



Lost Pet Checklist

Losing your beloved pet can be a scary experience for families and pets alike. It is important to do all of the following steps in order to reunite with your pet. The best chance a pet has of returning home is a loving, concerned, and very persistent guardian.

Scour Your Neighborhood

Check your front and back yard and your nearby neighbor's yards very thoroughly. Oftentimes, a lost pet — especially an indoor cat — will hide close to home and may be too frightened to come out when called.

Notify neighbors and search areas thoroughly, especially in the evening. Door-to-door canvassing may provide leads as well. Always leave your phone number and address in case a neighbor sees your pet later.

Utilize the Internet and Social Media

The internet and social media are incredibly effective tools for lost pets. Beyond posting on your personal pages, post a "Found Pet" advertisement on community websites like [Nextdoor](#), [Craigslist](#), and "Lost & Found Pets of [city name]" Facebook groups. Someone in your community may know the pet and guardian. Some additional sites that may be useful to post on include [Fido Alert](#), [Petco Love Lost](#), [PawBoost](#), and [24PetConnect](#).

In addition to posting, check these sites daily for "Lost Pet" posts from the guardians.

Contact Local Veterinary Clinics

Check with local veterinarians, as injured pets may have been taken to a clinic by a Good Samaritan.

Visit Local Animal Shelters

Go to the animal services shelter or shelters servicing your city and any adjacent areas as soon as possible. File a lost animal report including a current photograph of your pet. Check with the shelter to find out how long they keep lost animal reports on file.

It is very important to go in person to look through the stray population at least every three days after filing your report. Animals impounded without a current license are held for a minimum time period to give their guardians a chance to reclaim them. The length of this stray hold can vary from state to state and county to county. It is essential that you continue to personally check with the shelter, as only you would be certain to recognize your own pet.

Do NOT Give Up

Do not give up hope! Many of the animals in municipal shelters wander for days or weeks before being rescued by animal services officers, or well-meaning people may have held onto the pet for some time before bringing them to the shelter.

Animal Rescue Foundation

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