

# Lost Pet Prevention Checklist

- Put a **collar and tag** on him! A collar and tag means that if he wanders, someone can contact you to get him back home before he goes too far. Some dog breeds are more prone to wander—you may want to consider a GPS collar!
- Make sure he's **microchipped**. A [microchip](#) means he always has ID. Sign up for an [OHS microchip clinic](#) today!
- Sterilize** him! Pets wander less if they're not lured away by another in-heat animal.
- Keep your cat **indoors**...it's safer for her. Even cats who "usually" stay in the yard can be frightened away or chase animals. It's a myth that cats can always find their way home.
- Make sure **collars and leashes are well fitted and functioning**, and monitor regularly. A newly groomed pet's neck may require a collar adjustment!
- Make sure he's **trained**. Dogs with good recall can be called back before they run too far and get lost. (Need training? [See how OHS can help!](#))
- Keep careful **control during transit**. Many pets become lost when they bolt from a vehicle. Make sure pets in vehicles are contained in carriers or are wearing seat belts, so that you can control their entry and exit.
- Keep **screens and fences** in good repair. We receive many lost reports because cats pushed through a screen or dogs wiggled between loose fence posts.
- Train your family**. Many animals escape because a child (or their friend) left the door open or dropped the leash on a walk.
- Take extra **precautions during changes in routine**. Many pets go missing when something's different—have plans in place to ensure their safety during:
  - Renovations or construction** inside or outside the home. Talk to workers to make sure they're not leaving doors open, and consider keeping pets in enclosed rooms while there's major activity going on in your house
  - Vacations**—many pets escape pet sitters and dog walkers. Make sure your pet sitter or dog walker understand your pet's routines and habits.
  - Extreme weather and fireworks** makes many animals anxious, and more prone to bolt through open doors.
  - Household changes** (new pet, new baby)—big changes can upset pets.
  - Visitors**—make sure they know to keep doors closed and what to do around pets).
- Keep a recent picture of your pet on your phone at all times, so you can show it to people quickly if your pet does stray.
- Know the first steps to take, by reading our search tips below, so you can act fast if your pet does stray.