

Where Did My Dog Go?

*A Clear, Strategic Path Through
the Nine Missing Dog Scenarios*

Move beyond panic.
Profile the disappearance.
Take targeted action.



By Private Investigator Karin TarQwyn
... the K9PI

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www.howtofindalostdog.org



A Note from Karin

Let me begin by saying — **I’ve been exactly where you are now.**

When my dog Jack went missing, it was the most devastating experience of my life. I was already a private investigator with training in missing people, but nothing could have prepared me for the emotional chaos of losing my own dog. I did what most people do — put up flyers, walked for miles, and searched endlessly. But I didn’t know what had actually happened to Jack.

It took 4½ months, but I finally got the call that ended my search. Jack was found — and his journey was nothing short of miraculous. That experience shaped the course of my life. Since 2005, I’ve worked full-time recovering missing dogs, and every technique in this book comes from the lessons learned during my 20 years of experience searching for and finding thousands of missing dogs.

This guide was created to help you figure out what happened to your missing dog by becoming familiar with the possible scenarios based on your dog’s behavior profile and the missing event.

Should you need additional resources, tools or help you can find many of my techniques outlined in other eBooks. You can also arrange for me to contact you for a one-to-one case review by email or by phone. There is a charge for this service. Let’s get started.

~Karin

karintarqwyn@gmail.com – please reference that you have purchased this eBook when you contact me

Getting Started:

1. **Review “Behavior Basics”** below to accurately determine your dog's behavior profile:
 - o **C4T:** Confident, Calm, Courageous, Cooperative, Trusting
 - o **STARS:** Shy, Timid, Aloof, Reserved, Skittish
2. **Explore the “Nine Scenarios.”** Answer the query questions first. If you answer "yes" to at least half, closely read that scenario.
3. **Identify the scenario(s)** most similar to your dog's characteristics and escape event.
4. **Examine the “Profile” section** of each scenario to confirm if it matches your dog and the environment.
5. **Check “Characteristics, Sightings, and Leads”** to understand typical details of each scenario.
(Example: A skittish dog near a public park probably won’t easily allow rescue by strangers. Trust your intuition.)
6. **Review “Actions, Activities, and Techniques.”** If multiple scenarios apply, cross-reference actions that overlap to streamline your search efforts.

Behavior Basics: Interaction & Reaction

Is Your Dog C4T or STARS?

Understanding how a dog interacts with the world is the first step in building a strategy to recover them when they go missing. We classify dog behavior into two profiles: **C4T** and **STARS**.

What Are C4T and STARS?

- **C4T Dogs** – Confident, Calm, Courageous, Cooperative, and Trusting. These dogs are social and often approach strangers and new situations with ease.
- **STARS Dogs** – Shy, Timid, Aloof, Reserved, and Skittish. These dogs are wary of people and unfamiliar environments, often avoiding contact and fleeing when scared.

Case Study: Pedro (C4T Profile)



Pedro, a five-pound Chihuahua, went missing on the Fourth of July after being startled by fireworks. Friendly and trusting, our case profiling suggested Pedro likely approached someone and was picked up.

Twenty-six days later, after expanding our search radius, his family received a call. A man who had attended the same event said a Chihuahua had run up to him that night. He took the dog home, unaware of the family’s search. Thanks to widespread awareness efforts, Pedro was found—forty miles away.

Lesson: C4T dogs often trust strangers and are picked up quickly. Widen the search radius —especially around events with out-of-town visitors.

Case Study: Sadie (STARS Profile)



Sadie, a small dachshund, disappeared after fireworks startled her. Her owner initially assumed someone picked her up near McDonald's. But there were no sightings—until a man reported seeing a dog like Sadie a mile away, which the owner dismissed as too far.

Once we identified Sadie as a STARS dog, we adjusted our strategy. STARS dogs don't seek people; they hide and roam. We launched a wide-area alert campaign and used local witnesses. On day six, a sighting came from a man five miles away along a river. The family searched that area—and Sadie was found, cautiously following her owner.

Lesson: STARS dogs often travel far and avoid people. Early, wide-area alerts and quiet field searches are key.

Final Thoughts

Recognizing whether a dog is a C4T or STARS helps shape effective recovery plans. Trusting dogs need broad public exposure; shy ones require strategic, low-pressure searches. Avoid assumptions—follow behavior patterns, not wishful thinking.

Introduction to the Nine Scenarios

Understanding How and Why Dogs Go Missing

When a dog goes missing, identifying what likely happened and where it happened is the first step to a successful recovery. Just like in missing person cases, lost dog cases require gathering facts, creating a profile, and building a targeted strategy based on behavior and circumstances.

There are **nine primary scenarios** in which dogs go missing. Profiling a case involves comparing the dog’s behavior with the nature of the escape, environment, and terrain to determine the most likely scenario. Once that’s established, an effective and timely recovery strategy can be deployed.

The Nine Scenarios Under Which Dogs Go Missing

The Dog Recovered by Citizen

The Roaming Dog

The STOLEN Dog

The Dog that Meets with an Accident

The Dog Experiencing Confusion, Illness, or Pain (CIP)

The Dog That Is Intentionally Displaced or Removed

The Dog That Is Accidentally Trapped

The Dog that Meets with a Predator

The Dog That Is Accidentally Transported

THE DOG THAT IS RECOVERED BY CITIZEN



Scenario 1: The Dog Recovered by a Citizen

In this scenario, a dog is picked up by a person—on the street, in a public area, or private property. Most of these recoveries are **Samaritan rescues**, but sometimes result in the **finder keeping the dog**, or **a rescuer rehome**, or **a dog being held for reward**, or even **resale**.

Key Behavioral Profile

Dogs that are:

- Outgoing, trusting, and C4T-type (confident and cooperative)
- Small, fluffy, purebred, or “cute” breeds
- Likely to approach strangers or be carried off easily

Profiling Questions

- Is your dog friendly and social with strangers?
- Has your dog ever been picked up and returned before?
- Could your dog be seen as valuable or desirable?
- Have there been leads involving a vehicle or strangers?

Types of Citizen Recoveries

1. **Samaritan Rescue**
A well-meaning person finds the dog and tries to return it—often limited by lack of ID.
2. **Finder Keeps/Rehome**
If the dog isn’t immediately claimed, the finder may decide to keep the dog or rehome it.
3. **Held for Reward**
The finder waits to be offered compensation to return the pet.
4. **Seized for Resale**
Dogs seen as valuable are sometimes found and offered for resale.

Real Cases

Lola – Samaritan Rescue

Lola, a puppy, vanished while her family worked in the yard. She was found by a kind senior who saw her at a park and took her home. Public awareness signs helped reconnect her with her family three days later.

Willie & Miracle – Finder Keeps

Two Great Danes escaped. Miracle was returned, but Willie was hidden by a resident and later found wandering nearby after a high pressure campaign and awareness strategy.

Hunter & Robin – Seized for Resale

Two French Bulldogs were found and sold before their owner even knew they were missing. Tracking dogs and investigative work led to their recovery nine weeks later.

Priscilla – Held for Reward

This small Yorkshire terrier disappeared shortly after moving to a new area. After a planned media and flyer campaign, a man holding her for ransom called. Negotiations led to her safe return.

Action Plan

To recover a dog in this scenario:

In the First 48 Hours

- Conduct a **ground-zero search**.
- Put up **clear, bold signs** (11x17 laminated preferred).
- Call **emergency vets** and visit **shelters** in person.
- Notify **breed-specific rescues** if applicable.

Ongoing Strategy

- Keep a **sightings journal**.
- Interview **neighbors and witnesses**.
- Use **photo ID cards** to confirm sightings.
- Implement a **community-awareness campaign** using:
 - Signs at escape point and along major routes
 - Flyers, newspaper ads, and local websites
 - Posts on Facebook, Instagram, and pet-alert pages

Advanced Tactics

- Hire a **tracking dog team** to pinpoint pickup locations.
- Use scent trails to refine search and campaign focus.

Final Thoughts

A “found by citizen” case depends heavily on public awareness. The more people who know your dog is missing, the faster the recovery. Stay calm, act quickly, and adapt your approach as information comes in.

THE ROAMING DOG



The Roaming Dog

A roaming dog is one that is missing and wandering at large—often in unfamiliar territory and not able to return home without assistance.

Is Your Dog Roaming?

Ask yourself the following:

- Is your dog shy, timid, aloof, reserved, or skittish (STARS behavior)?
- Does your dog avoid strangers or bolt when scared?
- Is your dog missing in an unfamiliar area?
- Has your dog escaped before? Did only you manage to recover them?
- Was the escape caused by trauma or stress?
- Is your dog a breed prone to roaming (e.g., German Shepherds, Huskies, Beagles, Hounds, Terriers, Shiba Inu, Mini Aussie, Mini Doodle)?
- Have there been multiple sightings?
- Was your dog previously stray or feral?

Typical Roaming Dog Profile

- Dogs with STARS traits or reactivity.
- Dogs recently displaced (moved, traveling, with a sitter, or boarded).
- Breeds from herding, hound, and sporting groups more commonly roam.
- Former feral or stray dogs may revert to roaming.
- Males often remain at large longer than females, but females may travel farther depending on breed or circumstance.
- Areas with open space, woods, trails, dirt roads or water encourage roaming behavior.
- Even well-loved dogs may run and survive surprisingly well on their own.

Sighting Patterns

- Initial sightings are common but may fade as the dog moves beyond search zones.
- Many owners underestimate how far a roaming dog can travel.
- Expand your search area beyond what seems "logical."
- Some dogs settle into a routine; others remain nomadic.
- Water is a key survival resource—look near lakes, creeks, or areas with dumpsters or outdoor food sources.
- Most dogs are active and seen at dawn or dusk.
- Dogs may appear happy, even thriving—this is normal.
- Few roaming dogs return home on their own.



Case Study: Mishka

Mishka, a shy Border Collie mix, escaped from a boarding facility. Despite being hit by a car, she survived and roamed for 10 days. She ignored people and food, but when her owner arrived and called softly, Mishka ran straight into her arms. Her motivation wasn't food—it was her human.

How to Find a Roaming Dog

Steps to Recovery:

1. Raise awareness in your community immediately.
2. Maintain visibility through signs, flyers, and social media.
3. Respond quickly to sightings (“go sees”).
4. Track confirmed sightings and adjust your strategy accordingly.

Emotional Realities: Roaming behavior may feel like betrayal, but it isn't personal. Even loving dogs may not recognize or approach their owners. Don't anthropomorphize—your dog's instincts are canine, not human. Prepare emotionally for your dog to run if seen.

Checklist: Actions to Take

Initial Steps

- Follow first 48-hour protocols (see Section 3).
- Search “ground zero” (escape point) unless confirmed sightings exist elsewhere.

Ongoing Strategy

- Keep a sightings journal.
- Read how *not* to approach your dog.
- Gather and question witnesses.
- Use a photo ID lineup to confirm sightings.
- Consider hiring a professional tracker with experience.
- Contact local shelters, vet clinics, and emergency hospitals.

Community Awareness

- Use signs and flyers near escape and sighting areas.
- Add personal touches to flyers (e.g., “Help Ringo Get Home”).
- Use car magnets, social media, and lost-pet platforms.
- Engage local media, roaming dog stories often gain attention.

Attraction & Capture

- Use a magnet dog or familiar animal.
- Set up feeding and comfort stations.
- Monitor frequent sighting locations.
- Use humane or enclosure traps if needed.

Approaching (or Not Approaching) a Roaming Dog

Important Considerations

- Your dog may not respond normally when roaming. Fear-driven, feral instincts may cause her to flee even from you. This is common—do not take this personally.

If Missing Less Than 48 Hours (Non-Shy Dogs):

1. **Play Approach:** Move backward, encouraging calmly. Skip this if dog is shy.
2. **Kneeling Calm:** Drop gently to your knees, speak softly. Wait.
3. **Pretend Eating:** Mimic eating something tasty.
4. **Submission:** Lie quietly on your back, treats on chest. Wait patiently.
5. **Do Not Chase:** Note dog's direction if she flees; avoid pursuit.

If Missing More Than 48 Hours:

- Assume dog will not approach normally.
- Do not make direct eye contact; look at ground to dog’s side.
- Stay calm and relaxed; drop slowly to knees and speak softly.
- Pretend eating treats; if no approach, calmly lie back in submissive posture with treats.
- Be patient; your dog may take significant time to approach.
- **Avoid Chasing:** Sit quietly, read aloud, toss occasional treats if dog reappears.

Gaining Control When Dog Approaches:

- **Slow Movements:** Avoid sudden moves or lunging.
- **Use Treats:** Offer small, smelly treats (hot dogs, cheese). Use your less dominant hand.
- Gradually move treats closer across your body to gently reach collar with dominant hand.
- Ensure dog accepts at least ten treats before attempting control.
- If dog retreats, repeat patiently without sudden moves.

If Dog Does Not Approach:

- Shift to attraction, conditioning, surveillance, and capture methods. Stay patient, you can do this.

THE STOLEN DOG



The Stolen Dog: Understanding, Investigating, and Recovering

Overview

While many missing dogs are not stolen, true dog thefts have risen over the past decade. Knowing the signs, risks, and correct response can make all the difference.

Was Your Dog Stolen?

Ask yourself:

- Is your dog missing without sightings or clues?
- Would your dog allow a stranger to approach?
- Is your dog a high-risk breed (e.g., Yorkshire Terrier, French Bulldog, Afghan Hound, Pug, Cane Corso, Pit Bull)?
- Were there reports of suspicious activity recently?
- Did your dog disappear from a rural area or a location with other missing pets?
- Was your dog tied out or behind a chain-link fence?
- Was theft evidence found, like a cut lock or a burglary?

Key motives for dog theft:

- Resale for profit
- Personal interest or emotional attachment
- Revenge against the owner

Important legal note:

Dogs stolen from private property are considered stolen property. Dogs off-leash in public are legally "stray," and laws vary by state.

Stolen Dog Risk Profile

- Outgoing, rare, small, or exotic-looking dogs are most at risk.
- Dogs visible from public spaces or tied out are more vulnerable.
- Corner lots and rural areas have higher theft risk.
- Areas with active drug trades report more stolen dogs.

Breeds often targeted:

Yorkshire Terriers, English Bulldogs, French Bulldogs, Afghan Hounds, Pugs, designer breeds, hunting dogs, Cane Corsos, Pit Bulls

Signs Your Dog May Have Been Stolen

- No signs of escape
- Suspicious activity nearby
- Previous threats or grievances against the owner
- Dog's collar removed and left behind
- No sightings after disappearance

Important:

Stolen dogs are often later abandoned, so maintain shelter checks and community outreach.



Case Study: Roscoe

Roscoe, a beagle, was stolen from his fenced yard. His tether was neatly coiled, and his collar clipped to the gate—a clear sign of theft. Investigation linked the incident to a disgruntled former student of Roscoe's owner's husband. Police involvement and strategic calls to the suspect's family led to Roscoe being abandoned near a family members workplace and recovered safely.

What To Do If You Suspect Theft

- 1. **File a Police Report Immediately**
 - Gather evidence (e.g., cut locks, eyewitness reports).
 - Stay polite but persistent with law enforcement.
 - 2. **Hire a Licensed Private Investigator**
 - Ensure they specialize in stolen property recovery.
 - Set a clear budget and timeline.
 - 3. **Launch a Community Awareness Campaign**
 - Use signs, flyers, newspaper ads, and social media posts.
 - Avoid labelling your dog as "stolen" publicly; say "missing" to encourage more help.
 - 4. **Be Strategic and Persistent**
 - Keep sightings log.
 - Follow up on any leads cautiously.
 - Do not personally confront potential suspects; involve police.
-

Final Notes

- Even if initially suspected stolen, all lost-dog protocols continue.
- Shelters, rescues, and community members are critical resources.

THE DOG THAT MEETS WITH AN ACCIDENT



The Dog That Meets with an Accident

How to Understand, Search for, and Recover Your Missing Dog After an Accident

Overview This scenario covers dogs who go missing after an accident — most commonly a car collision, but it can include any serious injury or fatal event.

Profiling Questions

Ask yourself:

- Did your dog disappear at night?
- Were there sounds of tires screeching, a crash, or a yelp?
- Does your dog have shy, skittish, or reserved (STARS) behavior?
- Are there nearby hazards: toxic areas, pesticides, auto repair shops (antifreeze danger), steep cliffs, or bodies of water?
- Could your dog have interacted with poisonous snakes, rodents, or toxic plants?
- Was there a traumatic event like a car crash when your dog went missing?

Common Risk Factors

Dogs are more vulnerable if:

- They escaped near busy roads or highways.
- They are curious about rodents, reptiles, or plants.
- They are not finicky eaters (more likely to ingest toxins).
- They are poor swimmers or bolt when frightened.
- Dangerous terrain (steep cliffs, fast-moving water) is nearby.

Typical Signs and Leads

- No sightings immediately after disappearance.
- Tire screeches or stopped cars were reported.
- Nearby use of pesticides, poisons, or toxic chemicals.
- Lakes, rivers, or frozen water sources are nearby.
- Unique events occurred the day the dog went missing.
- Reports of “dog haters” or suspicious neighbors.



Case Study: Rudy

Rudy, a beloved family dog, escaped through an office door and ran toward a highway. Witnesses believe he was hit by a car after crossing busy streets. Injured and terrified, Rudy evaded capture for days. Through targeted poster campaigns and witness follow-up, Rudy was finally found — dehydrated and with a broken femur. Thanks to persistence, strategic outreach, and the help of a private investigator, Rudy was reunited with his family and made a full recovery.

From Rudy’s Family:

"If it weren’t for the right strategy and encouragement, we wouldn’t have Rudy back today. Never give up!"

Key Actions to Take

- **First Response:** Immediate home search and neighborhood canvassing.
- **Witness Development:** Talk to people nearby for information about accidents or sightings.
- **Tracking Services:** Hire professional trackers quickly if injury is suspected.
- **Medical Checks:** Contact emergency clinics, hospitals, and animal shelters.
- **Grid Search:** Methodically search nearby areas, paying attention to danger zones.

- **Check Dead Animal Removal:** Confirm if any found animals match your dog.
- **Signage and Flyers:** Distribute in high-traffic and high-visibility locations, especially accident areas.

Hope, Action, and Persistence

Recovery is possible — even against difficult odds. With the right knowledge, quick action, and unrelenting persistence, many dogs have returned home safely. Never lose hope!

The Dog Experiencing Confusion, Illness, or Pain



The Dog Experiencing Confusion, Illness, or Pain (CIP)

Dogs experiencing confusion, illness, or pain (CIP) may wander, hide, collapse, or rest far from home. They often seek quiet places, not to die, but to avoid disturbance. Immediate action is crucial, as these dogs may need medical attention.

Key Indicators for CIP

You do **not** need "yes" answers to most questions to consider this scenario. If the dog's behavior changed before disappearing, CIP is possible.

Ask yourself:

- Was my dog behaving abnormally before vanishing?
- Recently started or changed medication?
- Experienced an accident?
- In an unfamiliar area?
- Tends to hide when scared?
- Facing extreme heat?
- Diagnosed with an illness or disease?
- Disappeared without a trace?
- Missing near woods, fields, or heavy cover?
- Are there good hiding spots nearby?

Most at risk: Older dogs, shy dogs, recently treated or medicated dogs, or those with prior injuries (especially head injuries).

Profile of a Dog Missing Due to CIP

- Known illness or new medication.
- Hides when feeling unwell or frightened.
- Low tolerance for discomfort.
- Recently had surgery or anesthesia.
- History of “bolt and hide” behavior.
- Recent behavior or elimination changes.
- Disappeared suddenly without clear explanation.

Dogs in this scenario typically leave to find a quiet spot. Unlike common belief, they are not "going off to die," but to recover undisturbed.

Search Characteristics and Signs

- May run until exhaustion, then collapse.
- Travel distances vary; scared dogs may go further.
- Sick dogs typically stay closer.
- Seen lying still in public or remote areas.
- Signs like vomit, blood, or body fluids may be found.
- May seek cool, sheltered places if the weather is hot.
- Often silent—won't bark or whimper much.

Case Study: Angelo’s Story

Angelo, a smooth-coated Collie, vanished after a bad reaction to flea medication. Despite being a well-loved, trained family dog, he wandered into deep woods and was missing for 48 hours.

A professional tracking team used scent-specific K9s to follow Angelo’s trail through woods and train tracks. Against all odds, Angelo was found alive by a neighbor, dazed but unharmed.

His family’s story shows how illness can change even a dog’s dependable behavior and how professional help, persistence, and community support can lead to a joyful reunion.

Immediate Actions to Take

1. **Activate first-response protocol immediately**
2. **Search the escape point and nearby areas carefully.**
3. **Talk to neighbors and witnesses.** Mention your pet may be sick or hiding.
4. **Contact emergency vets and animal hospitals.**
5. **Start a neighborhood grid search, especially for older or ill pets.**
6. **Conduct a “Tiger Line” ground search (close to ground level).**
7. **Check all local shelters (including injured stray sections).**
8. **Post signs heavily around the last known location and all sightings.**
9. **Hand out flyers during your search.**
10. **Use spotlights for night searches (eye shine detection).**
11. **Consider hiring a professional tracking team with scent-specific K9s**

The Dog That is Intentionally Displaced or Removed



The Dog That Is Intentionally Displaced or Removed

Some dogs are unable to return home because they have been intentionally removed from the area. This can happen if a neighbor traps and relocates the dog, animal control picks it up, someone collects the dog as a stray, or even if a family member secretly removes it.

Profiling Questions

Consider these factors:

- Is the dog outgoing and friendly with strangers?
- Has the dog previously been returned by someone?
- Are there past complaints about the dog?
- Is the dog of a breed some may find intimidating?
- Was the dog dirty, tethered, or roaming?
- Are other pets missing nearby?
- Are there strained relationships with family or neighbors?

Profile Traits

- Barking, roaming, or fence-jumping dogs.
- Outdoor dogs with frequent escapes.
- Dogs considered dangerous by neighbors.
- Pets suspected of being neglected (rightly or wrongly).
- Areas with recent reports of missing pets.
- Neighbors particular about landscaping or hostile toward animals.
- Rarely, areas with abusive adolescents.

Signs of Intentional Displacement

- Pet who usually returns is now missing.
- No local sightings after the disappearance.
- Animal control activity reported nearby.
- Witnesses mention possible cat/dog haters.
- Indifference or dismissal from neighbors or family.

Case Study: Rocky

Rocky, a Jack Russell terrier, disappeared when a new utility worker accidentally left the gate open. Trained tracking dogs followed Rocky’s scent, which led not only through the neighborhood but also down major streets. It turned out Animal Control had picked him up—his scent escaping through the truck’s vents. Thanks to public signs and a witness, Rocky’s path was traced. This case highlights the importance of trusting trained tracking dogs and acting fast.

Action Plan

- **First Response:** Immediate search and alerts.
 - **Witness Development:** Focus on local neighbors and suspicious individuals.
 - **Search & Rescue:** Check shelters (local and distant), call emergency vets.
 - **Signage:** Post large, visible signs at escape point and key intersections.
 - **Flyers:** Distribute to locals without implying theft.
 - **Social Media:** Share the dog’s story widely without accusations.
-

THE DOG THAT IS ACCIDENTALLY TRAPPED



The Dog That Is Accidentally Trapped

Sometimes a lost pet isn’t running free — they’re stuck and unable to return. This scenario occurs when a dog accidentally wanders into a dangerous or confining situation and becomes trapped.

Profiling a Dog That May Be Trapped

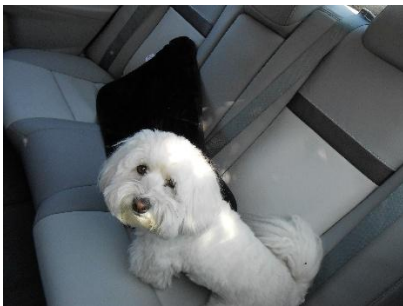
Key factors to consider:

- Has outdoor access and loves to explore.
- Went missing with a leash, rope, or line attached.
- Has a history of curiosity or getting stuck.
- Disappeared near garages, sheds, construction zones, storm drains, or wooded areas.
- May have vanished after neighbors opened and later closed doors or sheds.
- Long-haired breeds and low-pain tolerance increase risk.
- Lives near areas with attractive nuisances: briar patches, drainage ditches, basements, or abandoned structures.

Common Signs

- A normally outdoor-savvy dog doesn’t return home.
 - No sightings after the first day.
 - Doors or work areas were open at time of disappearance.
 - Neighbors moved, cleaned garages, or completed yard work recently.
 - A sudden silence from a normally responsive pet.
-

Case Study: Abby



Abby, a curious Coton de Tulear, bolted out a door while staying with friends. Despite massive search efforts with helicopters, cameras, and volunteers, Abby remained missing for 11 days. A scent-tracking dog named Cade eventually traced her to a neighbor’s basement — a hidden space missed by even heat-sensing equipment. Abby had fallen into a steep pit-like yard and wandered into the basement garage. She made no sound, highlighting how easily a trapped dog can be missed even during an intensive search.

Lesson: Trapped pets often stay silent and hidden. Persistence and the use of scent-tracking dogs can be essential.

Immediate Actions to Take

- Follow a first-response protocol immediately after disappearance.
- Conduct a thorough "ground-zero" search around the escape point.
- Search all neighboring properties — especially garages, sheds, basements, decks, and crawlspaces.
- Interview neighbors and local businesses.
- Pay attention to any new construction, moving activity, or open structures.
- Post signs and distribute flyers in the immediate and surrounding areas.
- Contact shelters, emergency vet hospitals, and check for possible injuries.
- Hire a professional tracker if possible.

Important Tip: Always use motivators (squeaky toys, favorite sounds) when searching for a possibly trapped dog — but expect silence from the pet.

THE DOG THAT MEETS WITH A PREDATOR



The Dog That Meets with a Predator

Introduction

Any pet can encounter predators. However, dogs living in areas with high wildlife activity are especially vulnerable. Awareness is key to prevention and search strategies.

Profiling a Predator-Related Disappearance

Consider these factors:

- Presence of predators (coyotes, foxes, owls, hawks, mountain lions).
- Dog vanished without sightings.
- Missing early morning, late afternoon, or at night.
- Small size (under 20 pounds).
- Predominantly white coloring.
- Area history of missing pets.
- Rural, wooded, or greenbelt areas.
- Older, ill, or physically compromised pet.
- Sudden bolting into wilderness.
- Familiar with territory, typically returns home.

Predator encounters are no longer confined to remote areas. Urban expansion forces wildlife, especially coyotes, into suburban and even urban spaces.

Common Predators

- **Coyotes** (primary threat across the U.S.)
- Bobcats, foxes, mountain lions, bears, fisher cats.
- Birds of prey (owls, hawks, eagles) — rarer, but possible for very small pets.

Risk Profile

- Dogs under twenty pounds (but not exclusively).
- White-coated pets are more visible.
- Older, sick, injured, or fearful pets are easier targets.
- Pets near wilderness, storm drains, or greenbelts.

Typical Characteristics of Predator-Related Loss

- Escape point near nature access.
- Missing during nighttime or twilight hours.
- Longer-than-usual outdoor time.
- No or minimal sightings after disappearance.
- Signs of predators in the area — even if unseen.

Predator activity spikes during winter food shortages and spring breeding seasons.



Case Study 1: Yoshi

After a major storm in Springfield, Missouri, Yoshi, a six-pound Pomeranian, went missing. Our K9 tracking team followed his scent to a river, where it appeared he encountered a fox. No remains were found, but days later, Yoshi was discovered alive under a bridge, severely injured by a fox but recoverable.



Thanks to continued signage and community alertness, Yoshi was rescued and recovered.



Case Study 2: Princess

Princess, a Yorkshire Terrier, disappeared outside her home in a heavily wooded Dallas neighborhood. Tracking dogs followed her scent to a sudden end deep in the woods. Further investigation found tufts of fur and blood — indicators of a predator attack, likely by a coyote. Surveillance footage confirmed she had run toward the woods after hearing a noise. The case brought tragic closure for her family.

Actions and Activities to Pursue

- Initiate immediate search and first-response activities.
- Search ground zero: escape point and surroundings.
- Conduct physical searches at knee-level height.
- Canvas area: develop witnesses and leads.
- Contact local emergency vets and animal hospitals.
- Notify shelters and humane societies.
- Post signs and distribute flyers promptly.
- Consider hiring professional K9 tracking teams experienced with predator scenarios.

The Dog that is Accidentally Transported



The Dog That Is Accidentally Transported

Some dogs disappear not because they ran off — but because they were unknowingly **carried away**. Curious pets can climb into open vehicles, trailers, or moving vans... and end up miles from home. In rare cases, a dog may be inside a car when it's stolen and later let loose far from where it began.

Profiling Query

Ask these questions to assess if this scenario fits:

- Does your dog love car rides?
- Would they jump into an unknown vehicle?
- Was the weather warm and windows down?
- Were there service or construction vehicles nearby?
- Was anyone moving in or out of the area?
- Are there confirmed sightings miles away without explanation?

This is a **rare scenario** — but one to consider if your dog is outgoing, adventurous, and disappears without local sightings.

Common Profile Traits

- Outgoing, curious temperament
 - Frequent outdoor access
 - Known to jump into open cars or trucks
 - Lives near high-traffic areas (freight, trains, commercial vehicles)
 - Van doors or work trucks were open nearby
 - Warm weather, windows down
-

Sightings & Clues

- **No local sightings**, or sightings far from home
 - Witness recalls a **dog jumping into a vehicle**
 - A call comes in: “This dog just showed up here.”
 - Service companies were present at time of disappearance
 - Sightings are ignored because “it couldn’t be our dog that far away”
-

Case Study: Ricky

Ricky, a small Maltese mix, was left crated in his family’s car. While they dined, the car was stolen — and Ricky vanished. His crate and leash were found six miles away in an alley, but Ricky was never recovered.

The suspects admitted to letting him out once they realized he was onboard, but changed their stories repeatedly. No one was charged. The family focused their efforts on finding Ricky, not the car, but media attention drew in inexperienced help that ultimately led nowhere.

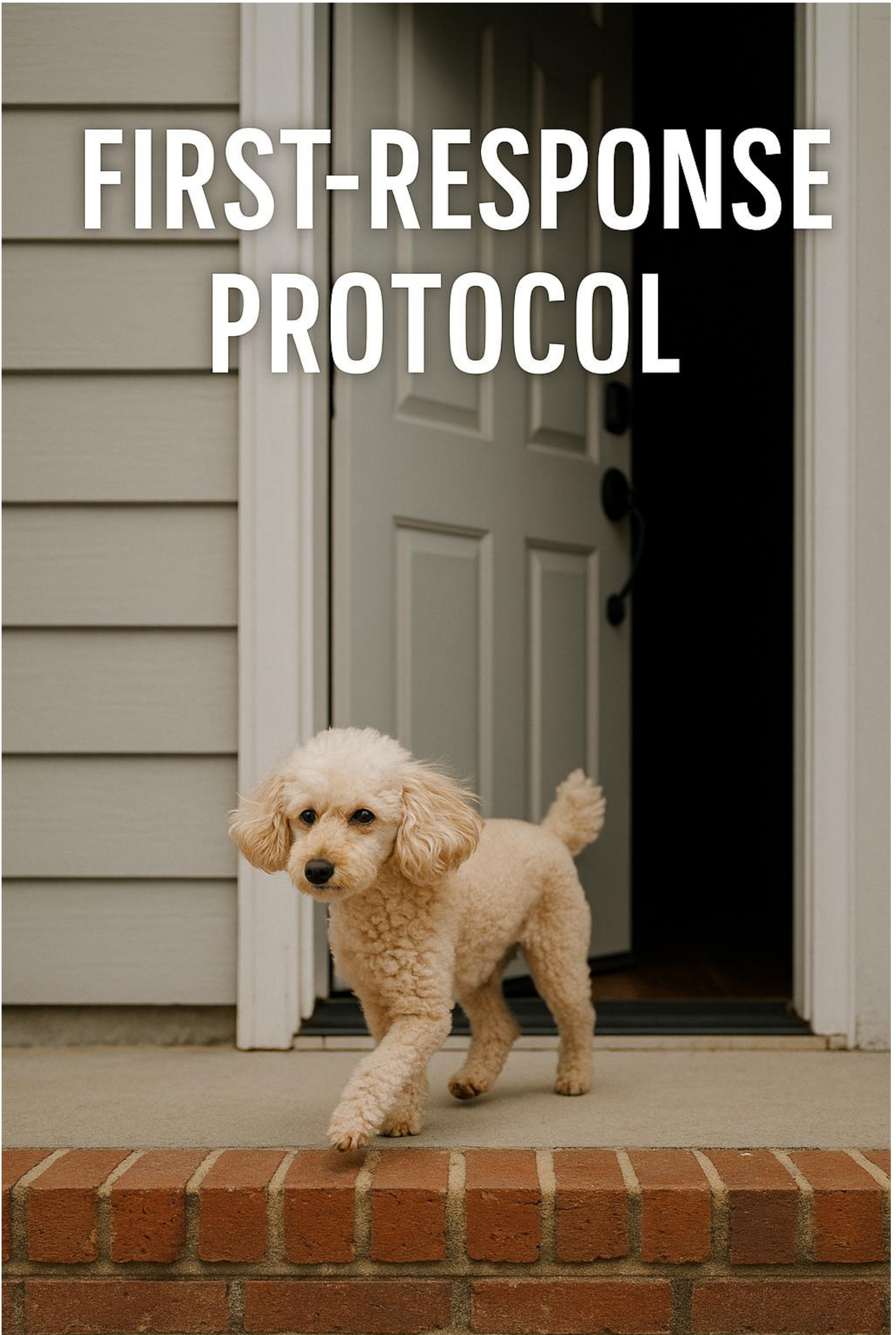
If trained professionals had deployed with tracking K9s early on, areas of interest could have been scanned for scent. But by then, it was too late. Ricky was lost in the shuffle — a victim of rare but tragic accidental transport.

Actions & Activities

- **Start with First-Response Protocol**
- **Conduct Ground-Zero search**
- **Develop witnesses** — ask about vehicles and movement in the area
- **Check shelters and emergency vets**
- **Signage** — include vehicle info if relevant, post near service company offices
- **Flyers** — hand-deliver and ask directly: “Did you see this dog or vehicle?”
- **Social media** — describe timeline and vehicle connection, if known
- **Newspaper ad** — dates, location, vehicle description
- **Hire a professional with tracking dogs** — trained K9s can detect if your dog was present in areas or vehicles

Note: If you believe your dog was transported, time is critical. These pets are often dumped or jump out far from home and generally cannot find their way back.

FIRST-RESPONSE PROTOCOL



First-Response Protocol

When your dog goes missing, your first hours are critical. Whether due to a door left open or a spooked reaction, it’s time to act—quickly and methodically.

1. Stay Calm, Act Fast

- Take a deep breath. Then **start your search immediately**.
 - Studies show quick, organized action leads to higher recovery rates.
-

2. Ground-Zero Property Search

Before you assume your pet is gone, search your property:

- Check the house, yard, garage, sheds, under furniture, in closets, behind appliances.
 - Injured or sick pets tend to hide silently—check carefully and thoroughly.
-

3. Prepare Essentials for Your Search

Have someone gather:

- A **clear photo** of your dog
 - 20 cards or notes with your **24/7 phone number** + “LOST DOG”
 - **Leash, carrier**, treats, whistle, squeaky toy
 - A strong-smelling **food motivator** (hot dogs, cheese, leftovers)
 - If your dog is STARS, bring another dog your missing dog knows and likes
-

4. Call in Support

- Contact supportive **friends and neighbors** to help search.
 - Avoid those who downplay your concern, you need focus and encouragement.
-

5. Make It Easy for Your Dog to Return

- Leave someone at the **point of escape** or your home.
 - No one available? Leave an open **gate, crate, or car door**.
 - You can also leave **an article of clothing** or food with a familiar scent.
-

6. Begin the Search

- If you **saw the direction** your dog ran, go that way.
 - If not, and your pet has escaped before, go where they went last time.
 - No idea? Start at the escape point and head **right**—statistically, dogs turn right more often.
-

7. If It’s Been Over an Hour

- Begin a **slow driving search** with another person if possible.
 - One drives, the other watches and stops to ask people:
“*Have you seen this dog?*” (Show photo, leave phone number card.)
 - Continue gathering sightings and clues.
-

8. No Sightings? Return and Reassess

- After 1 hour with no leads, go back to the **escape point**.
- Begin building a wider search plan:

- Witness interviews
- Public awareness efforts
- Targeted signage
- Flyers and social media outreach

9. Ground-Zero Search

Even if it seems unlikely, thoroughly re-search your property:

- Room-by-room, left to right.
- Check under furniture, in cabinets, behind washers, in attics, under decks.
- Look high and low—even **swimming pools, sheds, filter systems**.
- Pets may be silent even if stuck or injured.

Tip: Memory is unreliable in panic. What feels impossible (e.g., a pet slipping out during trash duty) can happen unnoticed.

Summary: Early action saves lives. Stay calm. Be persistent. Start with your home, organize your search, and follow sightings. If needed, adjust your plan and expand your reach.

Sightings & Leads

Today’s Date: _____

Witness Name		Witness Phone #	
Type of Call/Lead	Lead Sighting Supporter	Email	
Date of Sighting		Time of Sighting	
Location of Sighting		Intersections/Cross Streets	
Where did you see the dog? What are the cross streets? Are there any landmarks? Other information about location.		Location Information	
When did you see the dog? What time was it when you saw the dog? Was it dark or light outside? Other information about date and time.		Time & Date Information	
What was the dog doing when you saw him/her? Was it walking, trotting, running, eating, lying down or other? In which direction did the dog go? Other information about the dog’s activity.		Dog’s Direction of Travel & Actions	
Can you describe the dog you saw? Can you describe the color or markings? Did you notice (unique feature) like tail, ears, etc? If you were standing next to the dog, where would it come to on your leg? What would you guess the dog you saw weighed? Did you notice a collar or ID?		Description of Dog that was Seen	
The “Go See” Did you go to see if this was your dog?		Disposition:	
Notes & Other Information:			