



Trapping Basics

Before you trap

- Call the spay & neuter clinic to schedule an appointment. Yes, we want to schedule you an appointment to make sure we have space for the cat(s) you plan to trap. We have two convenient locations, please call for details.

Atascadero: 805-464-5034

San Luis Obispo: 805-549-9316 ext. 12

Trapping supplies

- Humane Trap
- Trap bait – high value smelly wet food, tuna, sardines in water, fried chicken, etc.
- Trap liner – pillowcase or light-weight towel
- Trap cover – towels, blankets or sheets

Don't have a humane trap? Our North County location in Atascadero offers rentals, call 805-466-5403 for availability and to reserve. Trap rentals require a \$50 refundable deposit, with a \$2 per day rental fee for up to two weeks. Your deposit will be refunded once you return the trap and charged for the total days you had the trap.

Do not feed the day or evening before trapping

The cat is more likely to enter the trap quickly if its hungry. For a particularly wary cat, you might not want to feed it for two days prior to trapping. If other people are feeding cats in the area, ask them not to leave food out for one to two days before you trap. This can be a real group effort.

Setting the trap

- Set the trap at the cat's normal feeding time. You should plan to trap the cat the evening before or early the morning of your appointment. You don't want to keep a cat in a trap for longer than necessary to minimize stress.
- Line the trap with an old pillowcase or light-weight towel. This will protect the cat's feet and hide the step plate.
- Place your bait food at the very back of the trap with a small amount on the step place and create a gravy trail from front of the trap with any extras left in the tin. You do

not need to use bowls and never leave metal tins in the trap; these items take space and can injure the cat. Cut up paper plates can be used if you don't line your trap.

- Place the trap on a level surface close to where you normally feed the cat. You can cover the trap or leave it as is. Then, set the trap.
- Stay in the area to keep watch and listen for the sound of the trap snapping shut. Check the trap at least every hour.
- Traps should not be left unattended and never left out overnight due to the high likelihood of trapping wildlife. *You will not receive a refund if you have trapped a skunk who has sprayed in the trap or a raccoon who has bent the trap.*

Once the cat is trapped

Once trapped, a cat may panic. Immediately after the trap has shut, cover the trap with the cover of your choice and move in to a quiet, dark location. After a short time, the cat will calm down. If holding the cat overnight, place the trap on top of a towel/pee pad to help absorb urine. Do not attempt to add a bowl of water; the cat could escape and its always a mess. When transporting the cat to the clinic, keep the trap covers and be sure to place a towel/pee pad under the trap.

Cat won't go in the trap?

Try "trap training" to help get the cat used to going in and out of the trap. Secure your trap door open with zip ties or clamps so it won't closed when a cat enters. Place the trap in the place you normally feed the cat. Start feeding the cat only within the trap during your normal feeding times. Once you notice the cat is entering the trap regularly call the clinic to schedule and appointment. It is your choice if you want to trap train with or without a cover.

Transporting trapped cats

Always keep traps covered when a cat is inside. We do not recommend transporting cats in the open bed of a pickup, this can be very stressful and not very secure. If traps must be stacked inside the vehicle, be sure to secure the traps with bungee cords or restraints and place towels or newspaper between the stacked traps. If an unsecure trap tips sideways or upside down, it can open and release the cat. Use your best judgement when transporting.

Remember...with proper planning and training, your trap-neuter-return (TNR) project can be successfully implemented. Trapping may feel awkward at first and you may need to trap a few times before you feel at ease.

Call us with questions of if you just need someone to talk to about your project. Every time you assist in the neutering of a cat, you will have helped more cats live safe and healthy lives without increasing the feral cat population.

Information provided by San Francisco SPCA