

## FINDING A LOST CAT

There are few things scarier for a pet owner than losing their beloved friend, especially when it's an indoor cat. It happens--indoor cats can slip out doors that weren't quite shut, windows with a torn screen, or perhaps just let out by a guest that wasn't aware the kitty needed to stay inside. No matter how it happens, here are tips for finding your furry baby safely.

### **Stay Calm**

It's important to have a clear head and to remain calm for your kitty. If you're having a fit at home or in your yard, more than likely your cat will steer clear of you until you simmer down. Keeping calm while searching will keep them calm once you find each other.

### **Check INDOORS**

This may sound crazy but there is a high likelihood that your missing feline is still in your house. Cats are incredibly talented at tucking themselves away in strange places, making it difficult to find them. Under sheets or blankets, in hidden corners behind furniture, in closets, under ottomans or other furniture, behind curtains, etc. are all popular places for "lost" cats to be found. Unless you actually saw your cat run outside, be sure to do a thorough indoor check.

### **Stay Close to Home**

If you know your indoor kitty must be outside, remember that your kitty is just as frightened and overwhelmed as you are because it isn't used to being outside. Chances are it isn't far from home but is hiding because it is scared. Alert your surrounding neighbors and ask them if you can check their garages, sheds, under decks, or porches and even in crawl spaces. Take flyers door to door to leave with your neighbors and post signs in your neighborhood. If children are outside playing ask them to keep an eye out for your kitty.

One of the best times to look for a lost cat is at night for one simple reason – reflection! Be sure to let your neighbors know that you will be out looking for your kitty so they know you are a worried pet owner and not a burglar, peeping tom, etc. Once the sun has gone down, take a flashlight and start shining it in bushes and other dark places that look like safe hidey-holes for a scared kitty. As you are shining that flashlight, look for the reflection of the light in your kitty's eyes.

If you don't find your kitty immediately, leave out some food and water in a few locations. Also leaving their litter box outside has attracted cats back home. Having familiar scents around may help to draw them out (especially at night) and the food and water will help keep them nourished and hydrated.

### **Connect**

Social media can literally be a lifesaver when it comes to finding your kitty. First, make sure that you have a good photo of your pet. Hopefully you have one on hand already so you can circulate that picture everywhere. Be sure it is on your flyers, but also put it on Petfinder.com, Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor.com, Twitter, Email, etc. If your kitty is microchipped, be sure to contact the organization that has your kitty records or contact a Lost Pet group who will send info out about your kitty (even if there is a fee, it will be worth it). Continue to talk to your neighbors and let them know you are still looking for your kitty and ask them to contact you with any info they might have.

### **SUCCESS – Kitty is back home!**

When you find your kitty taking it to your vet to be checked out is a best first step. While you can look it over there may be scratches or injuries to it that you can't see and it's important for it to get checked before abscesses or other illness occur. If your kitty isn't microchipped, consider doing that now just in case it gets out again. Be sure to give him or her extra love and attention so they know that being home is the best place for them. There are many dangers outside so be sure your kitty stays inside all the time to be safe!