



LOST DOG GUIDE

“NEVER GIVE UP HOPE”

Always have ID on your dog

SPRING INTO ACTION

DO NOT PANIC!

Many dogs are capable of finding their way back home!

Many dogs are found within a few miles of their own homes

Act immediately – don't waste any time! The sooner you begin your search, the better the chances are of finding your dog.

Don't wait days without acting in hopes that the dog will just show up back home.

Think rationally and remember when and where the dog was last seen.

Gather friends, neighbors and family and systematically begin your search.

First search your property indoors and out. (look in closets, under beds, in dog crates, behind furniture - outdoors look in yard, behind bushes, in sheds, barns, the garage, and the car !)

Leave your fence gate open in case he returns on his own.

Leave a bowl of water and food out where he is likely to find it

Put articles of clothing or a dog's favorite toys outside the house. Dogs are attracted to things that bring them comfort. A scent of their master whom they love can allure them.

If you have a good recall, use it!

If your dog responds to a bell or whistle USE IT!

Remember to expand your search within 2 miles of where the dog was last seen.

Always grab a leash, collar or slip lead to take with you

Always grab some high valued food reward.. just about anything smelly will help, it helps to use real people food !

Bring along your dog's favorite toy, or another noise that is sure to make him come running to you...(remember the idea of running in the opposite direction might encourage him to chase you too)

Shaking a treat bag or something else a dog knows means food can help, too. Dogs can hear sounds from very far away and may come if they hear a comforting and familiar sound!

Resist the temptation to CHASE after your dog, instead entice your dog to chase you.. when he does, keep dropping irresistible dog treats around your legs until you can catch him.

BIG PART OF YOUR EFFORT

Use free services such as **Oliver Alert on Facebook** to help get a virtual search started immediately in your geographical area as well.

Create your Flyers and Cards –follow guide for layout and information. Carry your cards with you always, until you find your dog.

Tell any children you see that you are looking for a dog and posters will be up tomorrow with your phone number. (However, keep in mind that many children have been warned that this is a trick used by potential kidnappers and kids may become frightened.)

While you're out searching, have someone else make phone calls to your local Humane Society, animal shelters, rescues, vets, and police departments. See contacts listed in this guide.

Contact all shelters in your area, not just your local one. People who pickup loose dogs may take them to any shelter not necessarily the one near you. Understand that if a dog crosses a particular street that he may then be taken to a different shelter because of boundary lines.

Contact your neighbors to be on the lookout. If you're close to a county line, contact similar places in that county, too. If your local TV and radio stations make community announcements, ask them for help.

Notify the local pounds and shelters. If someone does find a dog and brings it there, they will know to reach you. If they do say they have a dog that matches, make sure to visit yourself, and don't call off the search until you're sure it's yours. Their description and yours can easily vary. Follow up on any dog that remotely resembles yours.

Create an ad with a recent picture of your dog. If you don't have a photo, and your dog is a purebred, use a picture from a book. Describe the dog so an average person would recognize him if he saw him. Include identifying information about him like his collar, dog tags, tattoo, identifying features like scars or unusual colorations, or microchip ID number

MANAGING PHONE CALLS

Take "found" calls with a grain of salt. At this devastating time, you are vulnerable and there are unethical people who may try to take advantage.

If someone calls and describes your dog from your ad and says, "I've got your dog here," respond, "Does she have a black mark inside her right leg?" and they say, "She sure does" and your dog doesn't, hang up quickly. You don't want to deal with such people. If they say, "No, she doesn't" and you think it could be your dog, simply say you made a mistake, that's another dog you've seen before.

If someone tries to blackmail you into a higher reward before returning your dog, try to make sure they have the right dog (or any dog at all) and ask the person to meet you in a public place. Then go with another person to meet them. Don't be taken advantage of. If it is your dog, offer a token reward.

Recent scams include people calling for out-of-state airfare for your lost dog. They might say your dog has been stolen and dumped far from home and they found him 200 miles away. Don't fall for it.

EXPAND YOUR SEARCH

Go a little farther by vehicle and start spreading the word to your local mailmen, UPS and Fed Ex drivers, joggers, runners, bikers and anyone else walking around the search areas.

Drop off or fax a copy of your ad to area shelters.

Expand the radius of your search area by several miles - call shelters even beyond the area you think your dog could have reached.

Visit the animal shelters and rescue leagues to look for your pet every other day. Don't expect volunteers to recognize one brown dog from another. If the dog is a dirty, matted mess that lost weight, you may have trouble identifying your own pet. Ask if there is a quarantine area or an area where injured animals are kept in case your dog is separated from those shown to the public. Check the "found" ads in the newspaper each day your pet is lost. 8

Keep going back to the shelters showing pictures of your dog.

Many vets, neighbors, shelters & rescuers have found that the fastest way to place an animal back with its family is by following info on tags & microchips. Be sure that your dog is wearing a tag at all times, also be sure to microchip & register your dog.

Make at least 200 photocopies of your ad. (Printer ink runs in rain; photocopier toner won't.)

Start posting on bulletin boards and in high visibility areas like gas stations and grocery stores in your neighborhood. Tape flyers to phone poles (in many places, it is illegal and unsafe to use staples because it's a danger to pole men). Ask friends and family members to distribute flyers door-to-door. Be sure to put extra fliers around that playground, or notify the owners of that dog park.

Plan ahead for a "lost dog" emergency. Always have a picture of your dog on hand and a record of his ID tag, tattoo license numbers, and/or microchip ID information.

Keep your list of contacts for shelters, vets and neighbors in a folder ready to use when you need it.

It has been suggested that we not put our dog's name on his collar. The hope is that strangers who may be interested in taking your dog from you would not know his name. Many dogs will not come to a stranger just because he whistles or claps his hands.

If you have a purebred dog, check with the rescue organizations for your breed. Many of them have "Lost Dog" links on their websites. Some rescuers will travel a distance to help their breed in need.

Next, check out the neighborhood where your pet was lost, talking to residents and leaving your phone number and description of your pet with them

Call out to your pet (everyone the pet is familiar with should do this) and shake a box of food or bag of favorite biscuits.

Stop, look, and listen for sounds of your pet. Do this at night, too, since some pet may be afraid to come out in the daylight. Sit or place a piece of clothing right outside your home so your pet can 'smell home.

Don't delay calling the veterinary clinics in the area, then the animal shelters, Animal Control, police, and finally, check out "found pet" ads in the newspaper.

Go to the animal shelters and look for yourself. The staff may not match your pet to the description you give them.

Call your local radio stations. Some radio stations will broadcast lost pet information for free. Give them detailed information on where the pet was lost, its description, and how to contact you.

Consider placing a "lost pet" ad and offering a reward. Depending upon where you live and the possibility of scams, you may want to keep some of your pet's identifying characteristics from the public. Have the finder tell the characteristics to you.

Make a list of names & phone numbers of everyone you have contacted. This makes it easy to notify them when your search is over.

Ask the shelters, vets and police to notify you ASAP regarding any calls about stray dogs that generally match your dog's description.

Cook up some liver or chicken with garlic, liverwurst, and keep the juices. You want the smelliest stuff you can get that you know your dog will love. Put it in the fridge for the next morning or if you have already set up a trap, put it in the trap.

Leave food and water out at your home so if your dog comes home he will be nourished and hang around for more.

Put an AD in the Classifieds in the newspaper

Look first in areas your dog has visited previously on walks or areas he is known to visit if this is not his first escape.

Check areas where other dogs live. Dogs are good at finding other dogs and enjoy their company.

Send family members out to look for the dog armed with food, lead, collar, and another family dog if available. Most lost dogs are found within a couple of hours close to home.

Post on the Internet such as on 'Petfinder.com' in classifieds section. Include street & town where lost and good description; many ads are vague. Renew/Delete as needed.

Remain Hopeful ... Dogs have been re-united with their owners even after a year or more.

TIPS

Never respond to a found pet claim alone, you must bring someone with you.

Arrange to meet in a public place such as a park, a mall or perhaps in front of a police station.

Fencing – solid fencing with well secured gates are the best protection. Make sure the height is adjusted to your dog from jumping out.

Gates - Put springs on your gates to insure they automatically swing shut when you let go of the gate. You can even put locks on your gate and leave a key hanging on a hook on the inside of the gate.

Electric fences will not keep your dog in if he is distracted by the drive to chase something and then without that drive, he can't get back inside the boundaries nor does he recognize them from the opposite direction.

Make sure your dog has had lots of walk time with you in many different directions to and from home so if he ever gets lost near your home, he will be familiar and confident about how to return.