

# Cat found – What to do

## Tips on how to proceed



**You found a cat and think it might have run away, be a stray or even need help?**

**The following checklist will help you:**

1. Take one or more **photos** of the cat with your smartphone.
2. Check if the cat wears a **collar** with an address. Maybe the cat lives nearby.
3. If there is no address, ask around in your **neighborhood**; maybe somebody knows the cat.
4. If nobody recognizes the cat, check the **Missing Cats section** at Schweizerische Tiermeldezentrale STMZ at [www.stmz.ch](http://www.stmz.ch) (database for missing and found cats, available in German, French and Italian). Since cats can sometimes run far, set the search radius to a minimum of 10 kilometers.
5. If there is no corresponding Missing Cat report on the database, check whether the cat has a **microchip**. If you do not have access to a chip reader, ask an animal welfare organization, the police, a veterinarian or an animal shelter to check the cat for a microchip.
6. If the cat has a microchip, contact the registered cat owner. If the cat does not have a microchip, register a **Found Cat report** (Gefundene Katzen / Chats trouvés / Gatti ritrovati) at Schweizerische Tiermeldezentrale STMZ at [www.stmz.ch](http://www.stmz.ch). STMZ automatically forwards all Found Cat reports to the responsible cantonal reporting office and thus fulfills the legal reporting obligation in accordance with article 720a of the Swiss Civil Code. Share the Found Cat report on social media.
7. Print the **Found Cat report** and post it around the area.
8. Put a **paper collar** on the cat with your phone number and a note asking the owner to get in touch with you. If the cat still wears the collar after a few days, it is safe to assume that it is a stray or missing cat. The paper should easily tear under stress.
9. Send the Found Cat poster to all **veterinary practices** in the wider area.
10. If you have no possibility to take the cat in temporarily, contact a local **animal shelter**.
11. If the cat is sick or injured, do not wait any longer and immediately take it to a veterinarian or ask an animal welfare organization to take care of the animal.

### What does Swiss law say?

- In Switzerland, there is **no obligation to microchip a cat**. As a result, many cats have no microchip.
- The Swiss Civil Code regulates the **discovery, safekeeping, surrender and acquisition of ownership** under articles 720a ff.
- The finder of an animal must **inform** the owner **of the find**. If the owner is unknown, the finder must report the find. This duty is fulfilled when reporting the find to STMZ (see 6. above)
- The legal «**retention period**» for pets is **two months**. Only then does ownership pass to the finder.



**Because every life matters!**