



TNR Program

Steps for Trapping Cats

Step 1: Prepare yourself and the know the area

- Community cats are generally wary of people. Most will run away from you when you get a certain distance from them. Get to know the cats around the area and how many cats may need to be fixed.
- Make sure you have permission to trap on property that is not yours! Get to know your neighbors or property owners and inform them when you plan to trap and release the cats.
- Let surrounding neighbors or caregivers know when and where you are going to trap, so that if they have altered, outdoor cats, they can confine their cats indoors until you are done. If a cat is friendly, make sure that cat is not owned before bringing it in to the clinic.
- Be observant of the colony or community cats. Just like you have paths you walk every day, so do community cats! Watch for the trails that cats most often take. Note if there's a certain tree or bush, they like to sleep under, and what time of day they're most likely to be in a specific area. When it's time to trap, set up the traps at these places and times.

Step 2: Establish a feeding schedule for the cats

- In order to get the cats used to coming out and eating while you are there, establish a set time and place to feed the cats every day. Feed the cats as much as they can eat in a 30-minute period, and then pick up any remaining food after that period.
- To make your trapping efforts easier, put the food for the cats in unset traps for one to two weeks prior to the trapping day. You can even take the back door off entirely. This will get the cats comfortable with seeing and walking into traps.
- Remember to coordinate your feeding and trapping efforts with other caregivers. This will make the best use of your time and resources
- **DO NOT** withhold food for more than 48 hours (about 2 days) before trapping. It's dangerous to a cat's health to go without eating for more than two days.
- **NEVER** withhold water from cats.

Step 3: Use the correct Equipment

- Practice setting and baiting traps ahead of time. Test all your traps to ensure they are functioning properly.
- **DO NOT** use trapping equipment that is not specifically meant for cats. You could injure or even kill a cat with alternate trapping methods.
- Greenhill's TNR Program only accepts cats in traps at the time of your appointment. **Do not bring TNR cats in carriers, boxes, or bags.**
 - Greenhill has traps available for rent, only to be used for Greenhill's program. Rental is free, but a deposit must be made prior. It is a \$100 deposit for each trap and \$25 deposit for each divider. The money is not charged unless the traps are not brought back in a timely matter after completion of the program.
 - If you use another trap, we prefer Tru Catch traps (brown) or other brands that have a two-door system as they are safer for staff to be able humanely administer pre-surgical drugs. See example below.
- Use designated trap dividers, or "forks" that you can use to safely provide food and water in the trap if needed.



For questions or concerns call our TNR Coordinator at 541-689-1503 x 140 or email TNR@green-hill.org.



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Step 4: Start Trapping!

- **DO NOT** trap cats without an appointment with our TNR Program, scheduled with the TNR Coordinator, 541-689-1503 ext. 140 or SNR Program scheduled with Feline Receiving, 541-689-1503 ext. 133.
- Place the traps on level ground at the colony site. The cats will not enter an unstable or wobbly trap. Make sure the traps are not placed on a hill where they could tip or roll over when the cats enter them. Metal traps should never be placed on particularly hot or cold pavement, or they could become painful to cats' paws.
- Line trap bottoms with a liner, such as newspaper or puppy pad.
 - **TIP:** For trap shy cats, try covering the trap with natural material like burlap. Then, place leaves, small branches, palm fronds, or whatever is in the natural environment around the top, sides, and on the floor inside the trap. Just make sure your disguise doesn't interfere with the trap door closing!
- Cover the traps with a towel or blanket large enough to cover all sides, leaving only about 1/4 of the front of the trap exposed. If you find the cats aren't going into the traps, try removing the covers. Every cat is different, so you may need to use a combination of covered and uncovered traps.
- Place the bait at the very back of the trap so the cat must step on the trip plate to reach the food. You may choose to put the food in a safe, disposable container (such as a plastic lid or paper plate). **DO NOT** place open cans of cat food in traps as this can be harmful to the cats. Place a tiny bit of food just inside the entrance of the trap to encourage the cat to walk in.
 - **TIP:** Make a bait trail! Coax wary cats into the trap with tiny food scraps leading up to and then inside the trap. Gradually increase the size of the bait scraps as you place them on the trigger plate and beyond.
 - **TIP:** Try a variety of food, every cat has a different preference. Something extra smelly and tasty might pique a cat's interest.
- Hide the trigger plate! A cat may have learned to recognize the plate that closes the trap door and how to avoid it. To keep them from tiptoeing over and around the plate, try covering it, and a bit of the trap floor in front of and behind it, with newspaper or cloth. Or cut a piece of cardboard a little narrower than the width of your trap and a couple of inches longer than the trigger plate.
- Once the trap is set, move away! Do not stand near traps as most community cats are wary of people.
 - **TIP:** For trap-savvy cats, try larger traps. A larger trap with a taller opening and wider sides can be more inviting to a cat wary of entering an enclosed space.
 - **TIP:** If your hard-to-trap cat likes to circle around the back of the trap instead of entering it to figure out how to get the food, try setting two traps next to each other with their entrances facing opposite directions. When the cat circles around one trap, they may walk right into the one set up beside it.
- Try to place the traps in quiet and hidden areas, so cats are more comfortable going near them.
- Make sure only one cat gets caught in the trap. Each cat needs their own separate area to recover for surgery.
- Traps should never be left unattended. Check the traps frequently, but from a distance so you don't scare cats away. Choose a location to wait where you are far enough away to give the cats a sense of safety, but close enough so that you can see them. Keep a close eye in the event a trap malfunctions and you need to spring into action to prevent a cat from being injured.
- **DO NOT** try to catch a cat with your hands. Even the most socialized cat can panic when grabbed and can scratch or bite you. You can also harm the cat in the attempt if they struggle to escape you!

If you are really struggling with trapping, take a break for a few weeks and come back and try again!

Step 5: Transporting the cats to the clinic

- To keep your kitties as stress-free as possible, don't keep them in traps for any longer than necessary before going to the clinic (12 hours max).
- Set up a holding area if necessary. If you have to wait until the next day for spay/neuter appointments, prepare a holding area to keep the cats. This area could be any indoor area that is dry, temperature-controlled, and away from dangers such as toxic fumes, other animals, or people. For the safety of the cats, the area should be quiet and secure.
- When transporting cats in a vehicle, make sure they remain inside the covered traps and that they are placed on a flat surface. If traps must be stacked inside the vehicle, be sure to secure the traps with bungee cords or other restraints so they don't topple over. Place puppy pads or newspaper between the stacked traps in case there's a bathroom accident.
- Transporting cats in the back of an uncovered pickup truck can be very stressful for cats in traps, try to cover them and secure them down as best as possible to keep them from moving and protect them from inclement weather.

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