

# Cat Trapping 101

Trapping cats for TNR (Trap – Neuter/Spay- Return) is the best thing you can do to help feral and stray cats in your neighborhood. All you have to do is place bait in the trap, set the trap, and wait! Sounds easy, doesn't it?

Sometimes it is, but sometimes it takes more work.

Here are some foolproof techniques to ensure success.

## 1. Get the cat on a regular feeding schedule

Most ferals and strays come out in the evening, so place food and water sometime after dinner but before dusk. Feed at the exact same time every single day to get the cat used to your feeding schedule. Never leave food out overnight — you will attract raccoons, opossums, or other creatures you don't want to catch!

## 2. Bait and set the trap.

Once you've got the cat on a regular feeding schedule, it's time to bait your trap. Place a small amount of food on a paper plate and place it behind the step plate. Set your trap and wait. Hopefully the cat who is used to eating at the same time every day will walk right in and set the trap off.

## 3. Cover that cat!

Immediately after catching a cat, he will panic. To calm him down, just cover the trap with a sheet or towel



### A purrfectly set trap will look similar to above:

1. Put traps where cats normally eat, or along frequently walked trails. If possible, put the long side of the trap up against a wall/tree/ etc so it feels more natural.
2. Place a towel or blanket on top of the trap and drape over the sides but leave the entry and back open. The trap should feel like a tunnel. And you will have a towel immediately ready to cover a trapped cat!
3. Some cats are suspicious of the metal wire floor of the trap. Covering with newspaper, a piece of cardboard, straw or another material can help, but be sure it's not too heavy to set the trip plate.
4. Use a small bowl or paper plate for wet food as bait – never use a metal can to feed, because it can cut the cat's face! If you have a finicky cat, use the broth from canned food to create a trail into the trap. You can split a can of food between two traps.
5. For traps with an easy access door- be sure the door is latched closed before setting the trap, so you don't have an escape!

**If the above steps don't work, here are the next steps to take that will help you.**

1. Feed inside the trap. Sometimes outdoor cats are leery of anything new in their environment (or man-made). You have to acclimate the cat to the trap and it will be a cinch to get him in it. Just use a zip tie or bungee cord to hold the door open so that it will not go down. Since you've got the cat on a regular feeding schedule, start feeding the cat inside the trap. Start by placing the food at the entrance to the trap, and each day, move it closer inside until it is finally in the back of the trap. Once you've got the cat coming and going, set the trap and you'll win!
2. Use stinky bait. Who can resist stinky wet food? Try using wet canned cat food, tuna fish, or mackerel. On a cold day, try heating it up in the microwave so that the cat can really get a good whiff.
3. If you are having a lot of trouble, try limiting the food the day before you plan on trapping. This will make sure the cat is good and hungry and will go inside the trap more eagerly.

**Other tips and techniques**

- \* Never leave a trap set overnight or unattended for long periods of time. Cats should never be left alone in a trap in an unsafe location and should not remain in a trap for more than 24 hours.
- \* Always cover a trapped cat and remove the trap (cat and all) from sight immediately. Covering a trapped cat will calm it down. Remove it from the area, especially if you have other traps set. A trapped cat will spook other cats.
- \* Collect as many cats as you can! For every cat you bring us to be fixed, you have prevented 11,000 kittens from being born over the next 5 years.
- \* Pat yourself on the back! Trapping cats for spay/neuters and medical attention is the most wonderful thing you can do to give that cat a healthy, happy life; and help control outdoor cat population!