



OWNERS' STEP BY STEP GUIDE

THE FIRST 3-4 HOURS

Dogs will often run away when spooked by something – a sound, a large dog running at them or if they are scared or worried by something and sometimes, they manage to escape from a garden, or someone may have left a door open. IF this happens try not to panic. Stay where you are for 30 minutes or so and ask people you see to look out for your dog. It can be useful to have 2 photos of your dog on your phone – 1. A facial photo taken from the front and 2. A full photo of your dog taken from the side so people can see stature and size of your dog.

Dogs will often do one of two things – return home if they have escaped from their home or if you are out on a walk, they either return to the point where they left you or return to the car park or place where you normally park.

1. Dogs will often return to where they last saw you:
 - a. If the dog has **run away from home**, make sure that someone stays at home; consider putting their bed outside your front door and see if they return; leave the gate and ideally the door open (if supervised!). Check neighbouring ring doorbell cameras to see if they pick up the route your dog took.
 - b. If it is **from a walk**, remain where you last saw them and wait to see if they come back; or go back to the car but – if you can – remain at the car
2. If your dog went missing near any of the following, it's worth making these phone calls as a priority:
 - a. Near a **railway line**, call Network Rail Emergency on **03457 11 41 41**
 - b. If near a **major road**, call Highways England on **0300 123 5000**
 - c. If you think your dog is on a **motorway**, then call **101/999**
3. Call your **microchip company** – or log into their website - to make sure your details are up to date; if you don't know your microchip details, call your vet as they should have it.
4. **Raise awareness online:**
 - a. Register your dog on <https://www.doglost.co.uk/>, and create a poster that can be shared on social media – please choose photos taken in full light, ideally one front facing and one from the side
 - b. Post the DogLost poster on Facebook; ensure that 1) you make it shareable and 2) you ask anyone who has relevant information to comment on the original post (easier to keep track of) – **keep monitoring social media for sightings**



OWNERS' STEP BY STEP GUIDE

- c. Share on relevant Facebook Groups, i.e. DogLost Surrey and any local Facebook pages, and ask people to share on any other local groups
5. Call the local **Dog Warden** and **the vets in the area** (you could ask someone else to make these phone calls for you)
6. Strangers will pick up your Facebook posts and will want to help! There are things they shouldn't do, and things you can ask them to do:
 - Try and **prevent strangers going out looking for your dog**, calling out, and confusing scent - restrict it to known friends and family if you can as strangers can spook the dog further
 - If the dog has run away from home or is in an inhabited area, you may want to ask volunteers to knock at people's doors to raise the alert and see if their cameras have picked up any movement. You can also ask for volunteers to notify any shops in the area, or make phone calls to vets.



OWNERS' STEP BY STEP GUIDE

THE NEXT 6-18 HOURS

7. It's **time to ask for help**, as your dog is more likely not going to find its way back on its own
8. **Contact us – Lost Dog Tracking Network Surrey** - and we can advise on how to expand a search for your dog, and coordinate with other groups of volunteers as needed (i.e. Drone SAR)
9. If it's getting to **nighttime**:
 - a. If the dog has **run away from home**, continue to keep the gate unlocked, the dog's bed outside of the door; if enough people are home, you can consider taking shifts to see if they get close to home: dogs will often be on the move at dusk and dawn, when the streets are quieter. If you have – or can borrow - some Wi-Fi cameras, consider putting them at your door in case there is any motion. We do not recommend leaving food out as that may attract wildlife and scare the dog away
 - b. If the dog has **run away from a walk**, consider remaining in the car park, ideally cooking a barbeque as food and your voice may entice your dog; you may want to consider spending the night in the car, but please keep your safety in mind first and foremost: you should never be alone and not all locations are safe at night
10. It's now time to prepare **posters** and start placing them in the area where your dog went missing and along the direction you think they went – dogs can move fast so don't keep to a small area; posters are important as they lead to sightings; a few pointers for the posters:
 - a. You need a lot of posters, think **150 at a minimum** – the more the better: while social media will spread the word rapidly, you need to also reach as many locals as possible, and many people are not on Facebook
 - b. The posters need to be **waterproof**, you can either laminate them, or put them upside down in plastic sleeves
 - c. Places where you can put posters (not an exhaustive list): lamp posts, recreation ground entrances, dog bins, entrances to dog walking areas, shops, restaurants, car parks, bus/train stations, garages, and fuel stations, etc
 - d. Creating and placing posters is also an activity that you can delegate to anyone volunteering to help
11. Make sure that you – or someone you delegate to – **keeps an eye on social media for sightings** – all sightings should be noted down with a location and approximate time as that can help map the movement of the dog
12. If our dog was lost near a body of water, contact the **Canal and River Trust** (0303 040 40 40/0900 47 99947) and the **Environment Agency** (03708 506 506)



OWNERS' STEP BY STEP GUIDE

24 HOURS AND BEYOND

13. This very much depends on whether there have been sightings or not:
 - a. If there have been sightings, keep working with us to continue the search strategy: this may involve drones, thermal cameras, trapping teams, etc
 - b. If there have been **no sightings**, you may want to consider advertising a “finder’s fee” – this needs to be handled carefully as it could attract scammers; if you plan to, please talk to us for advice
14. Continue to push the message on social media, and expand the areas where you post; consider the UK wide Lost Dog groups and posters in areas where there have been sightings – don’t forget a dog can travel quite far
15. Seek out postal workers and street cleaning employees, share your poster and ask them to keep an eye out for your dog: they all cover quite some distance every day and can be a helpful extra set of eyes

THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

16. **Scammers:** as it often happens, scammers will try and take advantage of people in distress: your phone number will be on social media (a you want to be contacted in case of sightings), so people may call and ask you for payments – a few things to keep in mind:
 - a. Most of the teams working to find lost dogs are volunteers and they would never ask for money – this includes us
 - b. Most people who find a stray dog will contact the owner if they can, or post a sighting on social media, or hand the dog to a vet.... If someone says they have your dog and ask for money, they likely do not have it, so don’t pay anything unless you can physically see your dog
17. **When your dog is found**, it is important that you approach them with care and give them time to get close to you – especially in cases where the dog has been lost for a few days, they may scared, disorientated, hurt and will need a calm and patient approach