

How to Avoid Losing Your Dog: Safety and Prevention Tips

An ounce of preventions and safety is worth a pound of relief when your dog goes missing. The following safety measures can greatly reduce chances of your dog going missing. Every safety and prevention measure is divided into categories.

Equipment:

- Be sure to purchase the equipment you need **BEFORE** you bring home the new family member. A trip to the store on the way home is extremely stressful, on top of the stress they are already under.
- You will not be able to buy a collar before your dog comes home. You need to know the measurement of the dog's neck to get a proper fit and type. Purchase what is called a Training Lead **BEFORE** you go to retrieve your dog. This kind of leash doesn't need the collar; it makes one of its own so to speak. They are generally used for training and are very handy to have around.
- At the time you go to buy the collar, we highly recommend a Martingale Collar and leash. Fit the size properly. This type of collar leash combination is wonderful to stop the pulling without choking or hurting the dog. After a while, they will understand not to pull and you can go to a regular collar if you like. On YouTube watch this video for assistance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hex3wUqg8Y>

- Retractable leashes **are not** recommended. If dropped, the sound of the handle landing and dragging along can cause your dog to spook and bolt.
- Be sure your dog is Micro-chipped and wearing ID tags. If your dog is considered a flight risk, you may want to consider GPS Collar. Many Breeders and Rescue dogs will come micro-chipped. You have to remember to finish the process online with the issuing company. You need to update your personal information such as your phone number so you can be reached.

Home:

- As a consideration to visitors, set up a "Safe Space" for your new dog. A comfy crate in a quiet room with comforting toys is one idea. Your dog will still be uncomfortable and stressed when new people arrive at your home. Introduce people slowly.

- Do not leave your dog unattended in screened-in areas or where there are open windows screened or not.
- Use of exercise pens and dog gates as secondary boundaries help prevent the dog from running out an open door.
- Leave a long leash on your new dog in case you need to secure her quickly.
- Leaving the training leash on your dog using a loose loop while in the house helps you achieve two other important goals. One, it helps her get use to wearing a leash. Most of your newly adopted dogs probably have never had one on before they got to the sanctuary. Do this for a few weeks. Two, it will help you with training. For example, you do not want your dog on the furniture. Use the leash with a gentle tug leading your dog off the furniture. Make sure you give positive reinforcement with this to help memory learning.

Yard:

- Check for fence damage. Many dogs can scale a 6 foot fence or dig under a fence to escape.
- Electric containment systems **are not** advised. They do not keep predators out and many dogs breach the system with no fear, especially if there is something better on the other side. Always supervise your dog in the yard.
- Inspect for open doors, windows or any escapable area that a person may have left open after leaving your home.

Car:

- Open doors or windows are easy escape routes. Always harness the dog in some manner to prevent escaping. You should never leave your dog unattended in a car however, it does happen in life. You need to stop for a quick errand where your dog is not allowed. **In hot weather, harness the dog and always keep the windows open!** You'll not be able to lock your car so give great consideration to what you are about to do.

Away from Home:

- It is always the safest to keep your dog on a leash when away from home. The outside has many frightening sounds or interesting sights and smells.
- When you bring your new dog home it is best to be as low key as possible. A quiet walk around the house, down the street and into your home. Repeat this for a few weeks until your dog is adjusts to its new home.
- For the first weeks or so, try to avoid taking the dog to frightening and fearful places such as parades, fireworks show or where very loud noise will be occurring. These events are highly stressful for now.

Training:

- Train a rock solid emergency recall using high value treats. Never punish your dog for coming back to you, regardless how long they have been gone. Put your efforts into training the dog not to run away to avoid this situation.
- A great way to bond is with a positive reinforcement Obedience Course.

Recovery:

- **Important!** Missing dogs can easily become disoriented and stressed and not respond to your call or familiar people. **Do Not Chase** your dog; this will only succeed in driving them further away.
- In a case where you can see your dog, be sure to call in a friendly voice, move lower to the ground or walk in the opposite direction.
- Toss high value treats to your dog to bring them closer and closer until you can reach out to them.
- Get something your dog loves and can't resist for enticing her back.
- Leave toys or items your dog likes on the porch, in the garage, deck and yard.
- If your dog has not returned, notify local shelters, veterinary, animal control, local TV stations that have courtesy broadcasts and local law enforcement. If your dog is micro-chipped, someone may bring the dog to one of these locations. Also start getting flyers up immediately that has a picture of your dog on it. You should also add that it has been recently adopted and is most likely disoriented and scared.