

Study Results About Finding A Lost Cat

There is an American study from 2018 about the probable success of finding a lost cat. The results are very important to share. The researchers interviewed over 1,200 people who had lost their cats not only in America but Canada and elsewhere.

These were people that cared about their cats with over 90% saying they regarded the cat as a family member. 57% had some form of identification on the cat such as a collar or microchip.

Here you go:

1. 33% of lost cats were found within 7 days. 50% within a month, 56% within 2 months. Only 61% were found.
2. 75% of lost cats were found less than 500 m from home.
3. Indoor cats that get lost were found closer to home than indoor/outdoor cats. Usually under 100 m.
4. Less than 2% of cats were found in a shelter. Researchers concluded that "Cats are 13 times more likely to return to owners by means other than a visit to a shelter."
5. Where cats were found:
 - inside my house 4%
 - inside someone else's house 11%
 - inside a public building ie. shelter 2%
 - outside 83%

Most likely places found outside:

- In a yard 20%
 - Waiting outside home/house 19%
 - Found hiding under vegetation/shrubbery 16%
 - Under patio/deck/porch 10%
 - Under house 5%
 - In a garage 4%
 - Storm drain or sewer 4%
 - Under vehicle 3%
 - Outside a building (e.g., apartment complex) 3%
6. **The most effective way to find a cat is through physical search** which "included 'spoke with neighbors and asked them to look or assist in the search for my cat', 'walked around the area at night, using a flashlight (or spotlight)', 'asked and received neighbors' permission to search their property using a slow methodical search' and 'searched my yard or the immediate area'"
 7. **The second most effective way was advertising with fliers around the neighbourhood and using social media.**
 8. One thing that is not mentioned in this study is about the possibility of missing cats being stolen especially if they are friendly. My wife and I had the unfortunate experience of having our friendly male cat who would flop down on the sidewalk in front of people to get petted, taken home by someone. We only got him back through #7 above even though he had a collar and was chipped and licensed.

The study can be found here: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5789300/>