

Wandering cats are 13 times more likely to be returned to owners if you use the following strategies rather than just take them to the pound. (The reclaim rate for cats from Council shelters in Australia is around only 2%-10%).

### STEP ONE - IS THE CAT FRIENDLY?

This cat is likely to be a local indoor/outdoor cat that has escaped. Approximately 50% of cat owners do not keep their cats indoors or have appropriate fencing/enclosures to keep their cat safe. These cats are likely to explore, but the majority do not go far. 75% of these cats are found within 500m of their point of escape. Outdoor cats may be up to a kilometre from their homes.

If it doesn't have a collar and ID, it could have a microchip. Take the cat to a local vet clinic to be scanned for a microchip. If no traceable chip or the cat is too shy or fearful to be picked up, go to Step 2.

If the cat is sick, injured or too young to be on its own take it to the vet clinic as soon as possible.

**If the cat is coming and going it may be living between multiple homes.**

Try to fit it with a paper or breakaway collar with your phone number for an owner to call you. See template at [www.cats.org.uk/uploads/documents/COM\\_1032\\_Lost\\_and\\_found\\_collar\\_print\\_out\\_AW.pdf](http://www.cats.org.uk/uploads/documents/COM_1032_Lost_and_found_collar_print_out_AW.pdf).



### STEP FOUR - CONTACT YOUR LOCAL VET CLINICS, SHELTERS AND POUNDS

Report the cat as found and ask them to check if it is reported as lost. If the owner has given permission, they should provide you with owner details for direct return. Send a copy of the photo to add to their report.

### STEP FIVE

Utilise local lost and found and community web and social media sites to list the found pet with photo, and to check if an owner has posted a lost report. For example:

- [www.petsearch.com.au](http://www.petsearch.com.au)
- [www.lostpetfinders.com.au](http://www.lostpetfinders.com.au)

### STEP SIX - REPEAT THE ABOVE STEPS!

Cats are often lost for weeks or months before they are found.



### STEP TWO - GET A PHOTO AND DOOR-KNOCK IN A 5 HOUSE RADIUS

92% of indoor cats and 84% of outdoor access cats are found within a 5 home radius. Take a photo and ask all the neighbours if they know where the cat lives.

### STEP THREE - MAKE SIMPLE FLIERS

Distribute fliers to your neighbours in a 5 house radius. Put up giant neon posters on street poles or in local shops. On posters, include FOUND CAT, a PHOTO of the cat, YOUR PHONE NUMBER and any unique features (people driving past will have 5 seconds to read it so 5 words max).

Find an A4 flier/poster template at <https://www.g2z.org.au/lost-pets.html>. Note: Check with your Council on laws related to displaying community posters.

Write a simple message on your car back window.



## STEP SEVEN

If you have tried all of the above strategies and cannot find the owner:

- Consider adopting the cat
- Ask friends or family if they can adopt the cat.
- Desex and microchip the cat ASAP to prevent breeding of unowned unsocialised community cats. Visit the **National Desexing Network** website [www.ndn.org.au](http://www.ndn.org.au) or phone **1300 368 992** to find any reduced priced desexing programs near you.

## STEP EIGHT

Only after you have tried all of the above strategies and you cannot manage to desex the cat and keep or find her a good home, consider surrendering the cat to a shelter or rescue group with a good rehoming record.

These groups will often be overloaded with cats and kittens, and may have a waiting list. So if you can desex the cat while waiting, to prevent an unwanted litter and reduce the cat's time in the shelter, please do. Call the **National Desexing Network** to find reduced priced desexing programs available near you.

If the law requires taking a cat to the local council pound/shelter for the mandatory stray holding period:

- Leave your number as a person to be contacted as a potential adopter.
- Keep looking for the owner.
- Check how long the animal will be held at the pound, and stay in touch to see if the cat has been reclaimed or is still being held.
- Before the due out date, remind the pound that you are interested in helping by adopting and/or desexing the animal.

Cats are not claimed or adopted as readily as dogs, so need our help.

## STEP NINE - WHEN YOU FIND THE CAT'S HOME

- Thank and share your happy news with neighbours, vets and businesses
- Take down posters
- Share the strategies you've learned with others to help them find their cats
- Help the owners to prevent losing their cat again. Encourage them to:
  - update their microchip details
  - fit an elasticized collar with current phone number
  - desex their cat (desexed cats are more likely to be found than undesexed cats)
  - carefully contain their cat indoors or with cat-safe fencing, visit <http://www.awlqld.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/cat-safe-booklet.pdf>.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

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

**THIS RESOURCE IS A  
PARTNERSHIP PROJECT BETWEEN**



Animal Welfare  
League Qld  
Est. 1959

[www.awlqld.com.au](http://www.awlqld.com.au)



**GETTING 2 ZERO**

[www.g2z.org.au](http://www.g2z.org.au)

# FOUND A CAT?

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
TO KEEP HANDY IN CASE YOU  
FIND A CAT**



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**Don't delay! Think lost  
not stray!**  
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