

FERAL CAT TRAPPING INSTRUCTIONS

Preparation:

1. To get cats used to the traps, try leaving the trap unset and covered with a large towel during their routine feeding so that they will get used to the sight and smells of the traps. If possible try feeding the cats at the same time and in the same place.
2. Prior to setting the traps, make sure all doors on the trap are properly secured, or the cat might escape.
3. Don't feed the cats the day/night before you are going to trap. A hungry cat is a trapped cat. Be sure to notify others who may feed the cats not to leave food out. Exceptions include a very pregnant female, nursing mother, or young kitten.
4. Remove all possible food sources (neighbors, close dumpsters, etc.)
5. Plan to trap so that you do not have to keep the cat too long before surgery. Trapping the night before is usually the best approach. Cats should not eat 12 hours prior to surgery.
6. Only wire, humane traps are permitted. Cats in carriers or boxes will not be admitted. Only one cat per trap. Traps should be designed for cats or animals the size of cats and in good working condition. We have trap dividers that allow us to immobilize the cats to administer anesthesia without touching them. The dividers do not work for large animal traps. Please contact us if you have any questions concerning whether your trap is suitable.
7. Scrub the traps down with a low-odor detergent. A trap that reeks of Clorox or has the scent of an unknown animal could be just enough to spook the cat from entering the trap. It may help to spray diluted Valerian root tea over the trap.
8. Prepare the area you will be holding the cats before and after the clinic. A garage or other sheltered, warm protected area is best. Lay down newspaper to catch the stool, urine or food residue. If you lift the trap using pieces of wood this allows the newspaper to catch all the mess that falls through the trap. Spray the area ahead of time with a cat-safe flea spray (like Adams or Ovitrol) which will discourage ants.
9. Prepare the vehicle you transport the cats in. Plastic may be an additional precaution. Remember that you will need to use newspapers or some other type of absorbent material to catch urine or whatever else. Urine will roll off of plastic.
10. Do not trap in the rain or the heat of day without adequate protection for the trap. Cats are vulnerable in the traps and could drown during storms or suffer from heatstroke in the sun.
11. No food, food cans, bowls, or "comfy" items such as newspaper, blankets, or towels are allowed in the traps and must be removed before clinic arrival. Cats are anesthetized while in the traps, and these items interfere with holding the cat still to administer the anesthetic into the proper area of the leg. Bait the trap with loose food to avoid the use of a container.
12. Bring a flashlight with you if you are trapping at night. This will help when checking the traps from a distance.

13. Plan your day of trapping carefully. If you trap an animal and have to release it for some reason, it is unlikely you will be able to catch that cat again. They learn quickly.
14. If you have not successfully trapped the cats by midnight the eve before coming into the clinic, please remove the traps and do not proceed. Do not leave the traps set overnight as the cats are subject to dangers (exposure to elements or injury inside of the trap). Also, they may eat the bait in the early morning hours prior to their arrival at our clinic and food after midnight may cause anesthetic complications that could result in the death of the cat.

After Trapping:

1. Once in the trap, please cover with a towel or sheet so that the cat cannot see out to help him/her stay calm.
2. Do not transport the cats in uncovered truck beds. They are already traumatized, and this will only increase their fright and may cause them to injure themselves in the trap.
3. If there are young kittens involved, remember they should not be weaned from the mother cat before 4–6 weeks of age. If you are trapping a lactating female, you may want to wait until you have located the kittens and they are old enough to wean. If you wish to tame and foster the kittens to adopt out, they should be taken from the mother at 4–6 weeks. If you wait until the kittens are older than 4–6 weeks before trying to tame them you will find the job progressively harder with age.
4. Drop off the cats at Animal Alliance by 8:00 a.m. we accept the first 5 ferals Wednesday - Friday pick up is on the same day at 4:30 pm.

Our rules are not for our convenience, but for the safety and well-being of the feral caretakers, The Animal Alliance of Galveston Co. staff, and the cats themselves.

We appreciate your time and effort given to caring for feral cats!