

## What to Do If You Lose Your Pet

### How to reunite with your best pal



When your beloved dog or cat strays from home, it can be a traumatic experience for both of you. Here are some tips that we hope will help you find your pet.

**1. Contact local animal shelters and animal control agencies.** File a lost pet report with every shelter within a 60-mile radius of your home and visit the nearest shelters daily, if possible.

To find your local shelter search online or check your phone book. If there is no shelter in your community, contact the local police department. Provide these agencies with an accurate description and a recent photograph of your pet. Notify the police if you believe your pet was stolen.

**2. Search the neighborhood.** Walk or drive through your neighborhood several times each day. Ask neighbors, letter carriers and delivery people if they have seen your pet. Hand out a recent photograph of your pet and information on how you can be reached if your pet is found.

**3. Advertise.** Post notices at grocery stores, community centers, veterinary offices, traffic intersections, at pet supply stores and other locations. Also, place advertisements in newspapers and with radio stations. Include your pet's sex, age, weight, breed, color and any special markings. When describing your pet, leave out one identifying characteristic and ask the person who finds your pet to describe it.

**4. Try the Internet.** These sites may be able to help you out:

- Facebook
- Craig's List
- Newspaper (Lost & Found)
- Neighborhood Email Groups

Consider using a lost pet alert service such as [findtoto.org](http://findtoto.org) to contact homes in your area.

**5. Be wary of pet-recovery scams.** When talking to a stranger who claims to have found your pet, ask him to describe the pet thoroughly before you offer any information. If he does not include the identifying characteristic you left out of the advertisements, he may not really have your pet. Be particularly wary of people who insist that you give or wire them money for the return of your pet.

**6. Don't give up your search.** Animals who have been lost for months have been reunited with their owners.

A pet—even an indoor pet—has a better chance of being returned if she always wears a collar and an ID tag with your name, address, and telephone number. Ask your local animal shelter or veterinarian if permanent methods of identification (such as microchips) are available in your area.