



Car Exposure

As an adult service dog, your puppy will spend a lot of time in the car with her future client. Your puppy needs to be comfortable, manageable, and calm while riding in the car.

Preparation

You will need:

- A crate that your puppy is comfortable and relaxed in
- A vehicle that comfortably holds the crate
- A long-lasting treat, i.e. a frozen Kong

Process

1. Place the crate in the car and put your long-lasting treat in the crate.
2. Put your puppy in the crate and allow him to settle with the treat. If the puppy is very young, pick him up. If he's older and can safely jump into the car, allow him to do so.
3. Start the car and let it run for a few minutes while the puppy continues to eat the treat. Watch the puppy for stress signals. These can include no longer eating the treat, flattening ears, cowering, shaking, drooling, vocalizing, or flattening to the bottom of the crate and refusing to move. If your puppy demonstrates any of these behaviors, alert the Puppy Development Staff immediately.
4. If your puppy remains comfortable, you can take your puppy for a short drive. Keep the initial drives short and monitor the puppy for stress signals.
5. Once your puppy is comfortable on short rides, you can increase the distance.
6. As your puppy gets older, you may choose to allow him to ride outside of the crate. Tethering him in a safe part of your car so he can't wander around will help him learn where he needs to stay during car rides.
7. You can repeat steps 1-5 outside of a crate during your transition from crated riding to free riding.
8. Try to take your puppy on a car ride every day! Frequent positive exposure to the car will set them up for the busy life of a service dog in training.