



If your cat gets out:

FIRST AND FOREMOST – CALL KITTY ANGELS!!
(OR THE SHELTER YOU HAD ADOPTED THE CAT FROM)

Don't panic! Don't chase it and yell its name. Remain calm, call its name softly, keep an eye on it and always have a can of Tuna in Oil available to coax it back home.

"Jack Mackerel" smells even worse but has no oil. Also try warm, canned Pink Salmon.

Try and keep the cat in sight. Use a flashlight at night; you'll be able to spot the reflection of its eyes. If it's a friendly cat without a feral background, walk slowly calling to it and offering it smelly food. Place strong-scented articles outside your home to attract your pet. Animals find their way by scent as well as sound.

If it has a feral background and is a bit skittish, do the above but also have a carrier near by to collect the cat in or a towel to wrap around the cat as the cat may become fearful being outdoors and try and get away, and claw you. If this fails, leave a small amount of food out and borrow a humane trap from a local shelter. Skittish cats become "Ten foot cats" when are out of their element, no matter how long you have had them indoors. They want to come near, but are so overwhelmed at the amount of space between you and them, that you can only get an about ten feet or less near them and they run.

Trapping:

Tuna in oil or canned pink salmon works best, the oil hold the sent longer and, most cats can't resist it. Using a humane trap place a small amount of the tuna in a small dish in the very back of the trap. Make sure that the dish does not interfere with the trip plate falling all the way to the floor of the trap. Also try Valerian (get from health food store); cats cannot resist the potent smell of Valerian, it attracts them like magic!!!

You may use a piece of cardboard or paper plate. A shallow bottom from a 1/2 gallon jug of milk works as well. Next make a small bait trail, about the size of a dime or less. You don't want the cat to become satisfied by eating just the bait. The bait is to lure the cat in to the back of the trap where the dish is. Make a bait trail in small amounts starting at the very outside of the trap. Place a dime size bait piece, maybe on a leaf, another drop maybe about 8 inches into the trap and another on the trip plate. You may have to become inventive and outsmart a cat. For example, I had a cat that would only eat from a trash can...so I put the can on its side, put the trap in, baited the trap, threw trash in the trap and more trash in the barrel. Placing a piece of cardboard on the bottom of the trap acts twofold. The cat can not feel the metal of the trap and it holds the bait trail from the ground. Some people use newspaper. I would scatter some leaves and or bark mulch around the trap and bait. NOTHING HURTS when disguising the trap.

****Most important****!! **BE SURE THAT THE TRAP IS ON LEVEL GROUND!!** If the trap teeters when the cat walks into the trap, it will prematurely trip and scare the cat away. Once trapped, secure the trap with twist ties to keep the door from opening if cat struggles.

Smells:

Cats have an incredible sense of smell. Tuna in oil is your best bet; if your cat is stubborn you might try its favorite food. Also you might leave some socks or a tee shirt out that has your scent on it. Maybe not a cat carrier as most cats associate the carrier with a trip to the vets.

Hiding the trap:

Most cats will be leery of a trap left out in the open. Place the trap in the bushes, along side of a house or building. Somewhere so that it blends in with the existing scenery. Check to make sure that the trap door is not hindered by any obstacles, grass, weeds, etc... You may want to tie the front door up for a few days securely with strings to get the cat used going in and out, earning it's trust, then when you see the cat, cut the strings and you will catch him/her.

Checking the trap:

Never EVER leave trap unattended!!! It's best to put the trap where you can spy on it without approaching it. Spy from a car or a hidden window. The cat most likely is watching you and the trap; you just can't see the cat. At night, use a flashlight from a distance. If an animal is in the trap, you will see the reflection/glow of its eyes. Be patient and keep the bait fresh every 2-3 hours depending on the weather. If the weather is poor, snow or rain, cover the trap with a towel or a piece of a shower curtain, again making sure the trap's mechanisms and door are not obstructed.

Catching the cat:

When you have caught your cat, place a large towel over the trap immediately to reduce its stress. Use twist ties to secure the front door in place. Leaving a trap covered may be best, but have an idea of what it looked like before it was sprung. DO NOT REMOVE THE CAT FROM THE TRAP UNTIL YOU GET IN THE HOUSE!! Bring the trap in the house. If you cat has been out for days you may want to make a vet appointment. Cats can become dehydrated without water. Also they may pick up some fleas and ticks while out.

Posters/Searching:

Make posters and flood the neighborhood with them. Talk to everyone and their relatives!! Tell them to check sheds, garages, basements and anywhere a cat may be hiding or caught. Nothing is going to hurt. Give a description of the cat; was it wearing a collar and tags, does it talk, is it friendly or skittish, long hair or short hair, its name etc... Call your local Animal shelters, and perhaps the city/town that picks up animals killed on the roads, sad to say. NOTIFY EVERYONE! The mailman the UPS man etc....****YOUR BEST BET**** Try going out at 2:00 AM when all is quiet and softly calling your cat's name, this is the best time to find your cat, a scared cat always stays very close and never strays far, they are usually found right in their own backyard. Listen carefully for meows; this is a very quiet time with low activity so you will be able to hear your cat crying. Cats usually don't go far. They're curious animals that like to look and sniff around. It's more likely for a cat to be a few blocks away than a few miles away. So stick close to home for the first part of your search. Be sure to check all the streets in your neighborhood. Use a flashlight for checking under houses and other dark spots. Also check storage sheds, garages, dumpsters, trash cans, and under cars. Don't forget to look in trees for a cat!!!!.

Talking to other cat owners you see is a good idea as the owner might have seen your cat. It's more likely that a cat owner will notice a wandering cat than someone who is not a cat lover.

When searching the neighborhood, be sure to call your cat's name. Your cat can hear you from a great distance. Your cat might be in between houses or behind bushes. Don't rely on just your eyes for finding your cat.

Place a lost ad in your local newspaper or on Petfinder.com and post lost flyers on local websites with your contact information. Offer a REWARD!!! Most people tend to look for a cat if they know a reward is offered. Be sure to call your local veterinary offices and animal emergency clinics to see if anyone has brought in a lost cat. Give them information about your lost cat and take them a poster if you can. Be sure to also check the newspaper's classifieds section for Found Pets too!!! These ads usually change daily, so you should check them each day. If your newspaper has a website, see if you can search these listings online. Also, the road crews for your local and state department of transportation (DOT) usually pick up dead animals from the roadside and city streets. In some cases Animal Control does this as well. You have to call around and find out which agencies do this service in your area. Be sure to find them all!

Don't give up until you find the cat or its body because unless you have one or the other, you only can guess 50 % the outcome of a lost cat.

Wildlife:

I HAVE NEVER BEEN SPRAYED! Skunks, raccoon and opossums are likely candidates to spring your trap. Don't get discouraged; the smell is at least working. If your trap is covered, great, if not cover it GENTLY. Straddle the trap and using the back guillotine door open it slowly and place a stick in the door to hold it up and walk away. If your trap does not have a rear door slowly and gently try and prop the front door open with a stick. Raccoons will look over their shoulder before they run. Remain calm; critters are more fearful of you than you should be of them. Skunks will run if you can get them to wake up if it's morning. Opossums generally run but sometimes remain confused and sit and hiss. If this happens and your woodland critter won't budge gently place a stick through the trap door as if you were opening the trap baiting it. Some traps have a guillotine door in the rear that you can remove or prop open. Just walk gently, talk softly and make no sudden moves. If your trap is covered the task may be a bit easier on both of you. A twig works wonders in keeping the trap door open. Critters usually destroy the cardboard and dishes they encounter in a trap, so use things you don't care about.

GOOD LUCK AND DON'T GIVE UP!! YOUR CAT HAS TO BE SOMEWHERE!!

