



# What to do if your Pet is Lost or Stolen

## Be Prepared

- Keep a set of up to date photos of your pet from lots of different angles so you can quickly post pictures on social media or make up posters.
- Write a description of your pet including any distinguishing features, if they are microchipped, tattooed, neutered etc. so you are ready in an emergency
- Microchip your dog or cat. Dogs must be microchipped by law and must wear a collar and tag bearing your name and address whilst out in public. You may also want your cat to wear a collar and tag.
- Keep all your pet's documentation in one place to help prove ownership. This will include microchip numbers, vaccination certificates, registration documents, purchase receipts, rehoming contracts, vet bills. Also keep some photos of you with your pet over the years.
- Make up some slips of paper with your name and phone number on, plus a brief description of your pet so you have them to hand out if you are searching for your pet.
- Keep your details up to date on the microchip database and save their number in your phone
- Keep an updated list of contact details for your microchip database, all your local authority animal wardens, local vets, local rescues, national missing pet websites, local police and anyone else you may want to contact if your pet is lost or stolen.

## If your Pet is Lost or Stolen

- It is important to act quickly and try to make your pet 'too hot to handle'
- If your pet is microchipped, immediately inform your microchip database
- Ensure there is someone available to receive calls at the phone number that is on the tag.
- If your dog is lost on a walk and you have had no luck calling him, go back to your car as dogs are often able to find their way back there. If your dog is sociable with people check any areas where people may gather like cafes or shops. Leave your contact details and a description of your dog just in case.
- If your pet has escaped from your garden or is missing locally, search the area (remembering to look up as well for cats stuck in trees) and hand out your contact details to neighbours, postmen, local dog walkers and others who cover the local area. Also post your pet's details on any local Facebook community site.
- Report the loss to your local authority animal warden

- If you believe your pet has been stolen, report the theft to the police and ask for a Crime Reference Number. Also check if there was any CCTV operating in the area that might provide clues.
- Contact other local services to make them aware your pet is missing such as:
  - Neighbouring local council animal wardens
  - All local vets
  - All local rescue centres
- Register your pet as missing on as many Missing Pet websites as possible. Here are some examples:
  - [www.doglost.co.uk](http://www.doglost.co.uk)
  - [www.animalsearchuk.co.uk](http://www.animalsearchuk.co.uk)
  - [www.facebook.com/petloglostfound](https://www.facebook.com/petloglostfound)
  - [www.nationalpetregister.org](http://www.nationalpetregister.org)

These sites can also give advice on putting up posters, offering rewards and how to track down and catch a frightened or disoriented pet.

- Make up your own missing pet posters and place them everywhere you can in the area local to your home or where the pet went missing. Do remember to take them down when you are eventually reunited with your pet.
- Make full use of social media using Facebook, Twitter and even YouTube. You can also contact the local radio and local papers.

By raising awareness and keeping your missing pet's profile high you have a much better chance of being reunited with your pet so keep focused on the task. It can be a traumatic experience coping with a lost or stolen pet. NAWT has trained ALLY© supporters at each of its centres who can help you through this difficult time. Please contact your local NAWT centre.

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