

## Tips to Find a Lost Ferret

If your ferret escapes there are a number of strategies you can try to increase your chances of having them return safely.

When out in the big world by themselves, ferrets are usually pretty friendly and may freely approach people however, not all people will want to help your ferret while others may decide to keep their new find. For these reasons it is extremely important that you act quickly.

The search is on...

1. Check your house or apartment very carefully making sure that you enlist other people to help as different people notice different things. Search in every nook and cranny and most definitely in the back of drawers, cupboards, clothing on the ground, under the couch, etc. Once you have done this, do it again. The place you neglect and reckon there is no way they would be able to hide in will be the place your ferret turns up.
2. Thoroughly search your yard and neighborhood, again looking in every nook and cranny.
3. Go door to door so all of your neighbors know that you have lost a ferret. Describe your ferret, or better yet, show them a picture, and make sure you mention the ferret's demeanor. Notify your mailman, paperboy, kids, and anyone else you can think of that is outside on a daily basis.
4. Create a lost ferret poster with your phone number, a color picture, and detailed information about your ferret such as name, color, and distinguishing markings and offer a reward. Do not quote an amount, as people may not think the offer is worth the effort. If your ferret is on any type of medication make sure to mention this on the poster as well. Hang the poster at bus stops, pet stores, grocery stores, convenience stores, schools, churches, community centers, and on lampposts in the area. You can download a free lost ferret poster from the FRES website at [www.ferrets.ca](http://www.ferrets.ca). You simply have to insert your ferret's information and print it off.
5. Contact local animal shelters, ferret rescue organizations, local animal services, and veterinary clinics and advise them that you have lost your ferret and to contact you if any information becomes available. You should also provide each organization with a copy of your lost ferret poster.
6. Place a lost pet ad in your local newspapers, with your local radio stations, and any TV stations that feature lost pets.



7. Leave a small pet carrier with a familiar blanket, food, and water as ferrets have an extremely developed sense of smell; if they are in the area this may help attract them back towards your residence. A cardboard box with a small hole cut in the side may even be a better option so that cats can't take over your cozy ferret refuge. You can also act on the ferret's keen sense of smell by leaving a trail of your ferret's favourite treats like Ferretone or raisins near your house and for multiple ferret owners, searching for your lost ferret with another one of your ferret's may prove successful.
8. Do not stop your search after only a few days, as there is always hope. Ferrets will amaze you and their resilience can keep them alive in the wild for longer than one can imagine.

There are some things you can do to prevent your ferret from escaping in the first place, which can be easier said than done since ferrets are extremely curious and fearless, a combination that screams adventure!

To prevent a ferret's escape, ferretproof your home, this is the *ongoing* process of making your home safe for ferrets. For more information on how to ferretproof, check out our Ferretproofing Fact Sheet or contact FRES.

The most common routes of escape from your home are:

- Pushing out a window or door screen
- Pushing open a door that isn't shut tight
- Crawling out of a dryer vent
- Hiding in a purse, backpack, or garbage can
- Squirring loose from a harness or leash
- Jumping from, or falling off of a balcony

You can also try to train your ferrets to respond to a squeaky toy, the shake of a raisin can, or some other noise device, which can definitely aid in recovering a lost ferret within their hearing distance. For deaf ferrets you can train them to respond to a strobe light.

Lastly, having tags and/or a harness for your ferret will let everyone know that it is a pet rather than a wild animal and perhaps won't be so hesitant to approach your ferret.

