

How to Make an Effective Missing Pet Poster

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Introduction

Losing a pet can be like the end of the world. Of course you want to do anything you can to get your beloved family member back—and signs are an important part of the search process. Since most missing pet signs are not noticeable to the majority of passersby, Missing Pet Partnership, a search-and-rescue company, has come up with the “5+5+55 Rule” to create an effective poster for recovering lost pets. Their belief is that at any typical intersection, you only have five seconds and five words to get your message across to passing drivers. They’ve recovered pets several weeks after they went missing by using this method. The following steps will help you to create your own posters using the “Five words, five seconds rule.”

Instructions

Things You'll Need

- Computer
- 8 1/2 x 11-inch sheets of white paper
- Paste or glue
- Photograph of missing pet

Steps

Step One



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Use the largest font that you can such as size 80 or 90 Arial or Verdana and across the top put the color(s) of your pet. Across the bottom in the same font put the breed(s) or classification of your pet such as Poodle, Tabby or Parakeet. (If it's a mixed breed dog, include the breed/s your dog most resembles.) If your pet had on a collar, another way to do it is to put the color and breed at the top and the color of the collar at the bottom.

Step Two

In the middle, in a smaller font (size 18 to 20) write just a few sentences describing your pet such as coloring, hair length and distinctive markings. Also include the pet's name, whether or not she had on a collar, the date and location she was lost (or last seen) and phone numbers where you can be reached. If your pet is timid, be sure to add that.

Step Three

Paste or glue the best color photograph you have of your pet in the center of the flyer, preferably showing your entire pet (the larger the photo, the better).

Tips & Warnings

- You do not need to write "REWARD LOST DOG" (or CAT) since that will be written on the poster.

How to Make the Poster

Things You'll Need

- Giant 28 x 22-inch fluorescent poster boards (orange or green)
- 2 large black permanent markers (not water soluble)
- Plastic sheet protectors
- Clear packing tape
- Duct tape

Steps

Step One

Turn the poster board vertically and at the top in 5-inch black letters print the word REWARD.

Step Two

At the bottom of the poster in 5-inch black letters print the words LOST DOG (or CAT or BIRD).

Step Three

Secure the sheet protector to the center of the poster with the packing tape.

Step Four

Insert your flyer into the sheet protector and then seal off the top portion with the packing tape to protect it from the weather.

Step Five

Find telephone or street light poles at busy street corners, especially at the major intersections closest to where your pet escaped or was last seen.

Step Six



[Click to enlarge](#)

Hang the posters vertically as far above your head as possible for maximum visibility to passing drivers. Starting at the very top and working your way down place at least four horizontal strips of duct tape across the back of the poster and around the pole to secure it. This will increase the chances of it remaining there for an adequate length of time.

Tips & Warnings

- You can find all of the needed materials at most office supply stores. Some of the items can also be purchased at crafts stores.
- Return periodically to check on your posters.
- Based on research by Pet Detective Kat Albrecht, founder of Missing Pet Partnership, 64 percent of dogs that ran from home in fear of noise (thunder, fireworks) were found within a 3/4-mile radius of home and 20 percent of dogs that ran in fear from unfamiliar surroundings were found within a 3/4-mile radius of where first lost. Another 60 percent of the fearful dogs that ran from unfamiliar surroundings were found within 1 to 5 miles of where first lost.
- Do not include your name and address on the flyer. Missing Pet Partnership doesn't recommend including the reward amount either because you want to encourage animal lovers who don't care about the money to call rather than those looking to make a quick buck. But on the other hand, if it's a large reward, specifying the amount may provide more incentive for people to look for your pet or call if they spot your pet.