

Helping an Animal You've Seen Online

If you want to help a particular animal advertised for adoption on Facebook, other social media, or email cross-posts, there are several actions you can take.

Adopt or foster

The most direct way to save the animal, of course, is to offer to adopt or foster the pet. If the animal is some distance from you, contact the shelter or rescue directly and ask if you are eligible to adopt or foster. Some groups have a policy against allowing adopting or fostering by people outside their area or state. If they have such a policy, ask if they will allow animal welfare professionals in your area to vouch for you. Your veterinarian would be a great reference, for example. If the group requires a home check, perhaps they will allow another rescue group in your area to conduct one.

If you do adopt an animal from a shelter or rescue outside your area, there are many possible transportation options if you can't go pick up the animal yourself. There are volunteer networks of drivers, paid animal transport companies, and others who might be able to help. See our resource on transportation resources for more information.

Finding a home

If you are unable to adopt or foster the animal, ask your friends, relatives, co-workers, fellow churchgoers, or community group members to consider taking in the animal. When contacting individuals about the pet, it will help tremendously if you have a nice flyer to hand out.

Ask the shelter or rescue harboring the animal if they have a flyer prepared that describes the animal. If not, ask if you can use any digital pictures they have to make your own flyer. You'll also need to write a good adoption "ad" for the pet. For some tips on how to write an appealing ad, read [How to Write Pet Profiles](#) in the Best Friends resource library.

When writing the adoption ad, be respectful of the shelter where the animal is located and avoid writing judgmental comments about it. Emphasize the positive qualities of the animal, rather than dwelling on how the pet came to be at the shelter (e.g., by being dumped or abandoned).

Once you have a photo and an adoption ad, combine the two into a flyer. At www.petbond.com, you can create a flyer by following the simple instructions. Plug in your contact information and the adoption ad, and upload a photo, and you'll have a very attractive flyer. You can save it as a digital file, which can be attached to emails and used for posting on social media websites, and you can also print out hard copies for posting.

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Once you have your flyer ready, get creative and think of ways that you can spread the word. Here are some ideas:

- Post the flyer or information about your pet on social media sites, such as Facebook. Ask friends and family members to do the same.
- Put up flyers at your workplace, your church, your veterinarian's office — and other places where there's a public bulletin board.

Finally, keep in mind that shelters are often understaffed, and many rescue groups are run by volunteers who do animal rescue work in addition to full-time jobs. This animal may have struck a chord with you, but the shelter or rescue is most likely trying to place dozens of other animals at the same time. Try not to get frustrated if it takes them a while to respond to your inquiries.