

PET IDENTIFICATION TAGS are essential! ---At least monthly, check both the security of your pet's collar & tags, and make sure the tags are both legible and accurate. If possible, include an alternate contact person or telephone number on the tag—or include your veterinarian's name and phone number. This information can literally save a pet's life if there is an injury to the pet, since most veterinarians require consent before providing anything more than emergency treatment to "stabilize" a pet's condition.

Secure your pet's tags with "**O**" clasps instead of "**S**" hooks, from which a tag is more easily lost. If possible, use a separate clasp for each tag, so if one tag is lost, the others remain. (Unless the collar is lost.)

Have a recent photo of your pet, clearly showing any identifying marks, etc. The photo should be of a high enough quality to photocopy for flyers. (It is far easier for someone to recognize your pet, for example, if you have a photograph taken WITHOUT a Christmas hat, Halloween costume, etc.) Have a written description of your pet ready, including any unique characteristics—even any characteristic information about a dog's bark or a cat's distinctive "meow" can help. Do not expect yourself to be able to accurately describe your pet in a crisis situation.

Dogs, and even larger cats, **should wear their rabies tags**. A "stray" pet can be traced to the veterinarian who administered the vaccination, vastly improving your chances of retrieving your pet in the event he is lost. Maintain current dog licensing, & put the license tag on your dog's collar

Carry a "Pet Emergency Card" in your wallet, indicating the name, address & phone number of someone who will take responsibility for your pet(s) if anything happens to you, or in the case of some other kind of disaster. Along with the card, keep a list of pet identification numbers or registrations, your veterinarian's contact information, and the names and numbers of shelters and rescues in your area

If your pet is micro-chipped or tattooed, make sure you have the identification numbers in a place where you can find them quickly. If you lose an animal in an area where there is incidence of theft, including activity by "Class B Dealers," licensed by the USDA, you will need to be able to positively identify the animal as belonging to you if the animal is picked up.

If you are traveling with a pet, take the extra precaution of making a tag for your pet that carries a contact number at your destination, your cell phone number, if you have one, and/or the number of someone who is willing to be contacted in an emergency. This little "pet passport" can save his life, especially if he is lost en route. If you use a crate or carrier when traveling, also put this information on the crate.

It may also be helpful to carry the phone number of an organization you could contact, if need be, to find contact information for shelters, etc. wherever you may be.

Lost and Missing Pets Brochure



According to the American Animal Hospital Association's 1995 Pet Owner Survey, roughly 30 percent of pet owners have lost a pet at one time. Many of us find it difficult to think clearly in this kind of crisis. The more quickly you are able to take action, however, the better your chances of retrieving your lost pet. Below are some steps and suggestions to help you if your pet is lost..

IF YOUR PET IS LOST or STOLEN:

1. **Begin looking, as soon as you realize the pet is lost**, with as many helpers as you can find, starting in the vicinity the pet was last seen. Search by car, as well as on foot or by bicycle, calling out your pet's name. If your pet is injured or trapped, he may respond to your voice. **TAKE A LEASH** or carrier with you, as well as a **cell phone**, if you have one. Also have a blanket, and something you could use, if necessary, to muzzle a dog who has been injured. (Even a bandana or a rag will serve the purpose. An injured dog may bite out of fear or pain, regardless of temperament, so be prepared in case you need to do this.)
2. **Call your own veterinarian immediately** to report the loss, and all veterinary clinics in your area.
3. **Call every animal shelter or humane organization in your area.** (Use the list you have prepared for this kind of emergency.) Be exhaustive with the list you prepare because someone who may have found your pet may be keeping your pet safe, planning to advertise, etc. Many people who find "strays" are understandably reluctant to take them to shelters, fearing they will be euthanized, or worse.
4. **Visit the most likely shelters in person** because you know your pet better than anyone else. **Keep checking daily!** Bring a **photograph** of your pet to any shelter or rescue. No two people describe the same animal identically.
5. **Call your local police to report the loss**, especially if you suspect theft. If an animal has been killed in traffic, removal of the body by Animal Control or the state's department of transportation is often done via the local police department. In some areas, responsible agencies or departments are required to log the removal

of domestic animals. A police dispatch regarding the incident may also be logged.

6. **Check with neighbors**, and also with **people walking dogs** in the area your pet was last seen, or may return to. (Generally, people with dogs are more acutely aware of a "stray" in the area.) **Put up signs** around your neighborhood (or area the pet was last seen) that **include a photo or description of your pet, your phone number, where the pet was last seen, and how long your pet has been missing.** Use CAUTION, however, to protect yourself and/or your pet from ill-doers: **WITHHOLD at least ONE identifying characteristic with which you can positively identify either your pet, or a scam artist who claims to have located your pet. BE ALERT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SCAMS! Do NOT put your address on anything you post, particularly in public places.**

7. **Call your local newspaper** and place a "lost pet" ad. Also check the newspaper daily for "found pets" ads. Often they will print found ads for free. Be alert to the possibility that your grief could be exploited in this situation. **Some radio stations** will also air lost pet alerts.

8. **Provide area veterinarians, groomers, pet sitters, pet supply stores, and CONVENIENCE STORES with a flyer.** Post signs or flyers wherever people with pets tend to go, such as the pet food aisle of the grocery store, the park, etc. Give flyers to **delivery people, mail carriers**, etc. in your area. Put up AT LEAST a sign as soon as possible, and follow up by replacing the signs with a flyer, which includes a photo of your pet. Too much time can be lost if you are understandably limited in your ability to function at your "normal" level in a crisis.

9. **Remember that it is OK to ask for help**—ASK friends & family to help! You should not have to go it alone.

10. **If you do successfully locate your pet**, make a note of the resource or resources that were instrumental in helping you find your pet and FOLLOW-UP with those resources to thank them. This is important, for example, in persuading stores, etc. to maintain Community Bulletin Boards, etc. In addition, people long to hear that a pet has been found. A great many people have experienced this tragedy in their lives, and may not have been as lucky as you have been.

This brochure has been prepared for you by
Katie Nurmi, friend of Angel-Hearts

Angel Hearts is an online memorial site to allow us to share our departed pets, family and friends with others. Our love for them will never leave our hearts. We will think of them every day and miss them. Some days we may think of them with sadness and other days with joy and happiness. Sometimes, our biggest fear is that others will forget them. Angel Hearts will provide a place for them so their lives and love will always be near.