

# I Found a Cat. What Do I Do?

Not all cats are lost, so before you contact us about rescuing a cat that you've found, let's talk about lost cats! Many people let their owned cats roam free outside, so just because you found a cat and you don't see an owner in the vicinity, it doesn't necessarily mean that the cat is lost.

## How to Find a Stray Cat's Home

Different than feral cats, who are wild and will not come up to strangers, stray cats will act differently. They'll be friendly, approach you, and could even look like they are not used to being on their own. If you think someone is missing this kitty, follow these tips to help you find its home.

1. Check for a collar: If the cat has a collar, call any numbers on the tag—which might lead you to the owner.
2. Check for a microchip: A vet or animal shelter can check to see if the cat has a permanent form of identification called a microchip. If it does, you can call the microchip registry to let them know this kitty has been found and will attempt to contact the home to reunite them.
3. Call local shelters: In Columbia, the local shelter is Central Missouri Humane Society. You can reach them at 573.443.7387 Also contact Boone County Animal Control at 573.449.1888. Owners may call shelters and pounds when looking for a lost cat, and the shelter keeps lists to match inquiries. They also have a lost and found page Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/cmhslostfound/>. In addition to CMHS, check out these other lost and found pages in the Boone County area: Columbia MO Lost and Found Paws: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ColumbiaMOLostFoundPaws> and

4. Make flyers with a basic description of the cat and your contact information. Put the flyers out in your neighborhood.



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5. Post the same information on Craigslist. Make sure all callers can describe the pet in detail and, preferably, send you a photo.
6. If the cat looks healthy and happy but you can't find the owner, don't lock the cat up in your house. Leave it outside while you search for the owner. Research shows that about 60% of the time, lost cats find their way home. In fact, they probably live in the local area. Leaving her outside really is protecting her.
7. If, after all of your efforts to find the owner, and a suitable amount of time in letting the cat go back home, the cat is still hanging out and your house, and you don't want to keep, send us a relinquishment request through our website. <http://columbia2ndchance.org/index.php/adopt/cat-relinquishment-form/>
8. If, after all of your efforts to find the owner, and a suitable amount of time in letting the cat go back home, the cat is still hanging around, and you would like to give it a home, make sure to take it to a veterinarian to get it fixed and vaccinated. You can do inexpensively at The Spay Neuter Project Columbia 573.397.6443 or Central MO Humane Society at 573.433.7387

