



Help! My Cat Got Out!!

Expert health and behavior advice from the feline care professionals at
Paws, Whiskers & Claws
The Feline Hospital
www.pawswhiskersandclaws.com

- 🐾 If your cat is microchipped, report your pet as lost to the microchip company. Let your vet know as well. Make flyers and hang them everywhere! Post them at your local pet stores, grocery stores, shelters, animal control, your vet, surrounding area vets, neighborhood clubhouses, and anywhere else that would be helpful.
- 🐾 Don't forget the "Good Samaritan" - the person that finds your cat in your neighborhood but drives many miles to their home or their vet to be examined. These people mean well, they are trying to help what they think is a homeless stray. Our point is that a lost cat can get far outside the neighborhood in no time so broaden your search!
- 🐾 Keep your cat's scent out on your property. Place bedding on your porch or deck. Sprinkle the contents of your litter boxes around the perimeter of the yard. Since rain will wash the scent away, save some contents for future depositing. Cats have an amazing sense of smell so you don't need a lot to be effective.
- 🐾 The humane Havahart trap (<http://www.havahart.com>) that you bait with food is excellent. The key is only putting food in the trap. If your lost cat can more easily get a meal from a plate on your deck, why would they venture into this weird device? Use extra stinky canned cat food or whatever your cat finds irresistible. Freshen it twice a day. If ants are a problem, place the food bowl inside a larger bowl with water in it creating a "moat" to drown the ants!
- 🐾 You may catch wildlife or other people's cats in the process; know that they are more afraid of you than you are of them. Just open the trap and let them bolt away. They will not attack you, all they want to is to get away.
- 🐾 Always keep the trap hidden and sheltered. Cats are both predator and prey so they know better (particularly when they are scared) than to sit in the middle of the back yard!



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- ❧ Place the trap alongside the house, under the deck, in the bushes, behind the shed. Try: placing a blanket or towel that smells like home over the top, putting cardboard scraps in the trap or on top (cats love cardboard!), baiting a trail of food to the trap.
- ❧ If using a humane trap, it is imperative to check the trap frequently particularly when temperatures are extreme and keep the food or treats in the trap fresh. At minimum, all traps should be checked at least 3 times a day.
- ❧ If your cat is not falling for the trap, put out more than one. They are available for purchase at most home improvement/hardware stores and many rescue groups rent or lend them out.
- ❧ Go door to door and tell everyone that your cat is missing. Lost cats can easily get accidentally trapped in crawlspaces, sheds and garages especially during peak yard work time and the holidays when people are getting out or putting away decorations.
- ❧ Call for them and shake their favorite treat bag! This is best to do at dawn and dusk since these are the times of day when cats are most active (because it is also when their prey is most active).
- ❧ Check to see if there is a "Pet Detective" in your area! Locally, we have a retired police officer and his retired search and rescue dogs that will come search for your cat. Even if the worst is found, at least you have closure.
- ❧ Walk the shelters and animal control facilities. As gut wrenching as this will be, many of these places miss that a cat just dropped off is a perfect match for the one in your flyer. Go to all surrounding area shelters and not just your local one.