

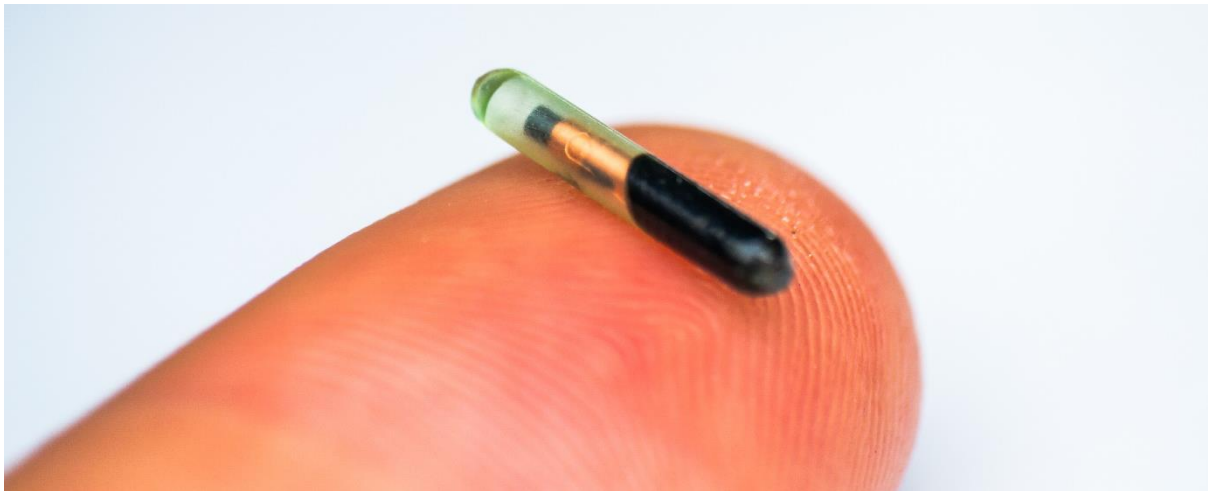


Microchipping you pet

Overview

- A microchip is a tiny identification device that contains a unique number linking a pet to their owner.
- Microchips help to reunite lost, stolen and injured pets with their owners as quickly as possible.
- We recommend that (where possible) all pets are microchipped, but it's a legal requirement for all dogs to be microchipped, and soon will be for cats.
- In most animals, microchips are implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades – it a very quick procedure that takes just a few seconds.

What is a microchip?



A microchip is a tiny identification device (the size of a grain of rice) that links a pet to their owner. Each microchip contains a unique number, which can be read by a scanner. If your pet is microchipped and becomes lost, anyone with a scanner (vets, dog wardens, and rescue centres) can scan your pet, call the microchip company, and help get you reunited.

Microchips are not linked to GPS and do not allow you to track your pets location.



Microchipping laws

Dogs

- It's a legal requirement for all dogs over 8 weeks to be microchipped*
- If you breed a dog (even if it was unintentional), it's your responsibility to have all the puppies microchipped by the time they are 8 weeks old, and to register yourself as their first owner.
- If you own a dog it's your responsibility to keep their microchip details up to date, and make sure they are stored on a UK government approved database ([see below for more information](#)).
- If your dog is scanned by a dog warden and found not to have a microchip you'll have 21 days to get them microchipped. If you don't, you could face a fine of up to £500.
- As well as a microchip, your dog must also wear a collar and tag (with your contact details on) in public.

* Very small puppies, or those with certain health problems can be issued a temporary exemption certificate from a vet to allow them to be microchipped when they are slightly older.

Cats

- We strongly recommend that all cats are microchipped before they start going outside.
- It's not yet a legal requirement for cats to be microchipped, but the UK government is planning to make it mandatory from 20 weeks of age in the near future. This will ensure any lost, stolen, or injured cats have the best chance of being reunited with their owners as quickly as possible.

Other pets

- Although it's not a legal requirement to have any other pets microchipped, we recommend you do. Rabbits, guinea pigs, ferrets, tortoises, and other small pets are notorious escape artists, so having them microchipped will help reunite you quickly if they go wandering.
- Even unusual pets like reptiles and birds can be microchipped – in fact it's a requirement for some exotic species that fall under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) rules.



Does microchipping hurt?

Your pet's microchip will be implanted under their skin between their shoulder blades using a needle. Like any injection, microchipping can cause a tiny amount of discomfort, but fortunately it's a very quick procedure that takes just a few seconds. Most pets barely notice being microchipped, but a tasty treat afterwards is likely to quickly distract them if they do become upset. Some exotic species need an anaesthetic or sedation to be microchipped – speak to your vet for more details.

Microchips are made out of non-reactive materials, so once it's in place it shouldn't hurt or cause them any problems throughout their life.



Where can I get my pet microchipped?

Microchips can only be implanted by vets, veterinary nurses, and people who have been specially trained. Most owners get their pets' microchipped at the vets, but if you go elsewhere (such as a rescue centre or grooming parlour) it's important to make sure the person chipping your pet is qualified to do it.

How much does microchipping cost?

The cost of having your pet microchipped varies – most vets will charge a small fee for the cost of the chip, their time and expertise. Some charities/events offer microchipping at a reduced cost or for free.



How do I register my pet's microchip?

The professional that microchips your pet will pass your details to your microchip database company. They will need your name, address, phone number, pet's details, and ideally an emergency contact (or two).

New puppies: If you have just brought a new puppy home, by law they should already be microchipped and registered to the breeder (unless they have an exemption certificate). When you collect your puppy, the breeder should give you a form/special code that enables you to update their details with [your microchip database company](#).

How do update my pet's microchip details?

If you move house or change your phone number, it's vitally important that you update your pet's microchip details with [your microchip database company](#). If you don't update your details it may prevent your pet being reunited with you if they become lost.

What should I do if I re-home or sell my pet?

If you rehome or sell a pet, you need to contact their microchip database company to let them know. They will give you a form or code to pass on to your pet's new owner enabling them to change the details on the microchip. This process is designed to prevent people from changing a pet's microchip details without the owner's permission (i.e. if they were stolen).

Which database is my pet's chip registered to?

Use www.checkachip.com to check which microchip database your pet is registered with.

There are many different microchip database companies in the UK, so it's really important that you make sure your pet is registered with one that's [UK government approved](#).

What should I do if my pet is lost or stolen?

If your pet is lost or stolen, phone your microchip database company to let them know ASAP. They will check your details are up to date, flag your pet as lost/stolen, and contact you straight away if they are found.



How long do microchips last?

Microchips are hardwearing and should last for your pet's lifetime. It's incredibly unusual for them to break or become faulty, but in the very rare case that one fails (meaning it can't be read by a scanner anymore) the chip manufacturer will usually provide a replacement chip free of charge. There is no need to remove the old faulty chip, your vet can simply place the new chip in alongside it.

Much more commonly, microchips move a small distance away from where they are implanted but this doesn't hurt, it very rarely causes problems and the chip will still be picked up if it's scanned.

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