



# Last Chance Dog Training

## It only Takes a Minute

The winter of 2003 was unforgettable! I will remember the snow and ice for a long time to come. Sadly I will also remember the unusual number of calls I got from owners who lost their dogs. The pets got out of the yard or the houses and they were never seen again.

Most people are under the impression that a dog can always find their way home. Unfortunately that is only true if the dog has the experience running loose and learning the territory. Most dogs today learn their yard and that's it. So when they happen to get out, they have no idea where they are, even a block from their home. Usually when a dog gets lost it will travel in ever widening circles looking for something familiar.

For a dog to stray into unfamiliar territory only takes a minute in today's world. Almost everyone who called me said that they only left the dog in the yard for a minute or the gate or door was only open for a minute! Well, it only takes a minute. When I get the call the owners usually didn't realize the dog was missing for half an hour to an hour, plenty of time for the dog to travel a mile or more from home. Unfortunately if you don't find the dog in the first 24 hours your chances go way down of seeing them again.

The really sad part of these stories was that none of these dogs had any form of I D. When a dog is found with no I D there is very little one can do, so the well meaning person will turn the dog loose in the hopes that they will find their way home. Most people won't take a stray dog into their home but they will call a number on a collar if there is one. None of these dogs had any form of I D.

There are many ways to identify your pet. The most traditional is a tag on the collar. Another is to have them tattooed with some identifying number. Another very simple way is the flat nylon collar with your name and number written on it with indelible ink. You may even choose to go high tech and get an electronic chip implanted in your dog. Many shelters are now equipped with the scanners that will trace the dog back to you through that chip. Your local shelter can provide you with more information about obtaining this service.

So, whichever method you choose, put some I D on your pet. **It only takes a minute.**

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