

Steps to Finding Your Lost Pet

Having a beloved pet go missing is scary. Take action as soon as you notice that your pet is not where they're supposed to be and take advantage of the loads of pet-lovers out there willing to help! Put everything else aside and start looking with the following steps as a guide:

- 1) **Get out in your neighborhood and community.** Knock on doors. Ask for help. Talk to everyone you see. Look around your house and neighborhood with a flashlight, especially in places where pets can hide such as in bushes, cars, and under stairs. Calmly call your pet's name (do not yell it as this may scare your pet). Go outside at night when it's quiet and call your pet's name. Your pet is more likely to hear you at night when you call, and you'll be able to hear the sounds it makes more easily.
- 2) If you live in the Central North Carolina area, **fill out a lost animal report** at Triangle Lost Pets (trianglelostpets.org). There, you can post descriptive information about your pet, view maps where animals have been found, and prepare a pet flier.
- 3) **Make a "Lost Pet" flier/poster.** Include a high quality recent photo of your pet, their breed, sex, coloring, age, weight, any distinguishing features and when and where he or she was last seen. Provide your name and two phone numbers: yours and a friend or family member's in case you cannot be reached. When describing your pet, leave out one identifying characteristic and ask the person who finds your pet to describe it. Offer a reward. Post them everywhere and anywhere you can: telephone poles on street corners, parks, vet offices, animal shelters, grocery stores, gas stations, churches, libraries, pet stores, coffee shops, places where children gather, etc.
- 4) If the pet is microchipped (which we highly recommend), **call the microchip company** to notify them that the pet is missing and to ensure your contact information is up to date.
- 5) **Visit your local animal shelter and surrounding county shelters.** If you live in Wake County, this would be the Wake County Animal Center. This is where people are directed when animals are found or people are looking for their lost pets. **Go in person to look and ask about lost animals at least every other day.** Calling may not get you very far as *you* will be able to identify your pet better than anyone else.
- 6) **Post on personal and neighborhood social media websites** such as Nextdoor, Craigslist, Facebook, and Instagram. Check pets listed on these and the following websites often: Triangle Lost Pets, Wake County Animal Center, SPCA of Wake County, Craigslist, Find Toto, The Center for Lost Pets, Fido Finder.
- 7) **Set up a space outside your house with familiar scents** that may guide your pet back: an old t-shirt, pair of sneakers, litterbox, etc. Also, set out some food and water nearby.
- 8) **Don't give up!** Remember that many lost animals have found their way back home!

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