

TRAPPING INSTRUCTIONS

Set-up and Prepare for Trapping.

Do all of your set up and preparation away from the trapping location—remember, feral cats are generally fearful of people.

Twenty-four hours before trapping, withhold food, but always continue to provide water. This will ensure that the cats are hungry enough to go into the traps. Remind other neighbors to withhold food as well.

Bait the trap

First, ensure the trip plate is functioning properly. Place approximately one tablespoon of bait tuna, sardines, or other strong smelling food, (the ones in oil work best), at the very back of the trap, so that the cat will step on the trigger plate while attempting to reach the food. You may choose to put the food in a lid or container for this, but make sure that it does not have sharp edges that could harm the cat once trapped. Drizzle some juice from the bait in a zigzag pattern along the trap floor toward the entrance. You should also place a tiny bit of food ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon) just inside the entrance of the trap to encourage the cat to walk in. Do not use too much food at the entrance of the trap.

Set the trap

Place a trap on the ground and make certain it is stable and will not rock or tip—cats will not enter an unstable trap. Do not place the trap on a hillside or incline. If you are using multiple traps, stagger the traps and have the traps facing different directions. Try to place the traps where they will attract a cat and be camouflaged, for example, near a bush. Move quietly and slowly so your movements will not frighten cats away.

There are several reasons to make sure you always have an eye on the traps. Leaving a cat uncovered in a trap for too long will increase the cat's stress and could lead to injury since they thrash against the cage. It is recommended to place a sheet over just the back part of the trap—not the front—before you place the trap so you can easily cover the entire thing after the cat is caught. This could also encourage the cat to go inside the trap since it appears to be a covered, safe place. When in a trap, the cat is exposed—and could be injured by other animals or a malicious person. Also, traps may be stolen, damaged, or sprung, or someone who does not understand your intentions may release a trapped cat.

Trapping a feral cat may take some time, be patient. It may take the cat a few minutes to go into the trap, so make sure the trap is sprung, and the cat securely trapped, before you approach the trap.

After the cat has been trapped

Cover the entire trap with a large towel or sheet before moving it. Covering the traps will help to keep the cat calm. Move trapped cat away to a quiet, safe area to avoid scaring any remaining, un-trapped cats.

It is normal for cats to thrash around inside the trap. You may be tempted to release a thrashing cat because you fear that she will hurt herself, but cats calm down once the trap is covered. Remember, you are doing this for her benefit. If she is released, she will continue to breed. Also, most injuries from traps are very minor, such as a bruised or bloody nose or a scratched paw pad.

You should never open the trap or try to touch a feral cat. Behave appropriately around trapped cats by being calm, quiet, and not touching them, even if they appear friendly under normal circumstances.

You may be faced with particularly hard-to-trap cats

Cats can become trap-shy—frightened to go near or enter a trap, or trap-savvy—mastered the art of removing food without triggering the trap. Don't be discouraged. There are several unique but straightforward techniques to humanely trap hard-to-trap-cats.

Follow these tips to help with your efforts. Cover $\frac{3}{4}$ of the trap with a sheet or large towel. Begin by tying the trap open and placing food inches outside the opening. The goal is to get the cat accustomed to the trap being there and near a food source, then actually the food source. Day by day, with the trap still tied open move the food closer to the inside opening of the trap. Place small amounts inside the trap so the cat is willing to walk into the trap. Once the cat does that untie the door and follow the instructions for baiting the trap for the actual trapping.

IMPORTANT: Please ensure cats don't remain in their traps for long. It is possible for a cat to die from heat stroke when confined in a trap outside. A simple guideline—if it is too hot outside for you, then it is too hot for the cats.

Never transport trapped cats in the trunk of a car or the open bed of a pickup truck—this is unsafe and it terrifies the cats. If traps must be stacked inside the vehicle, be sure to secure the traps with bungee cords or other restraints and place puppy pads or newspaper between the stacked traps. If an unsecured trap tips sideways or upside down, it can open and release the cat. If it seems precarious, it won't work. Don't take the risk.

Trapping will also go more smoothly if you don't disrupt the cats' feeding area. Throughout the entire trapping process, you should make the environment around the cats as calm and quiet as possible. This will help minimize their stress.

Spay/Neuter Information

If you are interested in having the cats you are trapping spayed or neutered please speak with one of our customer service representatives. We can assist you.