been approved, direct the caller to the Foundation.

3. All interviews must be approved before they take place. No Guide Dog Foundation staff member or volunteer should respond to a media inquiry without prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, Communications Manager or Assistant to the CEO. Should you be contacted, simply direct the person to the Foundation, and ask that they call us for information.

4. If you are at a location where media are present and you are asked to do a radio or television interview or provide information to a newspaper reporter, you must gain prior Foundation approval. If the media is on deadline, you still must contact the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, Communications Manager or Assistant to the CEO to find out how to proceed.

5. Guide Dog Foundation family members should not actively pitch a Foundation story idea to a reporter, editor, or producer on behalf of the Foundation without prior approval. They should contact the Foundation to discuss the idea first.