

Trapping Basics and Timeline



Quickly covering trapped cats calms them down. Source: neighborhoodcats.org

Before You Trap

Never begin trapping until you have a spay/neuter surgery appointment scheduled. Do not assume that because you have a cat in a trap, there will be a way to get it into surgery. Surgery takes place on specific days, at specific times and places. A cat must be held in a trap no more than 48 hours prior to surgery to avoid excessive stress from confinement. Such excessive stress can increase the chances of surgical complications and poor recovery. We recommend that you establish a routine feeding schedule. Feed the cats at the same time and place each day and for at least one week prior to trapping.

Withhold Food

You must withhold all food 24 hours before trapping. This will ensure that the cats are hungry enough to enter the trap. Also, surgery will be easier on the cats if they have not eaten for the past 24 hours. While this may be hard, particularly if the cats appear hungry, remember you are doing what is best for them. Continue to provide the cats with clean, fresh drinking water.

Supplies

In order to trap effectively you will need:

- One humane box trap per cat.
- A can of tuna in oil, sardines in oil, mackerel, or other strong-smelling bait.
- Newspaper to line the bottom of each trap (optional).
- A trap cover – a large towel or cloth cover for each trap, large enough to cover the entire trap on all sides. After a cat has been trapped cover the trap to calm the cat and lessen the risk of injury.
- If you are going to transport the cat in your car, it is advisable to place the traps on a tarp/plastic sheet in your car to catch any urine or feces. An old towel will absorb any fluids and keep them from running off the tarp.

Start Trapping

To begin, prepare the traps near your vehicle or away from the trapping site. Place the trap on a flat surface as you bait and set it. Do this so that if a trap doesn't work properly or goes off too easily it will not scare off the cats.

If you use newspaper, fold it lengthwise and place it inside the bottom of the trap. Do not use newspaper if it is windy.

Place approximately one tablespoon of bait along the very back of the trap. You can use a lid or container for this if you wish. Now drizzle some juice from the bait along the trap towards the entrance in a zigzag pattern. Place about one-fourth teaspoon of bait at the far end of the trap, past the trip-plate, and one-fourth teaspoon about six inches inside the front of the trap. It is important not to leave too much bait in the front or middle; this may satisfy the cat

and she will leave without setting off the trap. Now take the traps to the trapping site, most likely the feeding area. Place the trap on the ground and make certain it is stable and will not rock or tip.

If you are using multiple traps, stagger them, and place them facing in different directions. Try to think like a cat and place the traps where they will be tempting. Move quietly and slowly, and try to remain relaxed so your mannerisms won't frighten cats away.

Set the traps. Leave the area quietly. The cats are unlikely to enter the traps if you are standing nearby. You may want to go sit in your car or take a walk for a while. If you are trapping in your yard go inside.

It is preferable to quietly check the traps more frequently from a distance. Also, traps may be stolen, damaged, or set off. Someone who does not understand your intentions may release a trapped cat. (sometimes it is wise to chain and lock the trap to a post or fence so nobody can walk off with the cat and harm it)

Trapping Timeline Dates

Pick-up Traps/Instructions/Release form:

Withhold Food:

Begin Trapping:

- Never leave traps unattended or outdoors overnight
- Keep the trapped cats covered with a trap cover in a temperature controlled area and protected from the weather.
- Do not feed cats after 8pm the night before surgery. If food is already in the trap don't open the trap door to remove the food. The cat may escape.

Drop off for surgery:

Date of Surgery:

Transport cats to the IndyFeral Clinic at 5960 East 25th Street, Indpls. IN 46218.

- Traps should be covered with a sheet at all times.
- Do not attempt to touch or handle the cat in the trap. Serious injury could occur.
- If transporting cats in the back of a pick-up truck they should be protected from the weather.
- Summer: Lay blanket on the truck bed so the cats don't burn their feet. Don't leave the cats sitting in the direct sun or humid weather as they can overheat rapidly.
- Winter: Cover with heavy blankets and secure with a tarp to prevent hypothermia.
- Rain: Cover with tarp.

Post Surgical Pick-up of cats:

Return Traps:

Questions/Cancellations: Contact Indyferal at 596-2300 or your volunteer: