



## Missing Cat Advice

Firstly, don't panic. It's extremely distressing when your cat goes missing, but don't give up hope as lots of cats arrive home two or three days later as if nothing has happened and wondering what all the fuss is about. Hopefully this is the case with your missing cat but if not there are lots of things you can do to try and find him. The following advice contains contact details of organisations based in the Leicestershire area.

### Searching

- ❑ Thoroughly search your house and garden. Something may have scared him and a cat that has been frightened or hurt will often hide itself away and not even come out for food or a well-known voice. Look in, under and behind everything, however unlikely or however small - it is surprising how a cat can squeeze itself into the smallest of spaces.
- ❑ Search the local area and surrounding roads. Shaking a box of cat biscuits or rattling a fork on a tin of food may help. Knock on doors and ask neighbours to check their sheds and garages (while you wait if possible). Don't forget to do both sides of the street and the houses backing onto you. Don't forget to look up to see if he's got stuck on a roof or up a tall tree and is unable to get down (contact the local fire brigade to see if they have had to rescue any stuck cats). As time goes on, extend the search further afield.
- ❑ Repeat the search of the area after dark when it is quieter with a relative/friend. Keep talking as you walk round, gently call out the cat's name, and listen for meowing or scratching in garages, behind high walls, etc.
- ❑ Ask neighbours if they have had any deliveries or tradespeople at the house in case he's got into their vehicle. If this is a possibility, try and find out where they went to next and advertise in that area.
- ❑ Ask builders working in the area to check under floorboards, etc.
- ❑ If there are any empty buildings for sale locally, check with the estate agent in case he's been shut in.
- ❑ Check abandoned vehicles and skips in case he's got in but cannot get out.
- ❑ Contact owners of buildings such as church or village halls in case he's been shut in.
- ❑ If you think your cat has been shut into a locked building and you are unable to contact the owner, please ring the RSPCA. Don't attempt to break in yourself as you would be breaking the law.
- ❑ Ask local children to keep a look out, but make sure they tell their parents first.



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- ❑ Ask your local postman, window cleaner, dog walkers, etc to keep a look out.
- ❑ Check if there are any local feral cat colonies he could have "attached" himself to.
- ❑ Contact your local environmental services department as they usually keep a log of all animals picked up on the roadside. This is not a pleasant call to make and hopefully it will come back as negative but the majority of people prefer to know what has happened even if it's bad news.
- ❑ Go and look at any cat reported to you even if the description does not particularly match - it's surprising how two people looking at the same cat can describe it differently, especially regarding some colours.

## Advertising

- ❑ Make small flyers with a description and photograph plus details of when and where he went missing and your contact numbers (we recommend that you don't put your address or your name on the posters) and deliver them to everyone on your street and surrounding streets. Do not be too detailed with your description, for instance put black and white but not specific markings. As time goes on widen the area that you distribute them to.
- ❑ Make larger posters and ask to put them in local shops, post offices, vets, libraries, etc - in fact, anywhere that will let you. If it is okay with the local council, stick them onto lamp posts (put posters in plastic wallets in case it rains). Put one on your gate, in your front window and your car and ask your family and friends if they will do the same.
- ❑ Contact all local rescues to register him as lost and to check if they have had any reports of a stray cat matching his description. If they have a cattery go along and have a look on a weekly basis.
- ❑ Contact all vets in the area (not just the nearest) to register him as lost and also to check if he has been taken into them.
- ❑ Cats sometimes get into delivery vans, etc and end up jumping out miles away, so widen the search by putting an advert in the Leicester Mercury, including the local free papers. Continue to advertise periodically for several months - someone seeing a well looked after cat may think that it is just new to the area and it may be weeks later when they notice its condition is deteriorating that they start looking for adverts.
- ❑ If the cat is Microchipped, register it as lost with the database company.
- ❑ Register the cat as lost on local and national lost and found internet websites.
- ❑ If you have Pet Insurance check to see if they will assist with the costs of advertising, etc.



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## General

- Cats have a very good sense of smell so leave an unwashed item of your clothing outside or put the contents of your vacuum bag and/or the litter tray on your garden. This could help to keep him in the area or guide him home.
- Leave out food and a toy belonging to the cat.
- Take a cat carrier with you when searching.
- If you know where he is but for some reason he will not come to you (injured/frightened cats sometimes act strangely), ring the local rescues to see if you can borrow a cat trap.

## A Word of Warning

- Take sensible precautions.** When searching or going to look at a cat to see if he is yours, always take a relative or friend with you.
- Beware of hoaxes and scams.** Be wary if you are asked for money for the return of your cat. Even if you are offering a reward, NEVER hand over money until you have your cat back.

## When He Comes Home

- We would advise you to get him checked over by your vet to make sure he has not been injured or become dehydrated if he has been shut in somewhere.
- Let everyone you have notified know that he is home so that they can mark him as found.
- Let your neighbours know he is home so they can stop looking.
- Retrieve the posters you have distributed.
- Consider getting your cat neutered/spayed if not already done as a neutered/spayed cat is far less likely to roam.

## Useful Numbers

As we are a Leicestershire based charity most of the following telephone numbers relate only to this area:

- RSPCA helpline ..... 0300 1234 999
- RSPCA, Scudamore Road ..... 0116 233 6677
- Leicester Animal Aid ..... 01455 888257
- Leicester Animal Rescue ..... 0116 259 9399
- Cats Protection ..... 0116 288 1318



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- Redgate Animal Sanctuary ..... **01530 243925**
- Central Animal Rescue ..... **0116 263 0354**
- Loughborough Cat Sanctuary . **01509 263357**
- Cats In Need ..... **02476 347738**
- PDSA ..... **0116 255 8731**

It is best to register your cat lost with both of the RSPCA telephone numbers as they keep separate registers of lost and found animals.

### Useful Websites

[www.nationalpetregister.org](http://www.nationalpetregister.org)

[www.amissingpet.co.uk](http://www.amissingpet.co.uk)

[www.animalsearchuk.co.uk](http://www.animalsearchuk.co.uk)

[www.lostmecat.org/index.php](http://www.lostmecat.org/index.php)

[www.foundandlostpets.co.uk](http://www.foundandlostpets.co.uk)

[www.petsmiles.com](http://www.petsmiles.com)

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