



Ernie's

Second Pupdate

Over the last couple of months, Ernie has grown considerably and has been busy learning lots of new things. We've been in touch again with his Puppy Walker, Sheila, to find out what sorts of things they've been up to recently.

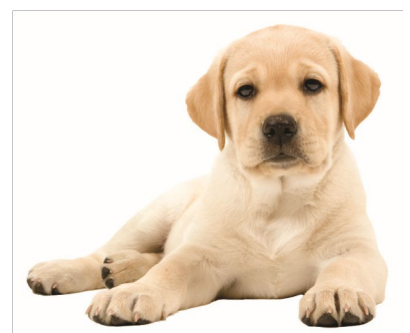
Sheila told us that Ernie is growing up to be a 'lovely boy' who is 'full of fun'. He's just started to wear his puppy training jacket, which is a smart looking blue garment that shows he is a guide dog in training. Sheila has already noticed fewer people are inclined to disturb him as a result, which is good. The jacket also helps our pups get used to wearing something on their backs for when the guiding harness is introduced later on in life.

Ernie loves being out and about, and it was lovely to hear that he is always very confident wherever he goes. However, because he does take everything in his stride, he can be a little impatient to see what's next so can pull a little bit on the lead. A special collar has been introduced which will hopefully help to reduce this.

Sheila told us that Ernie has been going for free runs for a few weeks now ever since his last vaccination. Apparently, it's been going really well and Ernie's recall is 'excellent' – he always comes running straight back to Sheila when called. Ernie always slows down before approaching Sheila so as not to knock her over by accident, and sits dutifully in front of her so she can put his lead back on. Well done, Ernie!

To get to all the places they've been to over the last couple of months, Sheila has taken Ernie on buses and trains to get him used to public transport. Even on the most crowded of buses, Ernie settles down beautifully and isn't worried by any of the noises, such as the bus's air brakes. To prepare for train travel, Ernie accompanied Sheila to the station a few times so that he could experience the sights, sounds and smells there. He was very happy with everything, and on his first rail journey, hopped across the platform gap with no hesitation.

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NAME
A PUPPY

On one train ride, Ernie did cheekily try to undo another passenger's shoe laces but luckily hasn't done it again since!

Ernie is more than comfortable in busy environments and along with Sheila visits the local town centre frequently. He can sometimes be distracted by pigeons, as well as the occasional pushchair as he loves children, but generally, he focuses really well. Ernie has also been fine with all the different types of stairs and lifts he encounters on his outings.

We hear that Ernie recently stayed with a volunteer boarder who had a 10-month-old baby and Ernie loved him! He was very careful and delicate around the baby and he settled into his new surroundings very easily. Ernie returned to Sheila a few days later with a glowing report from the boarder.

We hope you've enjoyed reading the latest news about Ernie. It sounds like he's making excellent progress at this stage of his training. We look forward to sending you Ernie's next training report card soon.

Thank you for naming a puppy and helping Guide Dogs to change a life.

