

Cat Trapping Information Book



Copyright © 2020 Ten Lives Cat Centre
12 Sels Point Road, New Town TAS 7008

Author: Dr Tess Vitesnik, Ten Lives Head Veterinarian
Design: Freya Langford-Sidebottom, Ten Lives Marketing



Why do we trap cats?

Traps can be used to capture and remove problem cats from the environment.

Following the steps in this booklet will increase the likelihood of trapping success and minimise stress and injury.

Trapping can be useful in catching a single cat or to reduce the numbers in a group of cats. However, it must be remembered that unless the source of the cats and/or their access to food is managed then the group will quickly repopulate.

What sort of trap should I use?

Ensure that the trap you hire, buy, or intend to use is suitable, secure, and safe for cats:

YES:

Heavy-duty wire cages, with a metal plate (treadle) on the floor of the trap with a drop down or hinged swing-style door.



NO:

It is illegal to use the following types of traps in Tasmania.

- Leg hold, steel jawed traps or snares. Penalties apply under the *Animal Welfare Act 1993*.
- Light-weight and hook-operated traps should not be used due to injury to trapped animals.



Images: Approved Wire Cat Trap: riesequipment.com.au/cat-trap

Leg hold – traps.com.au

Steel jawed trap – doc.govt.nz

Snare – survivalfreedom.com

Hook Operated Trap – shop.ehayes.co.nz

Where do I get an appropriate trap from?

Cat traps can be:

- Hired from Ten Lives Cat Centre (request a Trap Hire Form).
- Hired from some councils.
- Purchased from local rural supplies/hardware stores e.g. Derwent Traders (Moonah) & Hollander Imports (Hobart).
- Purchased online e.g. wiretainers.com.au.

When to set the trap?

Traps are best set at dusk and checked first thing the next morning, then closed for the day and reset in the afternoon. When traps are left open during the day, there is greater risk of catching non-target species.

Do not set traps in bad weather (i.e. very hot, very cold, or very wet).

Trapping outside of the breeding season i.e. June to October, avoids separating mothers from their kittens, who will die on their own.

If it is necessary to trap cats/kittens during the warmer summer months, the situation should be assessed first:

- Young kittens should be located and placed inside the trap to lure the mother into the trap. The family can then be surrendered together.
- If kittens are older and mobile, a row of traps can be set together under one covering.
- If a lactating mother is caught inadvertently, a thorough search should be conducted for her kittens.

Please note: very young kittens cannot be away from their mother for more than an hour or two and need to be kept warm. Please seek advice from Ten Lives or a veterinary clinic urgently if you have kittens without a mother.

If you wish to surrender cats to Ten Lives, traps should only be set as per your agreement with Ten Lives. There may be fees involved. The maximum charge is \$120 per trapped cat for commercial operations, \$50 per trapped cat for a community member. This is subject to discussion with Ten Lives. If you are part of a coordinated trapping plan, this fee may be waived.

No animals should ever be in a trap for more than 12 hours. Forward planning is required to ensure traps can be checked and animals released, euthanised, or surrendered within 12-24 hours.

Where to set the trap?

The trap must be set on your own property and on a flat surface.

The trapping spot should be free of ant nests, sheltering spots for snakes, or other animals (particularly dogs) and people, and have adequate shelter.

Traps must not be set in direct sunlight (remember that shaded spots change throughout the day). Place the trap against a fence or under a bush as cats will be reluctant to enter a trap sitting out in the open.

You may want to secure the trap with a bike lock chain for additional security, particularly if the place where you will be trapping is visible to others.

How to set the trap?

How you set the trap will determine your likelihood of success.

- On a flat surface secure both the trap and trap cover (with a rock on top or pegged into the ground) so the trigger mechanism won't go off accidentally, functions smoothly, and the cage cannot move once the cat is inside.
- Test the treadle plate/foot pad mechanism to ensure the trap closes completely and quickly.



- Place cardboard on the floor inside the trap to reduce injury (e.g. broken claws, feet, or legs).
- Place food/lure outside and just inside the trap entrance and wrapped in a piece of Chux cloth wipe or similar tied to the top left-hand back corner of the trap (this placement increases the chance of a cat stepping on the treadle plate). Do not leave food in open tins as sharp edges can cause injury to the cat's face.
- The use of poisoned bait is an offence under the *Animal Welfare Act 1993*.

Tips for success

Establish a 'Feeding Routine' for the cat you wish to trap:

- **Hiring a Ten Lives trap?**

Before hiring a trap, we recommend you feed the cat in the same place and the same time every day to establish a routine. Ensure this spot is protected from sun, rain, and wind. Once the cat is regularly visiting the spot to feed, hire and set the trap in the same place for capture. Place food in a trail leading up to the trap and inside it, with a 'prize' of bait at the far-back of the trap, behind the foot treadle plate.

- **Using your own/borrowed trap?**

To begin, cable-tie or fasten the trap-door open, so that the cat can enter and exit the trap freely while feeding and not be caught. This will ensure the cat trusts the trap enough to risk entering it once it has been properly set for capture. Place food for the cat inside the trap, at the same place and the same time every day to establish a routine. Cover the trap and ensure this spot is protected from sun, rain, and wind. Once the cat is regularly visiting the trap to feed, remove the cable-ties/fastenings and set the trap for capture.

In both scenarios do not feed the cat for 12-24 hours prior to trapping to ensure the cat is hungry enough to risk entering the trap for food.

Cover & camouflage the trap

- Create a dark, hidden safe space that is more enticing to cats than a bare metal cage.
- Use a dark coloured towel or blanket to cover the cage. Tuck the sides of the towel through the metal wire so that it does not flap in the wind, scaring off cats. Ensure the towel does not cover the opening or interfere with the trap door closing.
- Some cats may learn to recognise the plate that closes the trap door, and how to avoid it. We recommend you camouflage the trap floor with a towel, cardboard, leaves, grass, pine needles, or whatever is in the surrounding natural environment. Covering the trap floor will also help reduce the risk of injury to trapped animals. Test the trap foot pad mechanism to ensure the trap closes completely and nothing interferes with it.

Use smelly bait!

The more enticing the bait, the more successful your trapping will be.

We recommend using meat or fish as bait as cats are obligate carnivores.

Secure the bait to the inside of the trap with string (never a metal hook) or place inside a small bowl.

Replace the bait within 24-48 hours if uneaten.

IMPORTANT: It is vital to NEVER use metal wire or hooks to attach the bait as this can cause serious injury to the cat. ALWAYS USE STRING.



Animals caught in traps

Ten Lives Cat Centre accepts trapped cats to be brought in to the Centre strictly by appointment. If you wish to bring trapped cats to Ten Lives please contact us to set up a Trapping Agreement.

Appointments to bring in trapped cats are available Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays.

DO NOT TRAP IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO BRING IT IN WITHIN 12-24 HOURS OF CAPTURE.

Owned cats

Are required by law to be desexed and microchipped and may be wearing a collar. To avoid trapping owned pets talk to, or letterbox drop, your neighbours to inform them of your intention to trap unowned cats on your property so they can contain their cats. See the *Trapping Letter Template* at the end of this document.

If a cat is wearing a collar, has a 'desexed' ear tattoo, and seems well looked after, it is likely owned and likely lives in the area. Ten Lives cannot be involved with neighbourhood disagreements.

If you are having trouble with your neighbours' cat/s you will need to communicate with your neighbour directly and/or contact your local council for advice.

Native animals

Should be released as soon as possible, either where trapped or nearby.

If an animal is injured take it to a vet or contact the Wildlife Management Branch:
dpiwve.tas.gov.au/wildlife-management.

Transport & handling of trapped animals

Do not transfer cats from traps to carriers or other containers.

Place the trap on a flat surface within the vehicle so it cannot move or roll.

We encourage you to cable tie the trap door shut for extra security during transportation.

Cover the trap with a towel, light blanket, or sheet to reduce stress.

Always ensure adequate ventilation to the cat.

Keep dogs and other animals away from the trapped cat.

Trap cleaning

Traps must be cleaned after catching a cat to minimise the risk of disease transfer.

Scrub with hot water and detergent and air dry.

Removing odours of previous cats and handlers may assist trapping efforts.

Trapping cats and the law

For further information about your rights and responsibilities regarding the law and trapping cats in Tasmania, full details of the Acts can be found via the links below:

- *The Tasmanian Cat Management Act 2009:* legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2009-089
- *Proposed Cat Management Bill 2019:* dpiwve.tas.gov.au/Documents/Summary%20of%20Proposed%20Amendments.pdf
- *Animal Welfare Act 1993:* legislation.tas.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1993-063
- *Tasmanian Land Tax Act 2000:* legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2000-074#GS7@EN



Trapping Letter Template

Dear Neighbour,

There is an issue with stray (unowned) and/or feral cat/s in our neighbourhood which

- Wander onto my property _____
 - Fight/intimidate my pets _____
 - Catch, injure, and kill my livestock _____
 - Catch, injure, and kill wildlife _____
 - Spray and defecate in my garden/house/property _____
 - Other _____
-

To resolve the disturbance/damage occurring and to achieve desired outcomes I/we will be setting humane cat traps to catch any cat/s wandering onto my/our property on the following dates.

Trapping will commence on Day _____ Date _____ Time _____

Trapping will cease on Day _____ Date _____ Time _____

Any cat/s caught on my/our property will be treated in a humane manner and as per the relevant laws in Tasmania.

If you wish to prevent your cat/s from being trapped, please keep your cat/s contained to your property.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Your neighbour



Ten Lives

info@tenlives.com.au

12 Selfs Point Road, **New Town Tas 7008**

PO Box 309, **Lenah Valley Tas 7008**

P 03 6278 2111 | F 03 6278 3111

tenlives.com.au