

Trap Troubleshooting

The trap is too sensitive when I try to set it.

- Call the trap depot where you picked up traps and get a different one.
- Put some paper into the folded space in the trap door. This makes the door thicker and the trapping mechanism less sensitive.
- Do not set the trap to catch the cat if the trap is too sensitive.

I have several cats and I want to catch a particular one.

- Get enough traps for each cat in the colony. Trap all the cats and hold them in the traps while trapping the remaining cats. As soon as you catch the target cat then release the other trapped cats. Do not use this technique to trap and release unfixed cats.
- Use the “water bottle trick.” Instead of setting the trap normally, prop the trap door open with an object like a water bottle. Tie 20+ feet of string to the object and then wait for the target cat to go all the way into the trap and begin eating. Pull the string so the trap door closes quickly behind the cat.
- Use a drop trap. This is a larger, box-like trap which drops down around the target cat. You must be present to use this trap. Email info@indyneighborhoodcats.org to get information on how to borrow one.

I've been baiting the traps for more than 3 days and the cats won't eat inside the traps.

- Do the cats have access to food outside of the traps from you or from a neighbor?
 - If you have food available to the cats outside of the traps, then the cats have no motivation to eat inside the traps. Remove any food outside the traps, including dry food.
 - If you suspect a neighbor may be feeding the cats, then go speak with the neighbor and ask them to remove the food while you are trying to trap.
- Use smelly food to entice the cats into the traps. Tuna, KFC chicken, sardines, mackerel and smelly wet food are all good choices.
- Borrow one of our larger traps with a clear door. This tricks the cats into thinking both ends of the trap door are open.
- Use a drop trap. This is a larger, box-like trap which drops down around the target cat(s). You must be present to use this trap. Email info@indyneighborhoodcats.org to get information on how to borrow one.

- Use a large paper shopping bag. Cats love paper bags. In Indianapolis, you can pick one or several up at Menards or any grocery store. Put the trap inside the bag. Cats find it too good to pass up.

The cats are stepping over the trip plate to eat or the cats are able to pull out the food without setting off the traps.

- Use the "water bottle trick." Instead of setting the trap normally, prop the trap door open with an object like a water bottle. Tie 20+ feet of string to the object and then wait for the target cat to go all the way into the trap and begin eating. Pull the string so the door closes quickly behind the cat.
- Tie some chicken inside the back of the trap in the top corner. This will change the way the cat has to stand in the trap and will keep the cat from pulling the food out.
- Fold the newspaper so that it just reaches the end of the trip plate. Put some food on a piece of a paper plate and set it on the bottom of the trap past the trip plate and the newspaper. The cat will have to reach in further to eat and will not be able to pull the food out.

The cats are not coming to eat regularly.

- Do you leave food out at all times? Try feeding during a smaller window of time during the day. Continue to make this window of time smaller until the cats learn to come within a 1-hour time frame to eat.
- Talk to your neighbors to see if the cats are eating somewhere else in the neighborhood. Many cats go back and forth between several different feeders. Ask them to temporarily stop feeding the cats while you are trying to trap and Spay/Neuter or ask if you can put traps where they normally feed the cats.