

Favorite Tips

Submitted by many trappers

Please note that the content below is strictly the opinion of volunteers

1. **Trap handle covers:** cut an old garden hose into 4" segments with a hacksaw, slit one side with scissors, and slip over the annoying wire trap handle.
2. **Waterproof liners:** Ask at Lowe's or Home Depot for discounts on vinyl flooring remnants from their big rolls. Cut into 8" x 23" pieces and use as a foundation under the newspaper you put in the trap. If there is an old-style Tru Catch with a chain at the front of the trip plate, you will need to cut a small notch for it.
3. **Cardboard "mess pad":** Place a 7" (approximate) in width piece of cardboard over the newspaper liner when trapping. After the initial commotion, it can be slid out from under the cat, leaving the clean newspaper underneath. Added benefits are that it adds a little weight to the trip plate and helps keep the newspaper liner in place if there a breeze.
4. **Bait:** Use both chicken and fish to cover all the bases. Dribble just a little of the bait juice (not the solid food), up to the bait container. You don't want to risk your kitty walking back out after eating an appetizer! Some trappers say they prefer mackerel as bait.
5. **Paper bag trick:** Got a wary target cat? Slide your trap into a large paper lawn and leaf bag. It works! Be sure to check for ants if the trap sits empty for awhile and change out the bag for a new one if you see them.
6. **Extra incentives:** A few drops of valerian tincture (available at natural food stores) next to the bait container may help to attract your target cat. "Sometimes I use a little catnip oil also but 'From the Field' is the only brand I've found that is the real deal." You can find it on Amazon and at Bark N Purr/Hollywood Feed on Burnet Rd in Austin, in Round Rock and in 17 other TX cities. Visit HollywoodFeed.com to find a location near you.
7. **Silvervine, aka Matatabi:** Many cats find this natural dried plant even more attractive than catnip. It may draw cats into the trap that for dental or other reasons, are not eating. This product can be found on Amazon or most natural pet stores.
8. **Feliway substitute:** *No-Stress* is a much less expensive calming pheromone spray that is available on Amazon or Chewy.com. A 16oz bottle usually runs \$8-9.00.
9. **Securing the trap:** Releasable/reusable cable ties are great for securing the front door of a Tru Catch trap once the cat is inside. Amazon offers a variety of styles and lengths.
10. **Personal Safety:** Someone suggested keeping a can of Raid Wasp and Hornet Killer instead of mace or pepper spray as it shoots 20'.
11. **Coaxing kitty from drop trap to transfer trap:** Compressed air for dusting keyboards can be helpful.
12. **Trap cleaning:** Fill an old *Windex Outdoor* bottle with 1 cup of Simple Green or similar non-toxic all-purpose cleaner, ¼ cup bleach, and water to fill.
13. **Washing trap covers:** Add 1 cup of white vinegar to the wash load. It removes urine odor and works best on 100% cotton.
14. **Covering the trap:** Keeping the cat completely covered once it is in the trap tends to keep the cat calmer.
15. **Havahart trap tip:** Using a screwdriver, pry off the metal sleeves from the top and sides of the back panel so that it opens and lies flat on the ground. Now you have a service door to easily

provide your cat with food and water. However, be sure to use a divider! Refasten in the original upright position with 3 heavy twist ties at the top.

16. **Havahart as a transfer trap:** They make great transfer traps! Just slide the open back panel underneath the wall of your drop trap and bungee the two together where the open end of the Havahart and the sliding door of the drop trap meet. The Havahart drop plate should be in the down position for this.
17. **Tru Catch traps:** These are considered by most trappers to be the preferred trap. Havahart traps are considered to potentially be dangerous, especially when kittens are involved, but are great as backup traps.
18. **Handouts:** Alley Cat Allies (alleycat.org) has a flier to give to the occasional TNR ignorant or resistant people you may encounter. "How to Live with Cats in your Neighborhood" costs \$5 for 25 with approximately \$9 for shipping. It can also be downloaded from their website.
19. **Determining that the cat is in the trap:** Use flags that stick up on your trap doors. When the door closes the flag goes down and if the trap is in an area not easily seen, you can tell whether the trap is still open.
20. **Meowing App:** You might want to try using a meowing app on your phone to entice cats who won't enter a trap for food. Just place the phone near but outside of the trap.
21. **Seeing the trap at night or in overgrown areas:** Tie a white piece of cloth to the trap door or use reflective duct tape. An inexpensive pair of night-vision binoculars can be helpful. The less expensive ones seem to not work well in total darkness.

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