

TRAPPING IN SAN JOSE

San Jose Animal Care Center (SJACC)
2750 Monterey Rd, San Jose, CA 95111

PREPARING TO TRAP

- **Pregnant, sick or injured cats and kittens under 3 lbs** are accepted at SJACC at any time (7 days a week, 7am to 5pm), without approval or appointments. Cats are accepted **in traps only** (no carriers).
- **Get approval for other cats.** Email sjtnr@sanjoseca.gov for approval to bring in cats Sun - Thurs from 8-3 pm. Friendly cats and kittens may go up for adoption or go to rescue.
- **Borrow traps.** Traps can be borrowed from the SJACC lobby or bought at Home Depot. Get the large Havahart trap (30-32" length).
- **Withhold food.** Remove all food sources 24-36 hours before trapping, to ensure cats are hungry enough to enter traps. Do NOT feed immediately after trapping or cats learn avoiding traps means food.
- **Trap training (for cats).** If you have access to traps and are waiting for approval to bring cats, zip tie open the trap (so it won't catch a cat) and feed the cats **only** out of the trap for several days before trapping. When cats see other cats get trapped, they start getting trap smart.



Trap training

SETTING TRAPS

- **Base:** use newspaper, cardboard, or pee pads. If it is windy, use masking tape to secure the base.
- **Bait:** tuna, sardines, Fancy Feast flaked fish & shrimp, and Friskies are all good options.
 - Use a **small amount** at the very front of the trap (2-3 very small PEA SIZED piles) leading towards the trip plate. The main bait (1 Tbsp) is placed at the very back of the trap.
 - Fling a small amount of bait outside of the trap, leading to the front of the trap.
 - **Note:** do not put any bait on the trip plate or it will cause an early trigger and the cat will escape.
- **Placement:** place the trap flush against a wall, plants, or other objects. The best spot for the trap is where the cats are used to eating.

GUIDELINES

- **Never leave a trap unattended.** Traps can be stolen, cats can be taken or harmed, or may harm themselves, or you may trap wildlife.
- **When you catch a cat,** cover the trap immediately with a large towel, fully covering the trap, and move the trap to a quiet area. Use pee pads under the trap during car transport and holding.
- **For safety,** secure both trap doors with zip ties, as some cats are great escape artists.
- **NEVER release an unfixed cat.** You may never trap it again.

“Help! The cat won’t go anywhere near the trap!”

- **Are you too close to the trap?** Stay indoors or in your car with a window cracked and listen for the trap. Do not stand too close or the cat won’t go in the trap.
- **Use tuna juice or bait trail** leading to the trap and to the trip plate. No food on the trip plate.
- **Is the trap against a bush, wall, or fence** instead of the middle of the porch/sidewalk/yard?
- **How long have you tried waiting?** It may take 3-4 hours waiting over multiple days to trap a cat.
- **Are you trapping early morning and night?** Cats are most active early in the morning and after dark.
- **Try trap training.** Zip tie open the trap overnight (so it won’t catch a cat) and feed the cats only out of the trap for several days. You may have to start the food bowl slightly outside of the trap, and move it further inside each day.

“I have fixed cats that keep going in the trap and the unfixed one won’t.”

- Try a drop trap. You can post on a Nextdoor or Facebook pet group, or contact a rescue like 13th St Cats to ask to borrow a drop trap.
- Try the bottle and string method. Attach a half filled water bottle to a string. Prop open the trap door with the bottle. Wait until the target cat is eating in the trap, and pull the string quickly to remove the bottle, shutting the door. You’ll want to use enough food in the trap so the fixed cats can eat and leave.

“I found baby kittens, what do I do?”

- If they are not in immediate danger or sick, wait until they first appear at 4-6 weeks and as soon as they start walking around or eating, trap or pick them up and take them in with the mom cat.

“I can’t find a trap! SJACC has none available or I need a drop trap.”

- 13th Street Cat Rescue • 408-566-3637 • info@13thstcats.org
- Cat Resource Center • (408) 335-4357 • admin@catcenter.org
- Gatos de la Noche • onamission2012@yahoo.com
- Ask on Nextdoor - you may have a neighbor close by who would be willing to lend one.

“I am physically disabled or elderly, and do not have friends/family/neighbors to help me trap.”

- Submit a request to the Cat Resource Center catcenter.org/help.
- Submit a request to local trappers bayareacats.org/tnr.

“I trapped a cat with a collar but it is an unfixed male or a female that keeps having kittens.”

- If you do not know the owner, it may be a lost cat and should be taken to SJACC. It is illegal to have free roaming pets in San Jose, and irresponsible ownership to let an unfixed cat breed on the streets.

“I took the cat to the shelter but I don’t know when it will come back.”

- Check the San Jose lost cats page (Google search for link) to monitor the cats you bring in. If the cat has a medical issue, it will be listed. You should keep note of the ID number in case you need to follow up on the cat at the shelter. The cat should be fixed 1-2 days after being taken to the shelter, and ready for release the day after. If the cat is not back in 3 days, you should check the [San Jose lost cats page](#).

“What will happen to the cat at the shelter?”

- At intake, the cat will be scanned for a microchip and assigned an Animal ID (A#). Before release, the cat is spayed/neutered, microchipped, vaccinated, and flea treated. Friendly cats may go up for adoption, and feral cats are returned by volunteers. You will be called to pick up the cat for release if you check “Pick up for release” on the orange form.