

**THE
HANDBOOK
ON WHAT TO DO
— WHEN YOU —**

LOSE / FIND

A DOG

**REBOUND
HOUNDS**

BREED LOVE. RESCUE DOGS.

PART ONE.

**WHAT TO DO
WHEN YOU
LOSE A DOG**

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST 24 HOURS.

The first 24 hours are critical.

DON'T PANIC.

Stay calm and create a plan. You are in control of what happens next in terms of finding your pet.

NOTE WHERE THEY BECAME LOST.

Did they break free of their leash? Run in a certain direction? Were they possibly "taken" from your property? All very important facts to know.

ORGANIZE A SEARCH PARTY.

THE FIRST FEW HOURS ARE CRITICAL! Get your cell phone with a pic of your dog, get some leashes, treats, implore family, friends, to join in a search. Visit whatever park or area your dog frequented or liked. Knock on doors, ask people along the way if they have seen your dog, showing them a pic on your phone. Getting "sightings" are crucial.

YOUR PHONE! *Is probably your greatest tool during the search.*

Make sure your cell has a voicemail that isn't full!! AND CHANGE YOUR VOICEMAIL MESSAGE to refer people to another number in case you are not available.

CHAPTER TWO

WHO TO CONTACT.

Contact the following ASAP.

ALL LOCAL SHELTERS.

Email AND call. Send/text them a description of your pet, their chip number if applicable, good pictures.

* EMAIL EVERY DAY. Shelters are very busy and your pet could come in unnoticed for days. Stay on top of them with notices every single day.

* VISIT IN PERSON. Shelters, especially urban ones, are super busy, and though they have received your email, etc. there is nothing better than your eyes on all their dogs to see if your dog is among them.

CALL THE POLICE.

Report a missing/stolen/lost pet. Give them a good description and email/text a picture.

VISIT PRECINCTS.

Have flyers ready to hand to the desk sergeant. Request that they be given out at "roll call" so the patrol cars have a flyer in case your pet is spotted.

CONTACT YOUR MICROCHIP COMPANY.

Make sure their description of your dog is up to date. Age/sex/breed/medical condition, etc. Check on the accuracy of the phone number listed; give multiple contact numbers if possible.

CHAPTER THREE

PUBLIC AWARENESS.

Make Posters.

Please see how to make effective posters and flyers at the back of this handbook.

Effective posters are probably the most effective way to get the news out and recover your lost dog.

Post around your immediate neighborhood at entrances to any parks, vets' offices, groomers, subway/bus station entrances, in front of schools, supermarkets, laundromats, banks, post offices, etc. Flyers should have GOOD BIO, GOOD PICTURES, description of what the pet had on that day, a coat, a harness, collar, tags, mention any medical issues, etc. PROVIDE YOUR CELL NUMBER AND YOUR EMAIL.

ASK FOR SIGHTINGS. On your posters, flyers, on your voicemail on your phone, ask for sightings! Vital in order to circle in on where you dog may be. If your dog is not social, or afraid of strangers, ask that they do not approach, but simply call or text you immediately.

Post on Social Media.

Take a pic of your flyer and post on every social media you can think of ... Facebook, TicToc, Intagram, Twitter ... Ask everyone to "share". POST ON ALL LOST DOG PAGES in your area and beyond. Consider joining and listing your dog with [Lost Dogs of America](#). They are a network of Facebook pages across America that will share your listing with missing pet groups in your state.

CHAPTER FOUR

YOU CAN DO MORE.

Some Other Stuff To Do!

TAG YOUR CAR. Using neon glass markers list a brief description of your dog with your phone number on your rear and side windows.

ASK LOCAL WORKERS WHO SERVE YOUR AREA. Give flyers to your mailperson, Sanitation workers, Amazon/FedEx/USPS delivery people.

CONSIDER USING A TRAP. More easily accomplished in rural areas, a hungry dog can often be lured into a trap with food. CHECK THE TRAP OFTEN. Shelters and rescue organizations can often lend you one.

ENGAGE A TRACKER. Trackers have been useful in finding pets, especially those that have been gone for longer than a few days. They employ scent techniques, etc. to find a route or routes your dog may have taken. There are also many companies that you can purchase a plan to call homes in your area about your lost dog, giving your contact number if anyone has sightings.

REWARD OR NO REWARD? Consider the pros and cons. For dogs that are very friendly and not skittish, a reward may be advisable. However, if your dog does not approach strangers easily or is fearful in general, it can lead to people aggressively searching, which can scare the dog further and impact their rescue negatively.

WHEN YOUR DOG ISN'T RECOVERED IMMEDIATELY ... keep in mind that your dog will go into "survival mode" within days, even hours. They shift to a primal instinct to find food, water and shelter. Since they never had to do these things before, it puts your dog under a great deal of stress. This is why chasing a dog, calling their name, shaking treats can make them retreat further. Best to get "sightings" and go to that area, then be calm and quiet, letting them come to you.

IF YOU SEE YOUR DOG, USE A COAXING, CALM VOICE. Sit down, singing has been proven effective. Have smelly treats like cut up hot dogs with you. Act like you are eating, throw some treats on the ground. (NOTE: sometimes food works out, sometimes it doesn't. It depends on the level of panic your dog is in.) Laying down often will bring your dog to you. Remember, even though this is YOUR pet, if they are in flight mode, a panicked dog will be reluctant to approach even their owner.

DO NOT GIVE UP HOPE! Your dog is out there, somewhere. If you remain focused, positive and persistent, you have a good chance of recovering them. Even if your family ceases to support you, reach out and use the groups and resources on the internet.

CHAPTER FIVE

AFTER YOU RECOVER YOUR DOG.

Understand the Trauma.

When you pick up your dog from the shelter or a finder, bring something familiar, a favorite toy or treat or blanket, that reminds them of home.

Examine your dog for any injuries. Carefully check for any bites, scratches, punctures, etc. They may require a vet visit.

Do not expect your dog to act the same right away. Your dog may take hours or days to return to its' normal state ... give them plenty of love and care of course, but also time and space to decompress from their trauma.

PART TWO.

**WHAT TO DO
WHEN YOU FIND
A LOST DOG**

CHAPTER SIX

SAFETY FIRST!

Safety First.

You can actually make things worse for the dog if you yourself get bit or injured. Please take the following precautions ...

HOW TO APPROACH A LOST DOG.

If the dog seems "friendly" and you feel safe, crouch down to their level turning your body sidewise and speak in a friendly, high-pitched voice. Remove any sunglasses or hats you may have on. Coax the dog to come to you. Use a slip lead (put the clip end of a leash through the handle, the resulting circle end is the "slip") to put over their head and leash them.

CHECK FOR ID.

Most dogs will have tags, or an embroidered collar with name and phone number of the owner. Call immediately and decide if you are going to bring the dog home, to a shelter or stay put. If the dog does not have visible ID, they may be chipped. A scan can be done at most vets' offices or at the shelter.

IF THE DOG IS INJURED.

You must decide if you want to take the dog to your vet. If not, bring it to the nearest shelter. The shelter is equipped to deal with the vetting and care, also to scan for the all-important chip. Remember, an injured dog may bite if in pain; exercise caution when handling. If you cannot handle, call the police, your local Animal Control Officer, or the shelter.

IF THE DOG IS ON A BUSY HIGHWAY.

Contact the local police, Department of Transportation or Animal Control and give an accurate description of the dog and where it is located.

TRANSPORTING A LOST DOG IN A CAR.

Whether bringing the dog to your home, a shelter or your vet, secure the dog in the back by employing the leash as a tether. Close the windows so the dog won't panic and attempt to jump out.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TAKING A LOST DOG INTO YOUR HOME.

*Bringing the Dog Home? **Be Safe.***

You may decide, if you are comfortable with the dog's temperament, to bring the dog home rather than to a shelter. Upon arrival at your home, take the dog for a walk to relieve itself and lessen anxiety. KEEP THE NEW DOG SEPARATE from any of your other pets, since you do not know the vaccination status. Securely gate or enclose the dog in a laundry room, spare bedroom, etc., behind a door or gate. Provide food and water and a bed.

Try to locate the owner via the tags, the scanned chip, etc.

If none are available, post the lost dog on all social media LOST DOG sites.

Put up posters and distribute flyers for FOUND DOG (follow same steps for LOST DOG posters and flyers).

CHAPTER EIGHT

FOSTERING A LOST DOG.

To Keep or Not?

When weeks pass and the owner has not shown up, you have a few decisions to make.

THE DOG NEEDS TO BE SEEN BY A VET.

You cannot know if the found dog is up to date on vaccinations. AND if the dog is not spay/neutered, the surgery is another consideration.

SHELTER OR NOT?

Though you may want to avoid bringing the dog to your local shelter, you may have to. You may not have the resources to properly vet the dog, or your current pets aren't compatible, etc. IF YOU DO BRING THE DOG TO A SHELTER, you can ask that you be notified if the dog is slated for euthanasia. You can be the dog's safety net, in that regard.

FOSTERING IS AN OPTION.

Rescues are usually grateful when finders can keep the dog till a forever home can be achieved. **CONTACT LOCAL RESCUES** and let them know you have the dog in your home, and can keep until an approved home is found. You will then become a "foster" for the rescue (you may have to make an application to achieve this). Rescues will post the dog on their sites for a home and check the home for approval. They can also possibly take care of the vetting.

CREATE THE **MOST** **EFFECTIVE** LOST/FOUND DOG POSTERS

**Make them giant, make them
bright, make them brief.**

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS:

1. Use giant (28x22") fluorescent orange poster board.
2. At top in 5" black letters, print **PLEASE HELP!!**
3. At bottom, in 5" letters, print **LOST DOG**
4. In center, use clear packing tape to secure a plastic sheet protector.
This is where you slip your FLYER (below) and seal the top to protect it from the weather.
5. Hang vertically. Focus on intersections, busy pedestrian corners, park entrances, supermarkets, banks, etc.

CREATE A FLYER.

8 x 11 ½". You will need at least 75 to 100. PRINT IN COLOR OR ON COLORED PAPER. Include best picture you can find of your dog. Brief description, age/weight/breed. Your cell phone number. Put where/when last seen. Ask for sightings. Give more than one number if possible. Post reward if you are doing one. The internet has templates for free to produce lost dog flyers.