

## Lost Dogs Found More Often Than Cats

**New study says that dog owners wait less time than cat owners before searching for their pet.**

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A lost dog is more likely to be reunited with its owner than a lost cat is, according to a new study detailed in the current issue of the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

During the study, conducted in part by staff from Ohio State University, researchers found that in one city in southwestern Ohio, 71 percent of lost dogs were found, compared to just 53 percent of lost cats.

Although Ohio law requires that dogs be licensed, just 41 percent of the lost dogs in the study wore a license at the time of their disappearance. Less than half (48 percent) of dogs had an ID tag or microchip when they got lost.

Cat owners in that area aren't required to identify their pets; 19 percent of lost cats had a tag or microchip at the time they were lost.

More than half of the cats returned on their own, but less than one in 10 dogs did, according to the study.

Lead author, Ohio State Assistant Professor of Veterinary Preventative Medicine Linda Lord, and her colleagues restricted their four-month study to Dayton, Ohio, and the surrounding county.

The researchers interviewed by phone the owners of lost pets who agreed to participate in the study. Collectively, these owners reported the disappearance of 187 dogs and 138 cats. Owners answered a series of questions related to the recovery of their pet, including what kind of methods they used to search for the missing animal.

The researchers also asked the owners if the animal was wearing an ID tag; a rabies tag; a dog license tag; or had a microchip at the time it disappeared. Each shelter scanned animals for microchips.

"Pet owners should think about having a plan in place in case their pet is lost," Lord said. "Both animal shelters and veterinarians can educate their clients and the public about the best course of action to take when a pet is missing."

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