

Losing a pet can be distressing. But don't lose heart. Stay calm and follow the steps listed below to help you find your animal.

CONDUCT A SEARCH

Talk to your neighbors, especially the children who play in the neighborhood. Go door to door. Leave copies of this flier. Search in the evenings when it's quiet. Call or whistle. If your pet is injured or frightened, he may be hiding. Do keep in mind that cats sometimes climb into cars, and are transported miles away before jumping out. Cats also like to hide and may be trapped in sheds, crawl spaces and basements.

VISIT SHELTERS

Visit your Richmond Area Shelters including the surrounding counties. You must go in person, because only you can identify your pet. Look through all of the cages, and ask to see any injured or sick animals. Be sure to go every day. The Shelter holds stray animals for 4-5 days. After that, they may become available for adoption. Leave a copy of this flier at the Animal Shelters. Keep checking. Your pet may not be found for several weeks.

NEWSPAPER AND RADIO

Call newspapers and place an ad. Give an intersection or landmark where your pet was last seen. Briefly describe your pet—don't try to be too descriptive; you want anyone who thinks they may have seen your pet to call. Someone may have already found your pet. Also, try contacting your local radio stations. Often times the DJs will be happy to make an announcement on your behalf.

POST SIGNS

Use this flier. Place copies of the poster within twenty block radius of where the animal was lost. Put them up on local community bulletin boards, in grocery stores, etc. If placing outside where they

will be exposed to rain or snow, place in clear plastic sheet protectors (get these at an office supply store), insert cardboard backing for strengthening and staple the ends so the wind and rain will not ruin your sign. Then nail or fasten to telephone poles, street sign posts, trees, etc. Remember to take your fliers down when your pet is found.

HOW TO FILL IN THE POSTER

A black and white photo will reproduce better than a color one. If you don't have a photo, try to get a picture from a breed book to give people a rough idea of what

If your pet is an unusual breed, or is a mutt, you should write the breed the animal looks like most (e.g., looks like Lab-type dog, looks like short hair Siamese). Never write "mutt" or "mongrel" for a dog. Ordinary cats can be described best as "domestic short hair", "domestic medium hair", etc. Only the main colors of the animal should be included. Don't try to be too descriptive; you want anyone who thinks they may have seen your pet to call.

If using this form as opposed to a homemade sign, fill in your name and phone number on each of the small tabs at the bottom of the poster. If you don't have an answering machine, give a home and a work number, or list hours that you will be home, so that the caller will be sure to reach you. Cut the tabs on the dotted lines, so that if someone has seen your pet, he or she can easily tear off the tab with your name and phone number.

IF SOMEONE CALLS ABOUT YOUR PET

Try to get a positive identification on your animal from the caller. Have specific details in mind (a scar or peculiar feature) that will identify your animal from a similar one. Do not put all details on your poster. There are extortionists who will claim to have your pet. Think of a special question that only someone with your pet will be able to answer. If you offer a reward, make sure you have your animal back before you turn over the money.

**REMEMBER, DON'T GET DISCOURAGED.
IT MAY TAKE YOU SEVERAL WEEKS TO**

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE LOST YOUR PET

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www.ras.petfinder.com