



19 TIPS FOR FINDING YOUR LOST CAT

Keep Searching!

- 1.** Get out and look for the cat both day and night, including dawn and dusk. Bring a flashlight on your early morning or evening walks when you are calling your cat. The flashlight can pick up the reflection from the cat's eyes very well, even if your cat doesn't respond to your calls. Be sure to call in a moderate, calm voice. You don't want to scare away your cat. Loud yelling doesn't necessarily help.
- 2.** Crawl around the foundation of your house and your immediate neighbors' houses on your hands and knees. You will see how it looks from your cat's vantage point, and you may just see your cat. Be sure to look UP too. A cat can be stuck in a tree, be on someone's deck, etc.
- 3.** Don't forget to check ditches, creeks, drainage pipes and similar areas.
- 4.** Scent is very important to cats in recognizing "home." Try to set out scents that the cat will recognize – you can scatter his used litter around your yard and/or put out used litter boxes. You can leave articles of your worn clothing (so your scent is sure to be on them) or the cat's blankets outside near your house. Remember, an indoor cat that has slipped out won't necessarily recognize his own yard, and these clues can help him find his way home.
- 5.** Bait a humane trap with "smelly" food so that your cat will be tempted. Canned mackerel or Kentucky Fried Chicken has worked well. Line the bottom of the trap with newspaper so the cat doesn't walk on the wire but be sure the trap will shut. Place the trap next to a bush or along the house or back stairs—close to wherever the cat escaped. Having the trap next to something provides a sense of security for the cat. Never leave the trap unattended; if possible, check after several hours or watch from a distance. *About humane traps:* You don't necessarily have to buy one. They can often be borrowed/rented from local humane societies and shelters. Be careful, you may catch critters (possums, raccoons, other cats) other than your cat

at first, but they can be released, and the cage reused. Most wild animals will want to get away from you.

6. Be sure to check garages and storage sheds. Ask your neighbors to check and recheck storage areas, garages, etc. on their property where the cat could get locked in. Ask them to take a flashlight and check the shrubbery around their house foundations at night. They can either keep the cat confined if already inside a structure and call you to come get him, or call you to check out the cat they found under a shrub.
7. Cats are active in the evening. If weather will permit it, spend time just sitting out at night, occasionally calling your cat very quietly.
8. Stand outside and shake your cat's favorite food, or it might take the sound of a tin can being opened by either pop-top or can opener – whatever he's used to hearing at mealtime.
9. Be sure to recruit the neighborhood kids. Kids view the world from a different height than adults and have different schedules. They might spot your cat on their walks to/from school or while playing. Sometimes setting up a contest for the kids to find the cat helps too.

Notify Your Microchip Company

10. If your cat is microchipped, notify the microchip company immediately that your cat is missing.

Post Flyers

11. Post flyers with contact phone numbers, preferably with a color picture of your cat, around your neighborhood and adjacent streets. Also post in area stores, shopping malls, medical & office buildings, restaurants/fast food places, shelters, vets, libraries, places of worship and schools.

- 12.** Be sure to say “Reward” on the flyers you distribute but not an amount. This will greatly increase your odds of getting your cat back. Indicate whether your cat needs medication or whether he was an indoor-only cat.
- 13.** Hand out the flyers to everyone in your neighborhood. Knock on every door if it is safe to do so. Don’t be shy or proud—this is a time to ask for help and volunteers. When you are handing out flyers to your neighbors, this is a perfect opportunity to ask for volunteer help. You’d be surprised how many people in your community (home and work) will be willing to pitch in and help with distributing those flyers. The more eyes you can get to watch for your cat, the greater the odds of finding him.
- 14.** Stress to whoever spots your cat that they shouldn’t try to catch him; if they do so, they may scare him off or risk injuring themselves or the cat. Tell them to contact you right away so you can come to the area.

Contact Local Shelters, Animal Services & Veterinarians

- 15.** VERY IMPORTANT: Check your local shelters at least daily. Print a bunch of flyers with colored photos of your cat and hand them to every person working in your local shelter. Shifts change and workers may be too overworked to coordinate handing off one picture. Descriptions are very subjective. You can call the shelter and ask if they have your cat, describe him, be told “No” but he could actually be there. The shelters should be checked in person by someone who KNOWS what your cat looks like.
- 16.** Be sure to check not only with your local governmental animal shelter, but those in adjacent cities/counties. Your cat could have traveled farther than you think or been picked up by a traveling Good Samaritan and left at a shelter out of the area.
- 17.** Check—and recheck—with private shelters in your area like humane societies, breed rescues and general rescues. Your cat could end up with one of them.

- 18.** Call local vets. Someone may have found your cat and taken him in to be checked.

Post Your Missing Cat Online

- 19.** Several websites allow you to post lost pet announcements:

- [Nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com)
- [Craigslist.com](https://www.craigslist.com)
- [Pawboost.com](https://www.pawboost.com)
- [Lostfoundpets941.com](https://www.lostfoundpets941.com)
- [Lostmykitty.com](https://www.lostmykitty.com)
- [facebook.com/groups/MissingChar.SrqAnimals](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MissingChar.SrqAnimals)
- [tabbytracker.com](https://www.tabbytracker.com)