

If you have lost your Cat, follow this checklist



First confirm that your pet is not hiding somewhere in your home. Cats are known to be masters at Hide and Seek.



Once you are certain that your cat is really missing, start by posting a minimum of 10 signs in the immediate area where your cat was lost. It is best to use brightly-colored paper. If you do not have any, white paper will do. You can find some great tips for creating effective lost/found posters here:

<http://www.missingpetpartnership.org/recovery-posters.php>.



Begin to canvas the area where your cat was lost. If you are able to print additional Lost Pet signs, bring them with you so that you can hand them out to neighbors and anyone else you may run into. Enlist the help of friends, family and neighbors in the search.



If possible, leave your cat's litter box in front of your house. Your cat will be able to pick up on the scent and might hang around longer. To help encourage your cat's return via odors, you might even put a piece of your clothing recently worn by the door. Use an article that you wear next to your skin, and that has not been washed. This method, while eccentric, can help your cat a great deal in tracking your scent and deciding to stay near a familiar place.



Leave bits of your cat's favorite cat food out. But only do this if you can monitor the food station. Remember, there are most likely other cats or other wild life in the area and your cat may be pushed away from the territory if there is a dominant cat nearby (especially if this dominant cat has chased your cat away). Put the cat's food bowl outside, then put a baby monitor near it. An alternative to a baby monitor is to get a portable wireless motion sensor and receiver pair (also known as a "driveway alarm"), and set the sensor at a low height and facing the bowl. Placing the receiver in the bedroom so the alarm will be loud enough to wake you up when motion is detected. Tuna is an attractive bait for many a hungry cat.



Use a glow and sit still. Cats are energy-sensitive creatures, meaning that they see energy first, then decipher what it is. Sitting outside with a lit candle will be hard to resist for a cat who is highly enticed by the high energy of the candle.



Cats are known to climb to a safe spot or hunker down somewhere quiet if they are scared and not used to being outside. Look up, down and around during your search.



Grab a flashlight for checking in crawl spaces under your home and your neighbor's home, tool sheds and garages. Sometimes cats won't even respond to the voice of a loved one if they're scared. Use the flashlight to help in your search.



If your cat normally comes running when he hears the sound of a favorite treat being offered, shake the can or packaging to get his attention.



Knock on your neighbors' doors and tell them that your cat is missing. Ask if you can look for your cat on their property. If no one is home, leave one of your signs where they can see them by the garage and front door.



Call your local police department to see if someone has reported finding your cat.



Post your Lost Pet signs at locations where the finder might think to look, i.e.: veterinary offices, pet-supply stores, groomers, dog parks (dog people can be cat people, too), supermarkets, the post office and other local businesses. And tell your mail person that your cat is missing.



Stray cats are turned into local shelters more often than you might think. Go to the animal shelter that services the area in which your cat was lost. If you do not know which shelter picks up strays in your area, call your local police department. It is important that you physically go to the shelter at least every other day. New pets come in daily. Simply calling is not enough. Your cat may not be listed with the front desk when you call or the person may not recognize your cat from your description. Even if your cat was wearing identification when he was lost or he is microchipped, it is highly recommended that you physically go to the shelter.



Leave a copy of your Lost Pet sign with the shelter staff. If you are unable to physically go to the shelter, calling is the next best thing.



After you have gone to the shelter that services the area where your cat was lost, go to all of the shelters within a 50-mile radius. Some shelters hold onto a pet for a period of time and then transfer them to another. Also, the person who found your cat may turn him in to a shelter other than the one that services the area where your cat was initially lost.



Contact local rescue groups and let them know that your cat is missing. The person who found your cat may have been afraid that he would be euthanized if they turned him in to a shelter and took him to a rescue group instead.



Contact your local animal control and others in the area. Give them a description of your pet and a reliable way to contact you.



Contact your veterinarian and make sure they have current contact information for you if someone finds your pet. Don't forget to contact past veterinarians as well just in case the pet is traced back to them.



Contact local emergency vets. If your pet was injured it might be taken there. Leave contact information and a description of your pet.



If your pet is microchipped contact the microchip company and make sure they have current contact information



Contact the breeder or rescue group you got your pet from. If your pet is found it may be traced back to them and they need current contact information for you.



Place a Lost Pet ad in your local newspaper(s). And be sure to check the "Found Pets" section of the paper. Leave out a piece of information that only the true finder would know, such as the color of your cat's collar or a distinguishing mark. Sadly, there are scam artists who prey on people who have lost a pet, claiming to have the pet in order to collect a reward.



Get the word out. If you are on Facebook, Myspace or any other social networking sites post a picture of your lost pet and contact information.



Place lost ads in local papers. If they have online versions post there as well. Many papers will run lost and found ads for no charge.



Post lost CATS on <https://www.facebook.com/lostcatsazd>



List the pet under "lost and found" on Craigslist.com



List the pet under "lost and found" on Petfinder.com



Set a humane trap. If your cat is indoor-only, she is very likely hiding in fear close to where she ran away and will not make a sound even when you call her. Don't forget to put some cat food in the trap, and even sprinkle liberally with treats and catnip. This is your best bet for finding your indoor-only cat. Be aware that you may trap another animal or cat before yours ventures in. If so, you'll need to remove it—with care.



Don't give up too early! Keep at it! Pets have been found months after they were originally lost.



Please use every available resource to look for your pet.