

Best Trapping Practices

The illustrations and data provided in these documents were inspired from the results of the trap testing completed through the work of the Trap Research and Development Committee of the Fur Institute of Canada



FUR INSTITUTE
OF CANADA

May 2025



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May 2025

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IMPORTANT NOTICE:

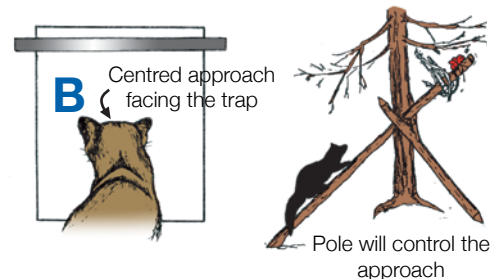
Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area.

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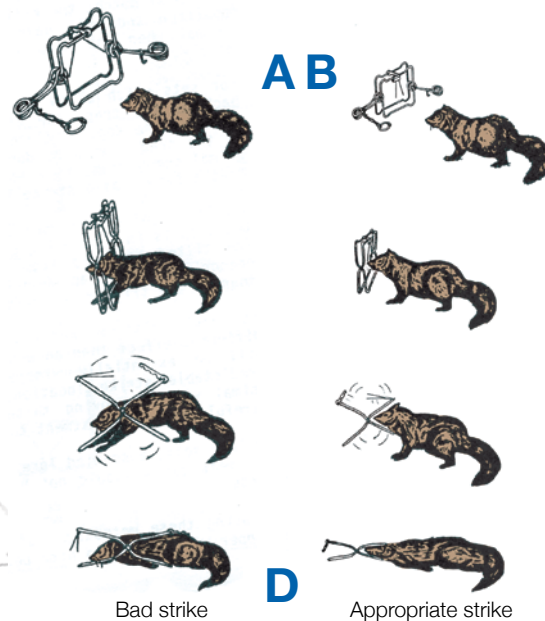
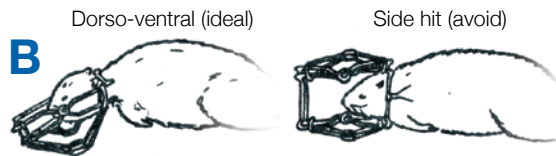
Principles

Criteria

Approach angle

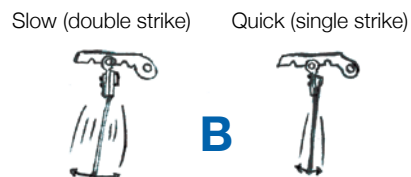


Trap position

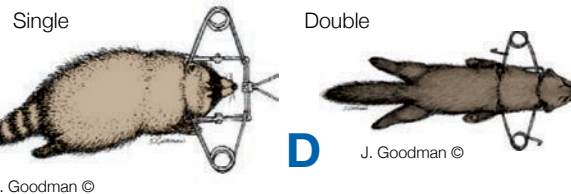


- A** Trap dimensions (adapted to the size of the animal);
 - B** Set (angle of approach by the animal, trap position, trigger position and configuration, trigger adjustment);
 - C** Trap Model Mechanical properties (velocity, momentum and clamping forces);
 - D** Strike locations (targeted vital strike zones).
- ➔ Illustrations show rotating jaw traps but can be applied to other killing type traps.

Trigger Adjustment



Strike type



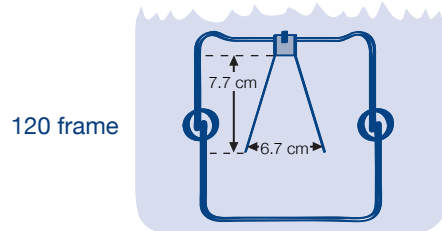
These criteria and principles apply to species-specific killing traps. For a list of certified traps for each species, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

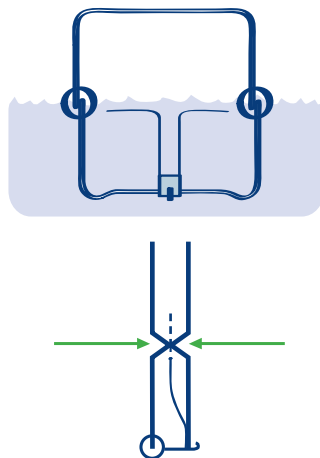
→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

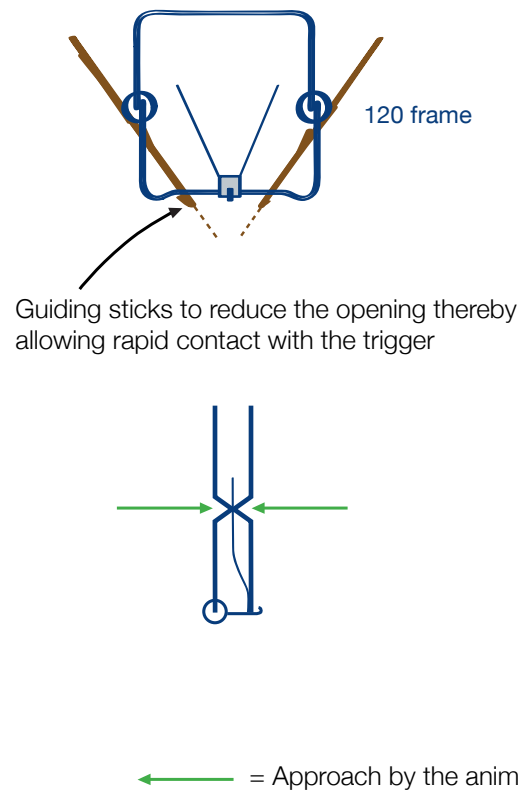
On land and submerged



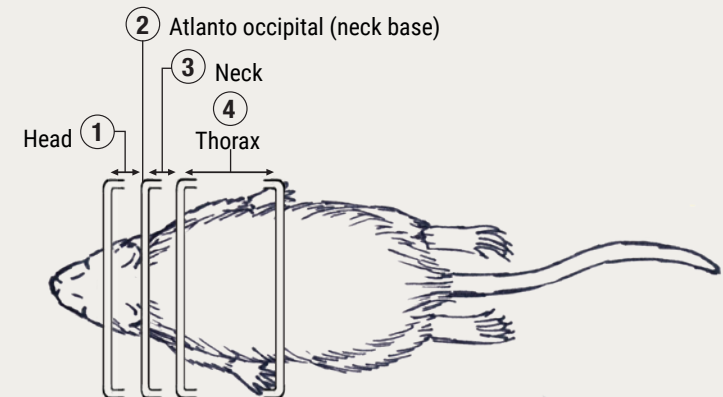
Semi-submerged



Burrow or house entrance



Strike Type	Recommended Strike Locations			
	①	②	③	④
Single	✓	✓	✓	✓



These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

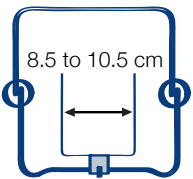
fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

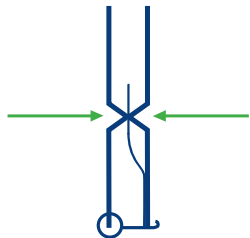
To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

Trail set (on land) Bait or lure set

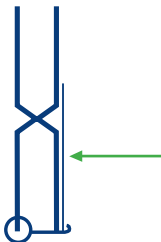
220 and 330
frame



Trail set (on land)

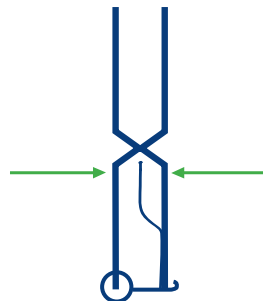
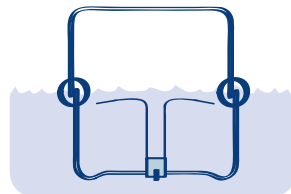


Bait or lure set



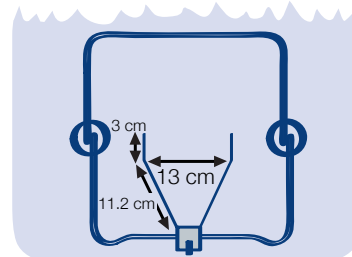
Trail set "semi-submerged"

220 frame

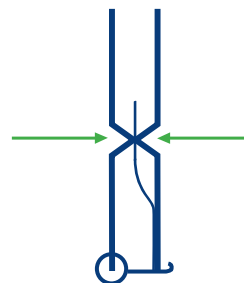
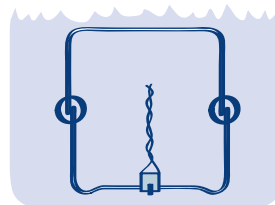


Channel set "submerged"

330 frame



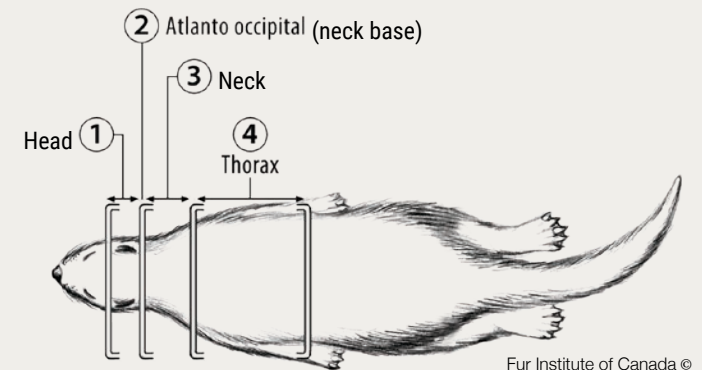
220 and 280 frame



← = Approach by the animal

Strike Types	Recommended Strike Locations			
	①	②	③	④
Single		✓	✓	✓
Double*	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Any combination of thorax ④ and strike location ① or ② or ③.



Fur Institute of Canada ©

These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

Lure Set "semi-submerged"

"Submerged"

330 frame

280 frame

280 and 330 frame

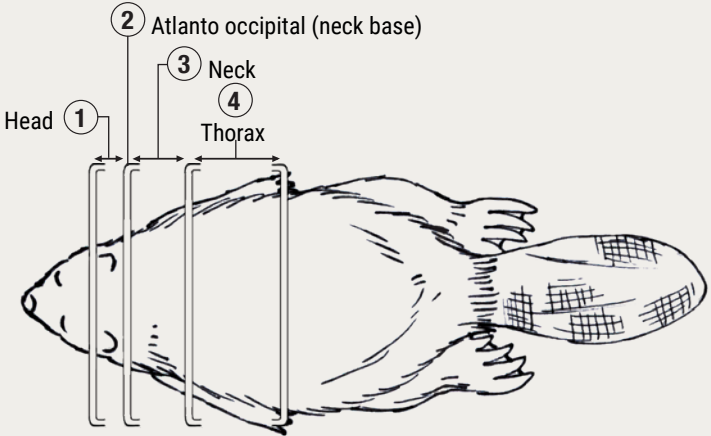
"On land" also

Lure Set "On land"

✗ = Lure ← = Approach by the animal

Strike Types	Recommended Strike Locations			
	①	②	③	④
Single	✓	✓	✓	✓
Double*	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Any combination of thorax ④ and strike location ① or ② or ③.



These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

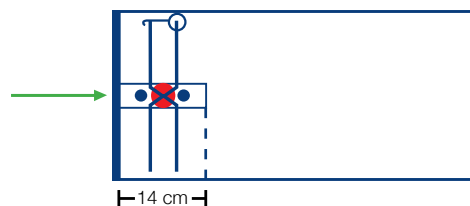
fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

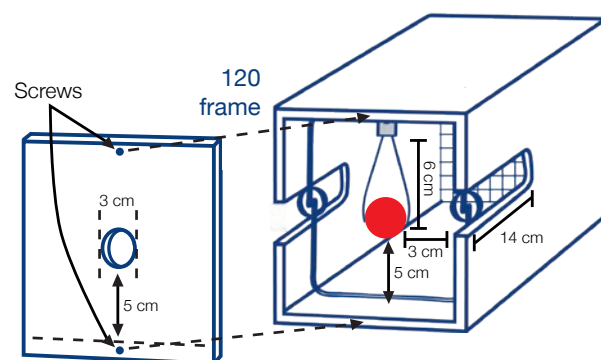
To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

“Closed” Box trap

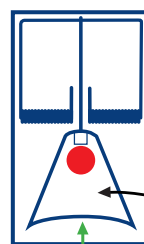
Double rotating jaws / baited trigger



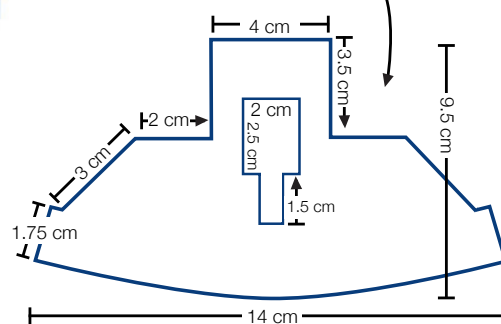
Reduced opening for better selectivity and approach by the animal



Modified Rat Trap

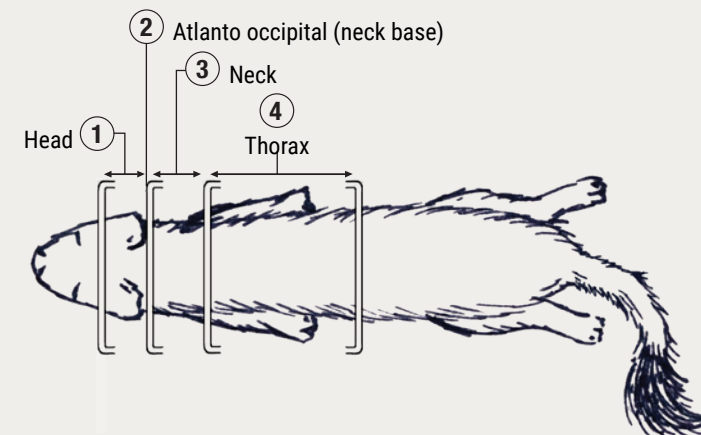


Plastic cone to ensure correct approach



● = Bait ← = Approach by the animal

Strike Type	Recommended Strike Locations			
	①	②	③	④
Single	✓	✓	✓	✓



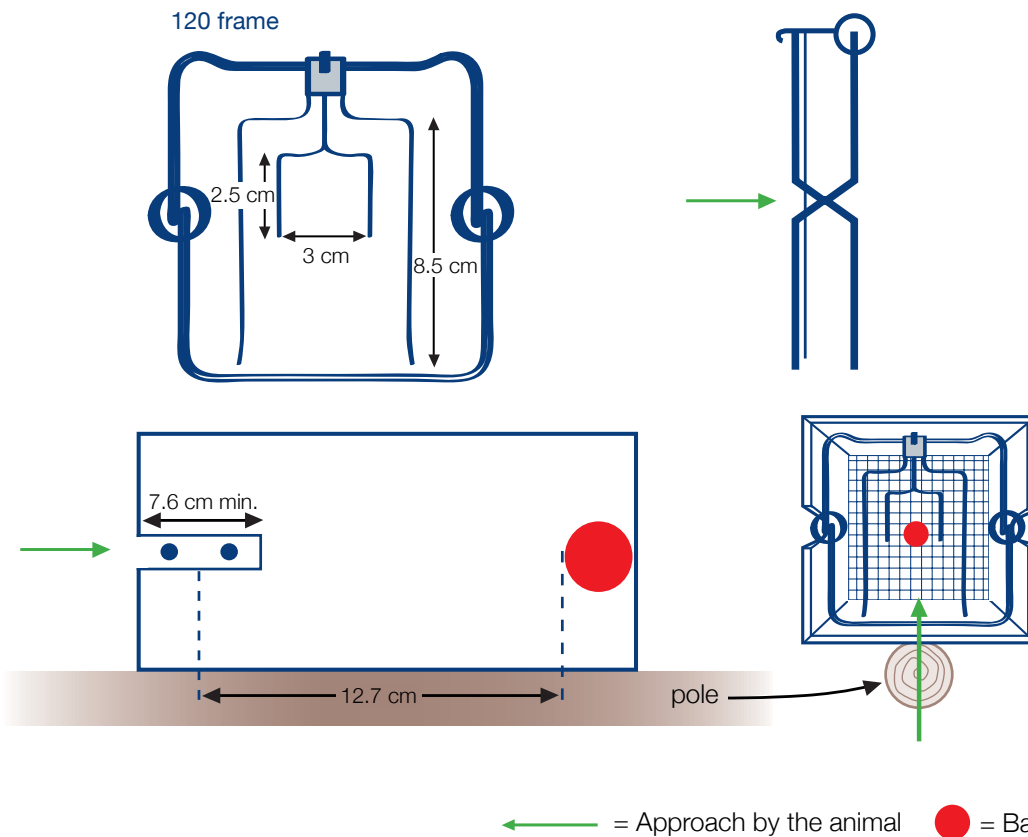
These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

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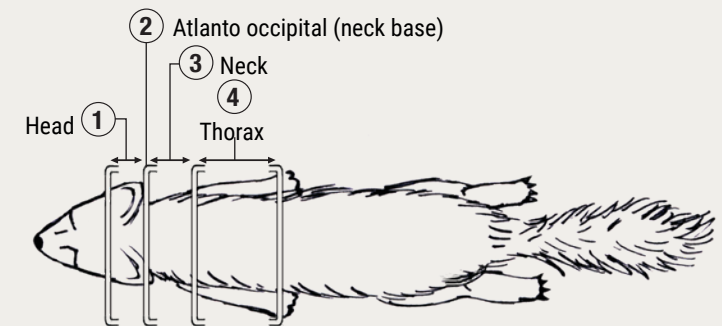
To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

Box set



Strike Types	Recommended Strike Locations			
	①	②	③	④
Single	✓	✓	✓	✓
Double*	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Any combination of thorax ④ and strike location ① or ② or ③.

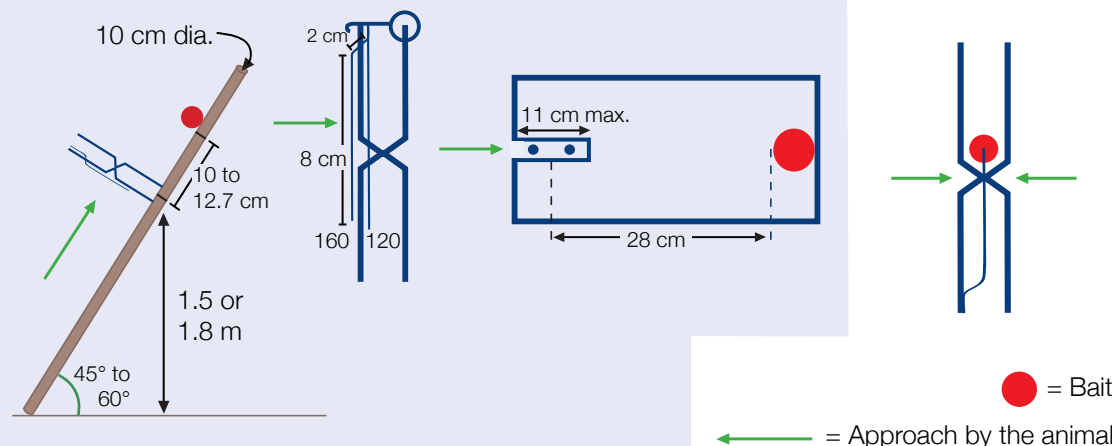
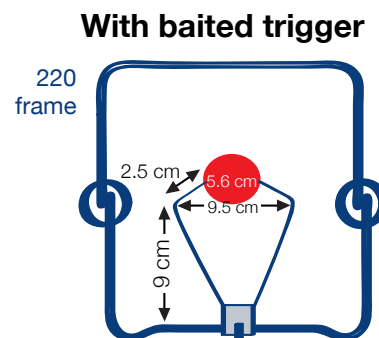
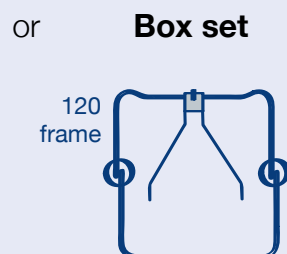
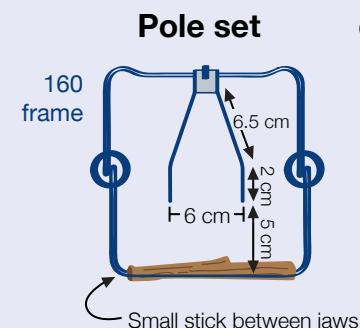


These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a certified traps list, see:

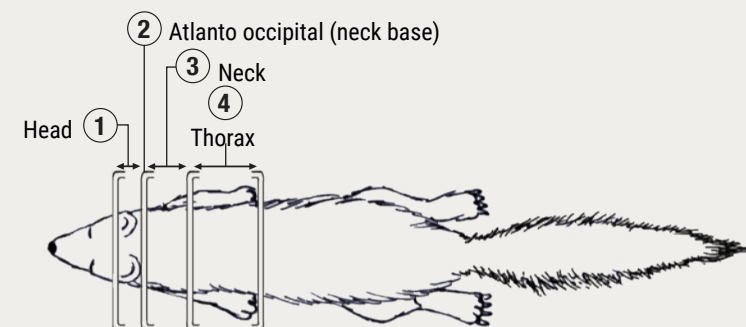
fur.ca/certified-traps/

→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations



Strike Type	Recommended Strike Location			
	①	②	③	④
Single		✓		



These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

Pole set*

or

Box set*

Trail set

220 frame 280 frame

10 cm dia.

11 cm max.

28 cm

45°

Center trap on pole for best approach

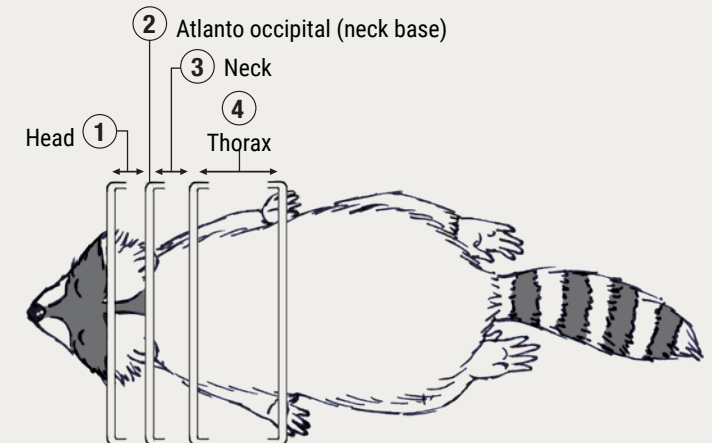
* Trap size and distance between the bait and the center of the trap is a major factor in obtaining atlanto-occipital strikes.

● = Bait

← = Approach by the animal

Sets above the ground (vertical or horizontal) is to avoid captures by a front leg

Strike Type	Recommended Strike Location			
	①	②	③	④
Single		✓		



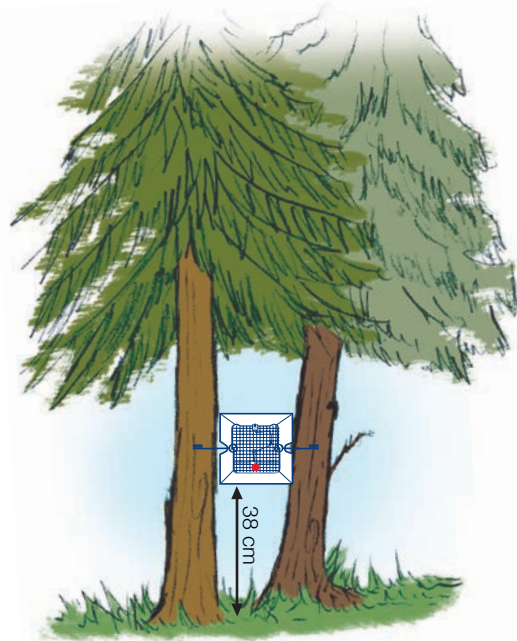
These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

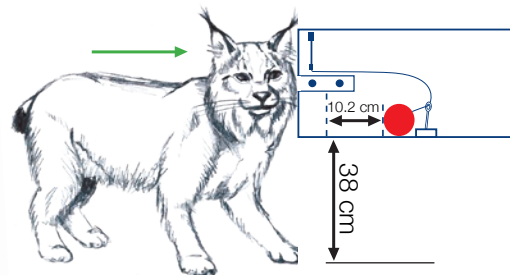
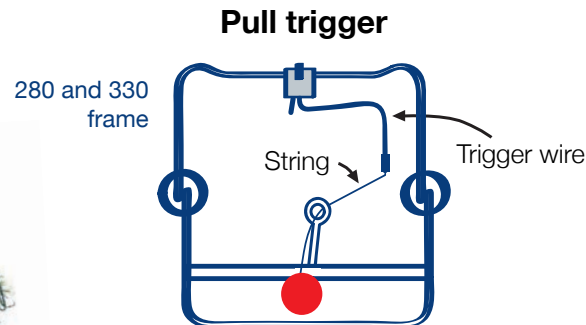
➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To Get Optimal Lethal Strike Locations

Set details



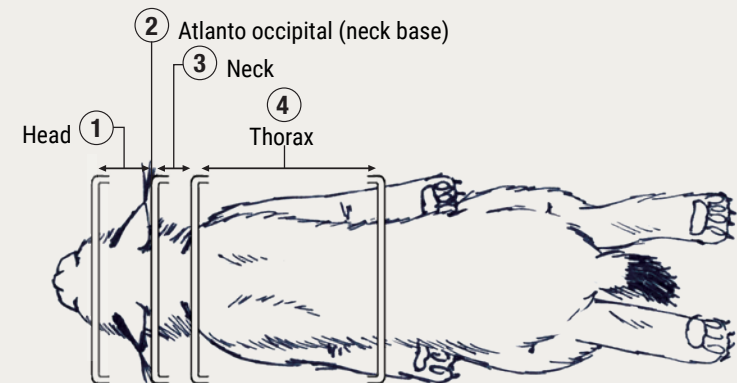
Technique to encourage lynx to take the bait with its mouth thus avoiding capture by a front paw.



● = Bait

← = Approach by the animal

Strike Type	Recommended Strike Location			
	①	②	③	④
Single			✓	



These specifications only apply to killing traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

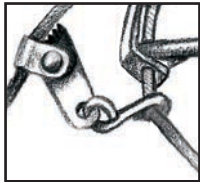
➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Types of cable (galvanized steel)

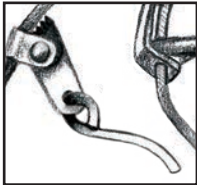
Target species	Diameter (inches)	Construction
+ Lynx/Bobcat Fox/Coyote	1/16 and 5/64	1 x 19 and 7 x 7
Wolf	3/32 and 5/64	1 x 19 and 7 x 7

Types of breakaway devices

S-Hook + J-Hook



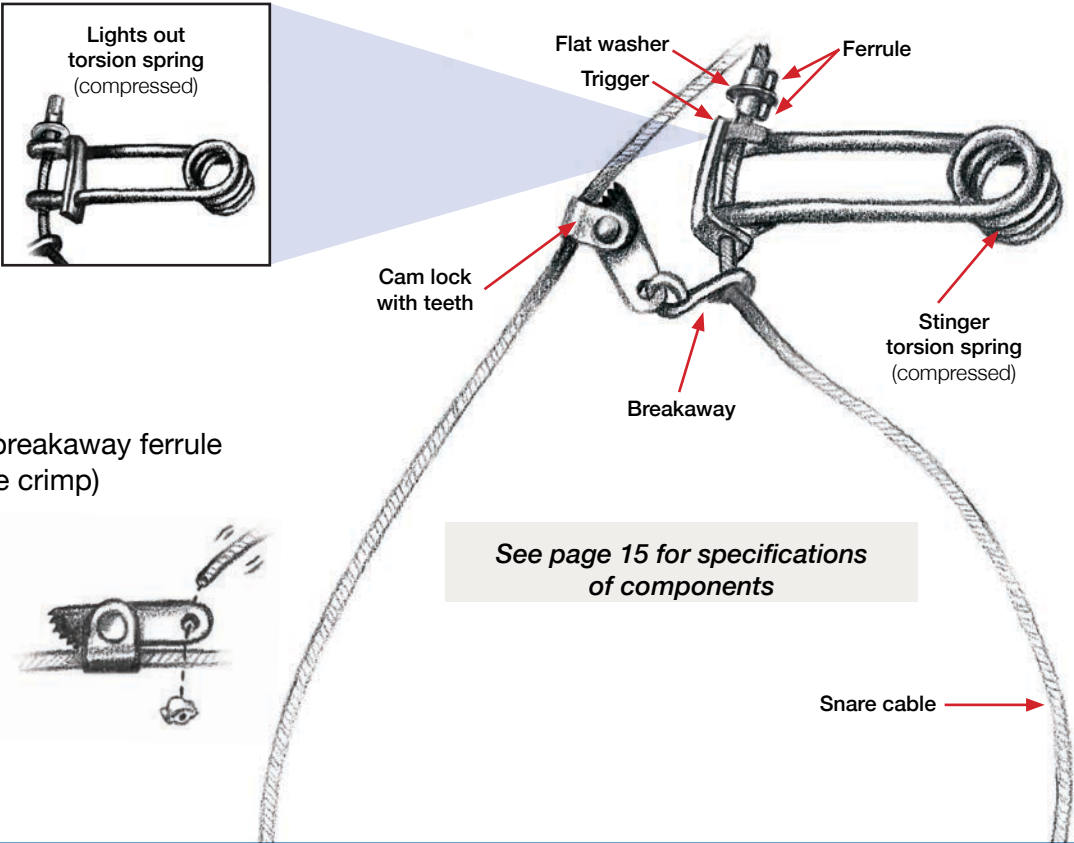
Camlock with
teeth and
S-Hook



Camlock with breakaway ferrule
(single crimp)



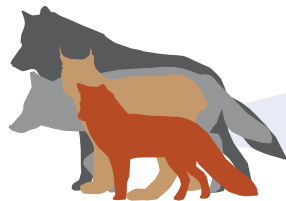
Recommended design and components



See page 15 for specifications
of components

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Recommended Parts



Torsion springs

Model	Foxes	Lynx/ Bobcat	Coyote	Wolf
*Stinger 22 Mag Economy	✓	✓	✓	
*Stinger 22 Mag Deluxe	✓	✓	✓	✓ (1)
*Stinger 33 Mag Deluxe			✓	✓ (1) + (2)
*Stinger 44 Terminator			✓	✓ (1) + (2)
**Lights Out A1	✓	✓	✓	✓ (1)
**Lights Out Signature 75			✓	✓ (1) + (2)
Signature Series 85			✓	✓ (1) + (2)

*All Stinger springs to be mounted with #2 trigger.

**All Lights out springs to be mounted with Lights Out incorporated trigger.

Camlocks with teeth (e.g. Bridger Sure-Hold Camlock with teeth) or other designs that will stay in place while the torsion spring is opening. They must be of the same diameter as the snare cable.

Breakaway devices

Breakaway model	Hold foxes/lynx/ bobcat	Hold coyote/ foxes/lynx/ bobcat	Hold wolf/coyote/ foxes/lynx/ bobcat	Release white-tailed deer/mule/ caribou	Release elk/moose
				(Caught by a leg)	
Senneker S-Hook 265	✓			✓	✓
Senneker S-Hook 385	✓	✓		✓	✓
Senneker S-Hook 750	✓	✓	✓ (1)		✓
Senneker S-Hook 1000	✓	✓	✓ (1) + (2)		✓
Snare Shop					
S-Hook 285	✓	✓		✓	✓
S-Hook 525	✓	✓	✓ (1)		✓
Sullivan S-Hook 280	✓	✓		✓	✓
J-Hook 285	✓	✓		✓	✓
J-Hook 350	✓	✓			✓
Fastach #150 or Ferrule/single crimp					
1/16" cable	✓	✓		✓	✓
3/32" cable	✓	✓	✓ (1) + (2)		✓
5/64" cable	✓	✓	✓ (1)		✓
Fastach	✓	✓		✓	✓

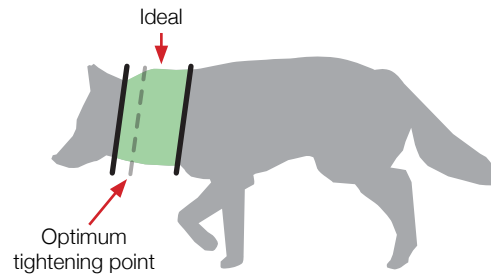
Note: the breakaway model numbers may not match the values obtained by standardized testing (e.g. S-Hook 285 releases at 335 lb).

(1) Eastern wolf

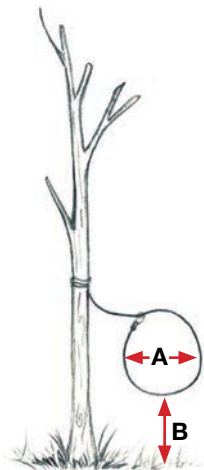
(2) Western wolf

→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Strike zone (Canids + Felids)

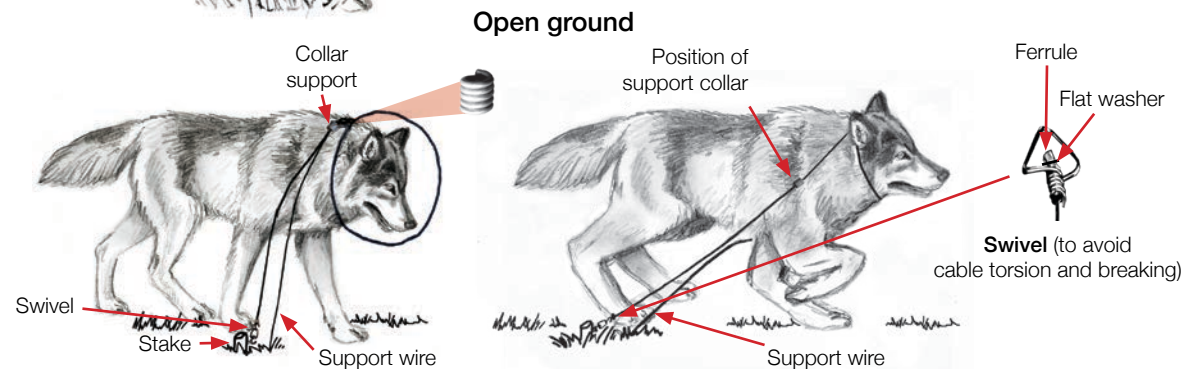
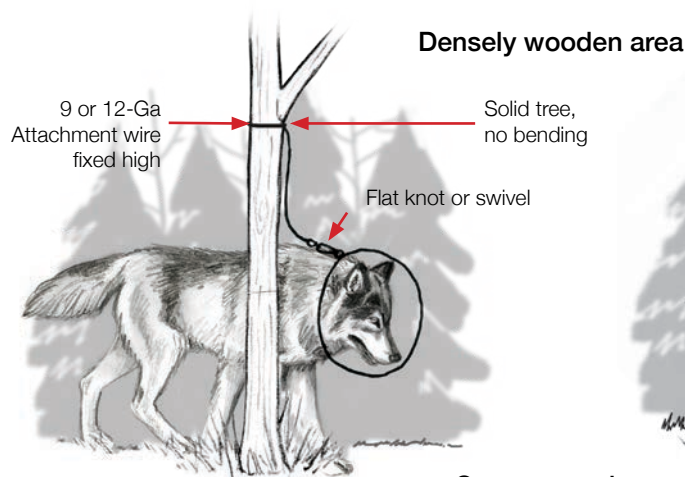


Loop diameters and setting heights



Species	A	B
Fox	18 cm (7")	18 cm (7")
Bobcat	20.5 cm (8")	20.5 cm (8")
Lynx	20.5 cm (8")	30.5 cm (12")
Coyote	25 cm (10")	25 cm (10 to 12")
Wolf	35 cm (14")	35 cm (14")
Wolf (Northern)	40.5 cm (16")	45.5 cm (18")

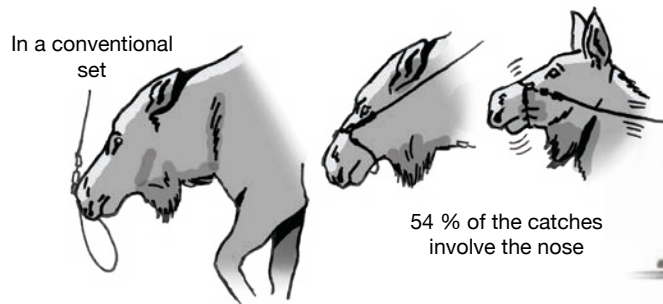
Snare set sites and attachment points vs. strike zone (Canids + Felids)



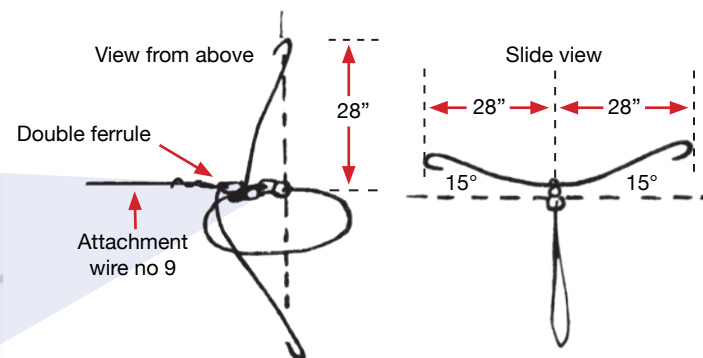
➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

To avoid capture and retention of cervidae, cattle and sheep, killing neck snares must be constructed and set the proper way.

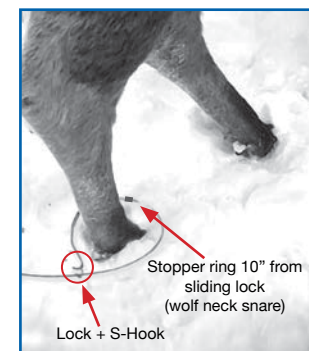
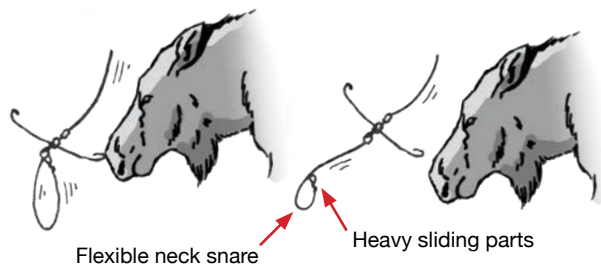
Accidental catches of moose in neck snares intended for wolves



Diverter; wire no 11 (set details)



Using a diverter wire

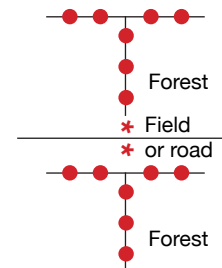
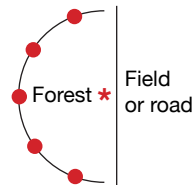
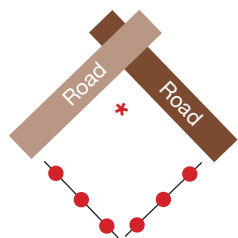
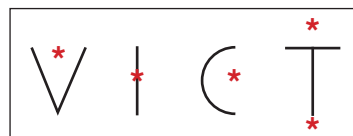


Leg catch = rupture produced by S-Hook

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

General Set Guidelines (dogs, eagles, birds of prey) - solutions

1. Proper neck snares and attractives positioning



Behaviors

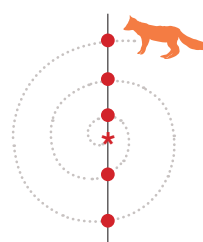
Dogs

Field



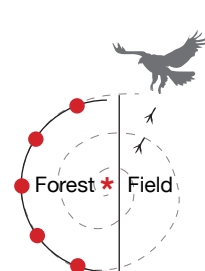
When smell detected, will go straight to the attractive (lure/bait)

Canids (fox, coyote, wolf)



The suspicion of these wild canids leads them to turn around the smells detected before approaching them

Eagles or birds of prey

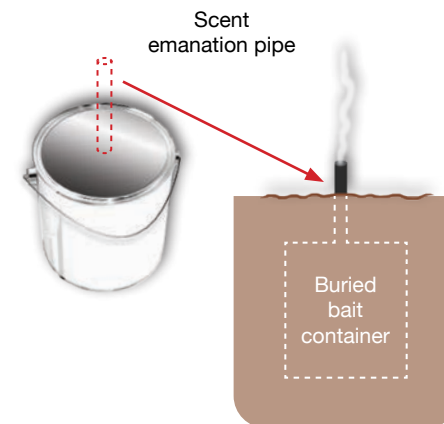


Requires an open area for landing

- * Attractive (lure/bait)
- Neck snare
- Movements on the ground (wild canids)
- - - Flying travel trajectory (birds of prey)
- Movements on the ground (birds of prey)

2. Hiding baits (buried, inside a bait container, covered)

Use of a adapted bait container
(eg. steel bucket with lid)



Covered bait



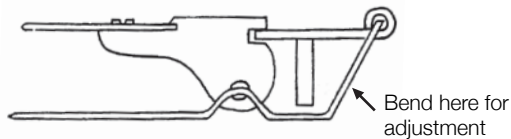
→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Elements of Trapping to Avoid Injuries / Limb Holding Traps

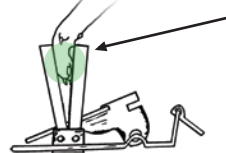
For all species when possible, use a fixed anchor

Jaw type traps and certain footsnares

Proper adjustment of the pan trigger...

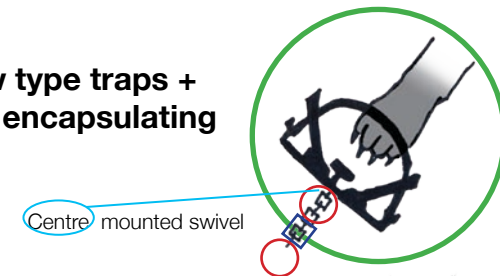


...Produces an appropriate strike location



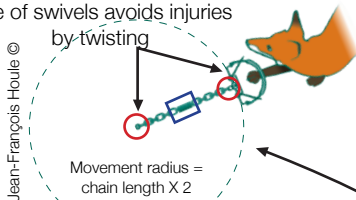
Daily check of the trap sets

Jaw type traps + Foot encapsulating



Jaw Type Traps, Footsnares, Foot Encapsulating Traps

Use of swivels avoids injuries by twisting



Jean-François Houle ©

Shock absorber springs

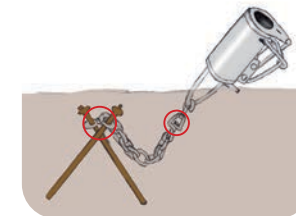


Strong (coyote, wolf)



Regular (fox)

All limb holding traps for raccoon and lynx: use stake anchoring systems



Canids, lynx, raccoon:

With a stake, use short chain or cable

Canids jaw trap only:

With a drag anchoring system, use a long chain (see Canids sheet)



Stake or drag trap anchoring:

Use an inline shock absorber spring and a sufficient number of swivels

○ = Swivel

□ = Shock absorber spring

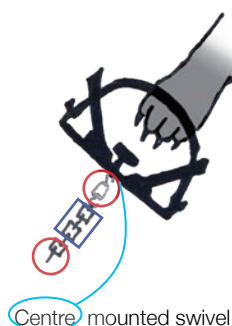
These specifications only apply to the species-specific live capture traps. For a list of certified traps for each species, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

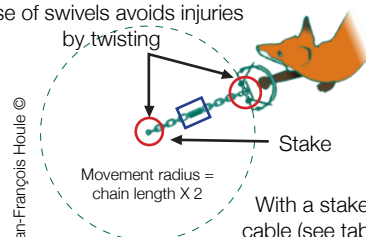
Trap Set Details to Avoid Injuries

Jaw type trap



Jaw type trap and footsnare

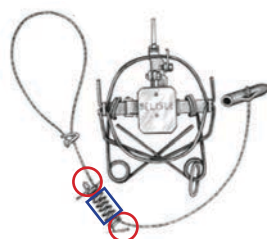
Use of swivels avoids injuries by twisting



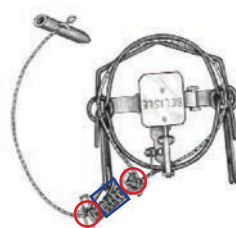
N.B.: For all footsnare cable, use stake only, no drag

Footsnare

(not set)



(set)



Shock absorber springs



Strong (coyote, wolf)



Regular (fox)

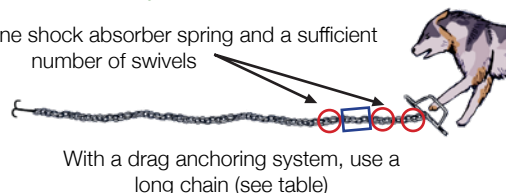


Recommended anchoring chain maximum length

	Mobile (drag)	Stake
Fox	1.5 m	0.3 m
Coyote	2.5 m	0.5 m
Wolf	3 m	1.2 m

It is preferable to use a fixed anchor system in most cases

Use of at least one shock absorber spring and a sufficient number of swivels



○ = Swivel

□ = Shock absorber spring

FOOTSNARE / JAW TYPE TRAP

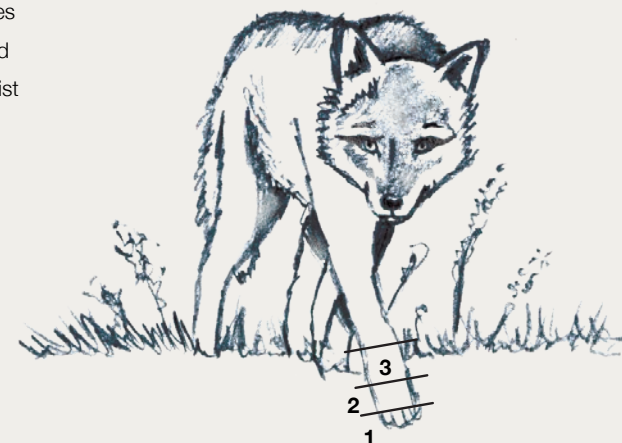
Optimal Strike Locations

1	2	3
✓	✓	

1 Toes

2 Pad

3 Wrist



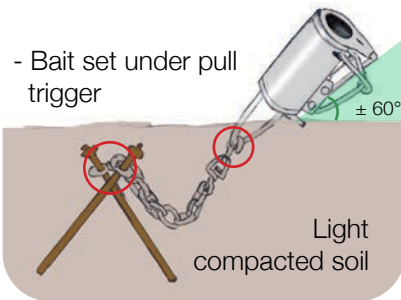
These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for these species. For a certified trap list for coyote and wolf, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

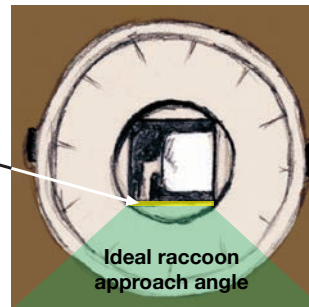
Trap Set Details To Avoid Injuries

Lil' Grizz Get'rz



- Positioned this way, the restraining arm (steel rod) strikes on the pad side

Egg trap

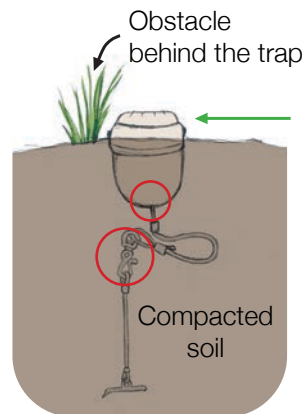
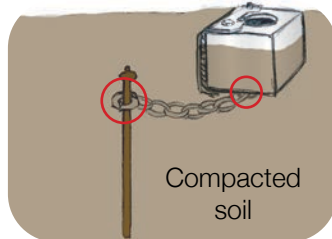


For all trap models:

- Short chaining system
- 2 swivels
- Stake anchoring system

Duffer and Egg trap:

- Partly buried underground (compacted soil)
- Bait set on the trigger

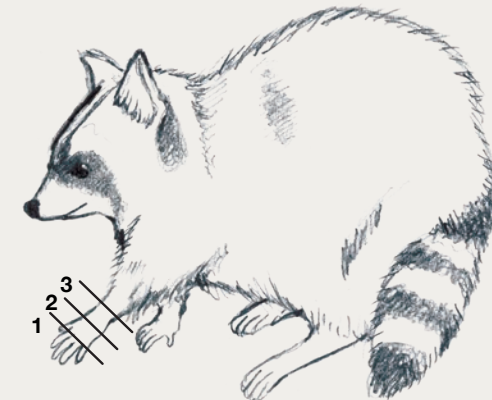


← = Approach by the animal ○ = Swivel

FOOT ENCAPSULATING TRAPS

Optimal Strike Location

1	2	3
	✓	



These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

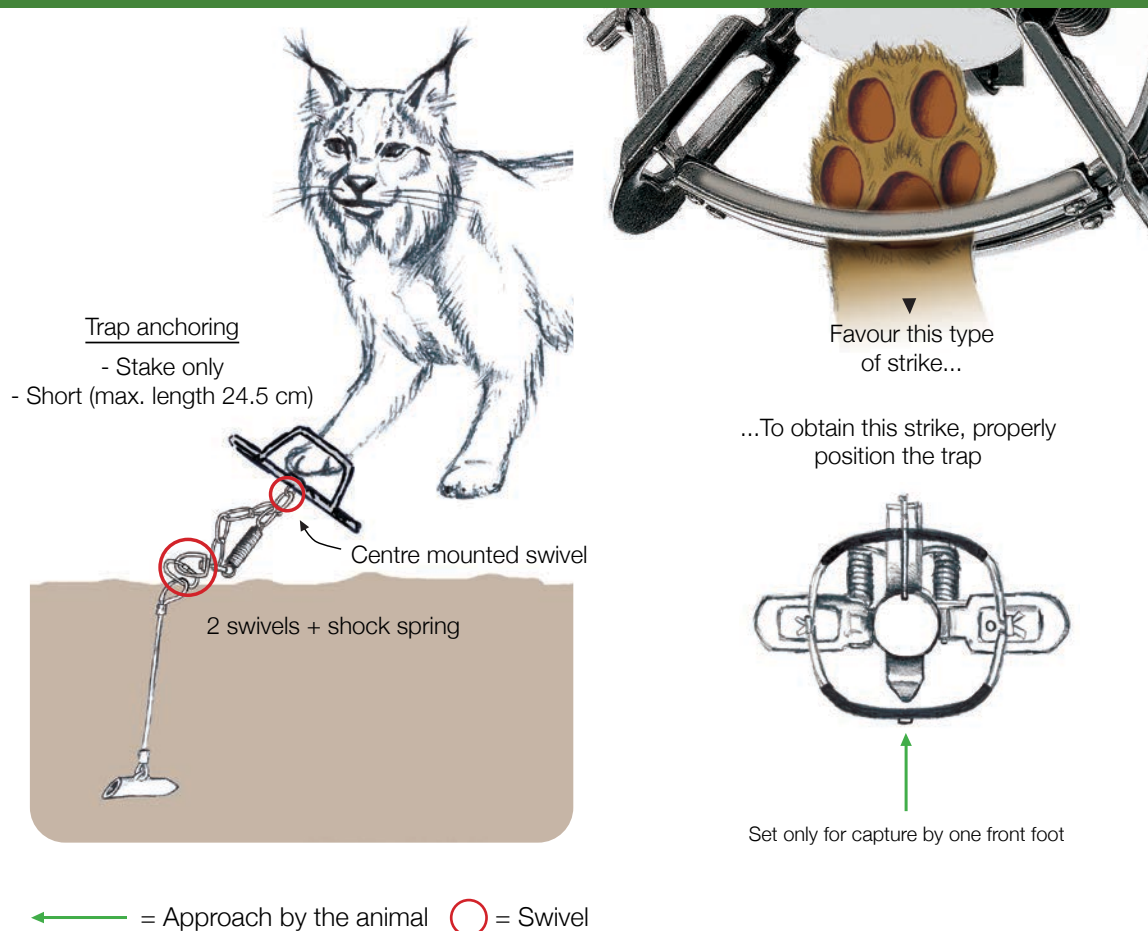
Best Trapping Practices

CANADA LYNX

LIVE CAPTURE

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

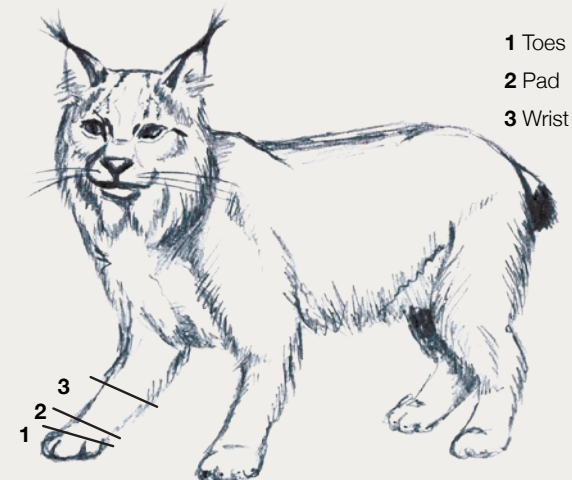
Trap Set Details to Avoid Injuries



FOOTSNARE / JAW TYPE TRAP

Optimal Strike Locations

1	2	3
✓	✓	



These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

Best Trapping Practices

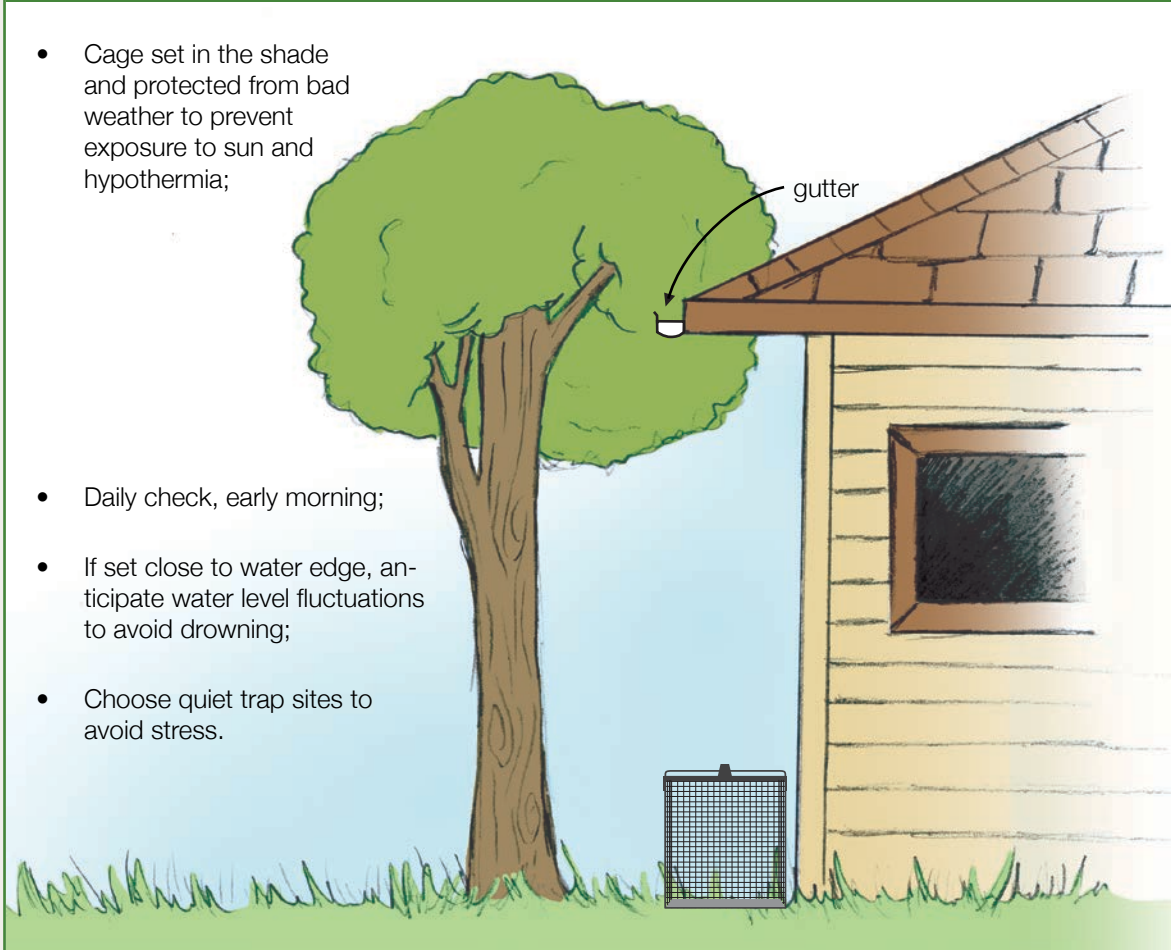
GENERAL INFORMATION

LIVE CAPTURE CAGES

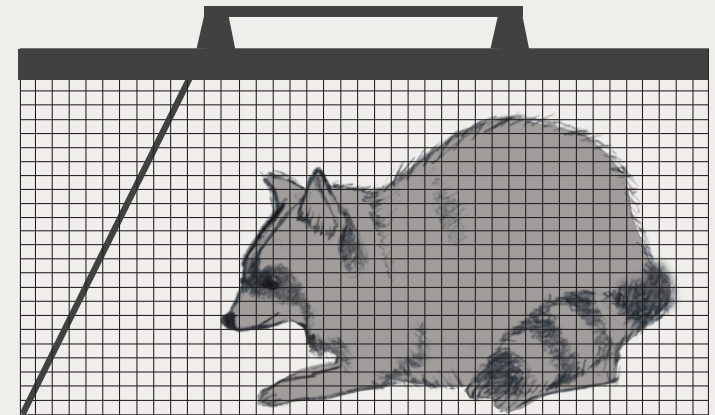
➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Installation Details

- Cage set in the shade and protected from bad weather to prevent exposure to sun and hypothermia;
- Daily check, early morning;
- If set close to water edge, anticipate water level fluctuations to avoid drowning;
- Choose quiet trap sites to avoid stress.



CAGE



For a list of raccoon certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

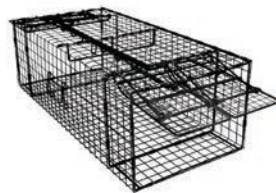
➡ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Daily visit check. Trap set time = end PM or day.
Visit = early morning (prevents insolation, hyperthermia, injuries)

AIHTS Certified beaver live capture cage models



Hancock/Koro



Comstock



Ezee Set/Dam Beaver

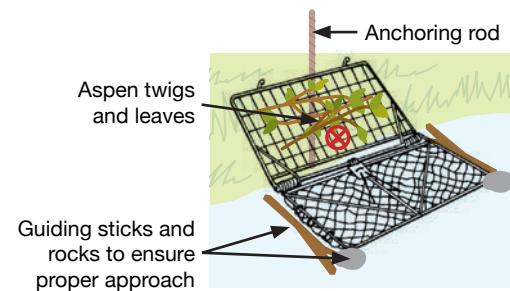
Recommended trap set details to avoid injuries, stress, mortality:

Covered and shaded site :

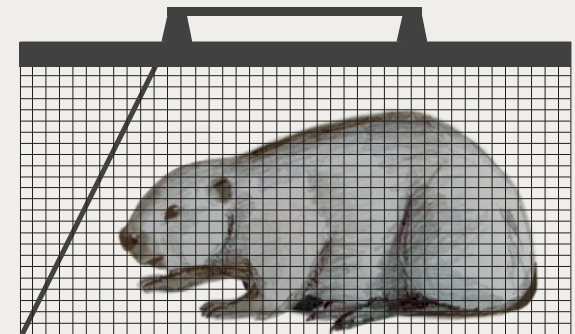
- ✓ diminue le niveau de stress
- ✓ diminue le risque de blessures



⊗ = Lure position
(beaver castoreum)



CAGE

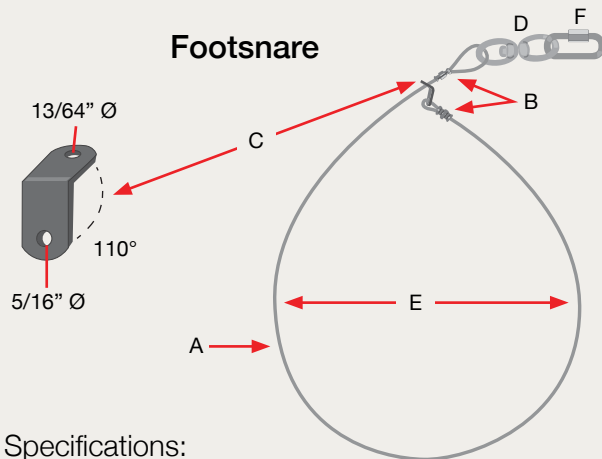


These specifications only apply to the live capture traps for this species. For a list of certified traps, see:

fur.ca/certified-traps/

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

Footsnare



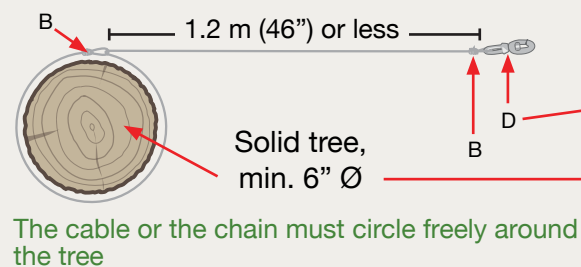
Specifications:

- A. Flexible steel cable, construction 7 x 19, 3/16" diameter
- B. Double ferrule 3/16"
- C. Lock: 110° angle, 3/16" thickness, 5/8" width, rounded edges (**single use**)
- D. Swivel: minimum 880 lb test
- E. Diameter of 6" and less (bucket set)
8" and less (trail set)
- F. Quick link 5/16 (1 760 lb test)

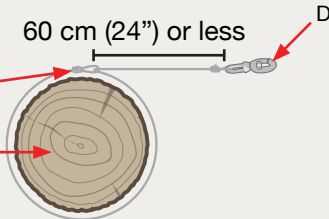
IMPORTANT: fixed anchor ensures a more reliable operation of the footsnare swivel.

Fixed Anchor Systems (recommended) with steel cable 3/16" Ø or chain (1/4" links)

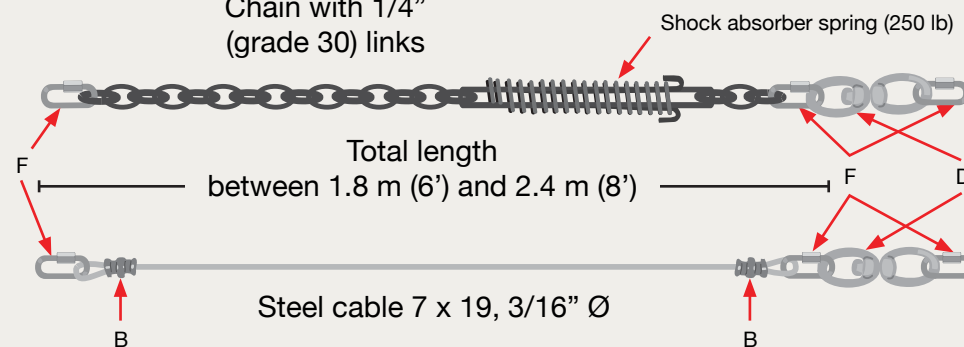
Bucket Set



Trail Set

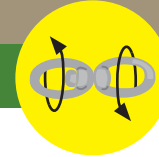


Chain with 1/4" (grade 30) links

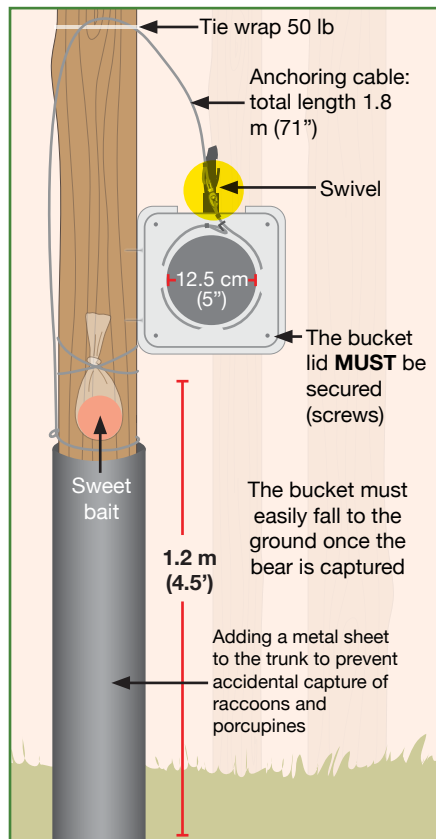


➡ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

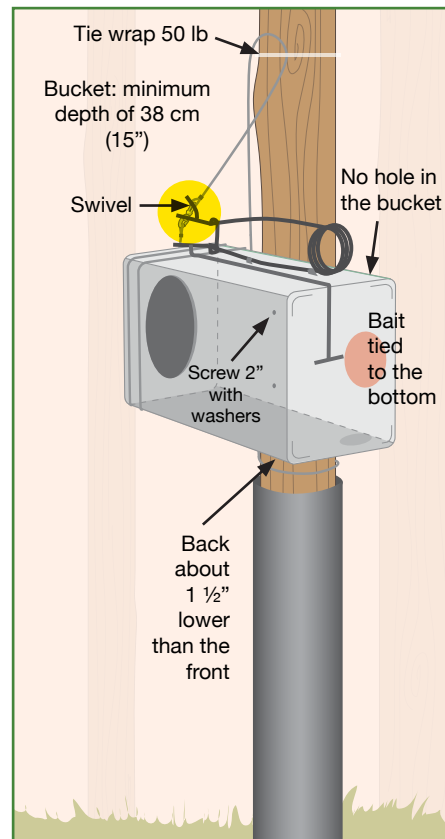
THE SWIVEL MUST ALWAYS BE FUNCTIONAL



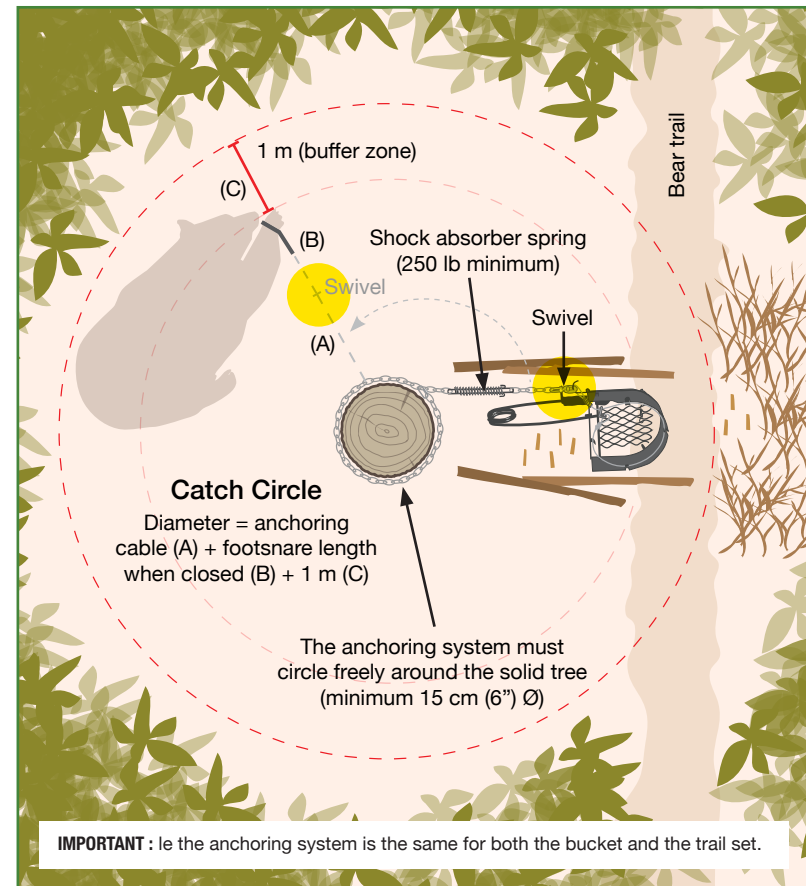
BUCKET SET



IMPORTANT: the anchoring system is the same for both the bucket and the trail set.



TRAIL (GROUND) SET



IMPORTANT : le the anchoring system is the same for both the bucket and the trail set.



Best Trapping Practices

COYOTE

LIVE CAPTURE

RELAXING CABLE RESTRAINT



FUR INSTITUTE
OF CANADA

➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

RECOMMENDED TRAPPING PRACTICES AND CABLE SYSTEM COMPONENTS AND DESIGN

Relaxing cable restraint is a cable used to capture and hold an animal by the neck with the objective of maintaining it alive while minimizing injuries during the contention time period.

It is used in several parts of North America to live capture coyotes for different reasons, mainly where there is a risk of incidental capture of non-target species such as domestic dogs, livestock and big game species.

Properly built and set, it allows for the releasing of non-target animals and, if necessary, of target species with minimal harm.

Ongoing recent trap research programs in Canada and the USA involving government agencies, veterinarians, trappers, trap manufacturers have permitted to identify different characteristics that will permit to achieve these goals for the capture of coyotes. This document is identifying these different components that trap research results have confirmed as to be the basic ones in order to minimize injuries and stress to captured animals.

Since capture efficiency and selectivity are related to local field conditions and wildlife species, and therefore can vary from one region to the other, we recommend that you consult your provincial or state wildlife agencies and trappers association to learn about the best applicable setting techniques in your trapping area.

• CABLE (AVIATION CABLE)

- Strand Construction: single 1 × 19 or 1 × 7, multi 7 × 7 or 7 × 19;
- Diameter: 1/8" or 3/32". If too small, it will increase possibility of injuries and chewing by coyote (escape).

• LOCKS (RELAXING)

- Relaxing models, e.g. Micro Lock, Penny (90-Degree Bend Washer Lock), Kaatz Relax-a-Lock, Berkshire Washer Lock, Reichart™ Washer Lock, No. 4 Gregerson™ Lock, BMI™ Slide Free Lock;
- Passively non-powered activated (by the animal itself);
- No Powered assisted locks (e.g. Ram Power Snare, Stinger Spring, Amberg Spring).

• CABLE LOOP (FIGURES 1, 3)

- Size (diameter) minimum 10" (25 cm), maximum 12" (30 cm);
- Height from the ground to the bottom part of the loop: 10" (25 cm);
- Deer Stop (to prevent capture by a leg): single ferrule cramped on cable to allow a closed loop at 2 1/2" (6 cm) diameter.

• SWIVEL

- Install swivel number 1 on the cable as close as possible to the end of the 10 to 12" (25 to 30 cm) diameter snare loop; (FIGURES 1, 4)
- Install swivel number 2 at the end of the cable extension on the fixed anchoring point. Cable extension must be as short as possible; (FIGURES 1, 4)
- Captured animal must be able to circle (360°) freely around the fixed anchoring point. (FIGURES 4, 5, 6)

• EXTENSION TO THE CABLE (FIGURE 2)

Must be as short as possible to prevent a whipping action when the coyote in movement hits the full extension of the cable. This reduces the risk of injury and possible cable entanglement resulting in death. (FIGURE 4)

• ANCHORING POINT

Snare cable or extension cable has to be attached to a solid (fixed) anchoring point directly by a swivel. The cable MUST be able to freely turn around the anchoring point. (FIGURES 4, 5, 6)

For ground stake, it should be a metal rod of 30" (75 cm). In loose substrate, use a double one. Ground cable anchor (e.g. Berkshire, Finned) and solid tree can also be used as anchors.

• ENTANGLEMENT OF THE CABLE

There MUST BE NO entanglement of the snare or extension cable. The swivel(s) MUST be able to function freely during the captive time period. (FIGURE 4)

• BREAKAWAY DEVICE (BIG GAME AND LIVESTOCK) (FIGURES 2, 3)

An appropriate breakaway component is added to allow self releasing of non-target species. Check appropriate resistance per species.

→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

FIGURE 1

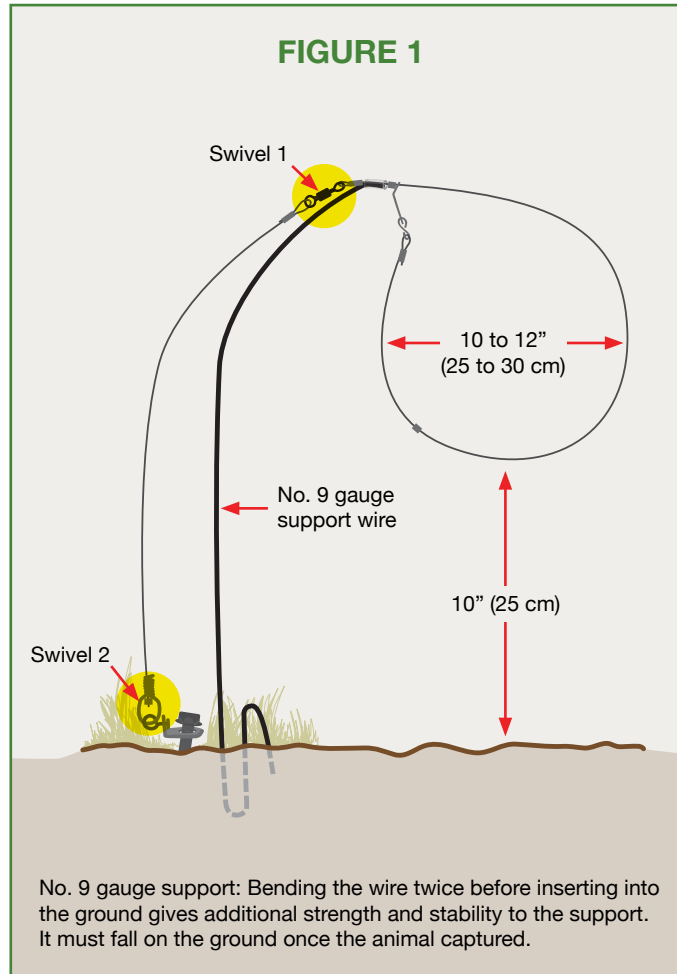


FIGURE 2

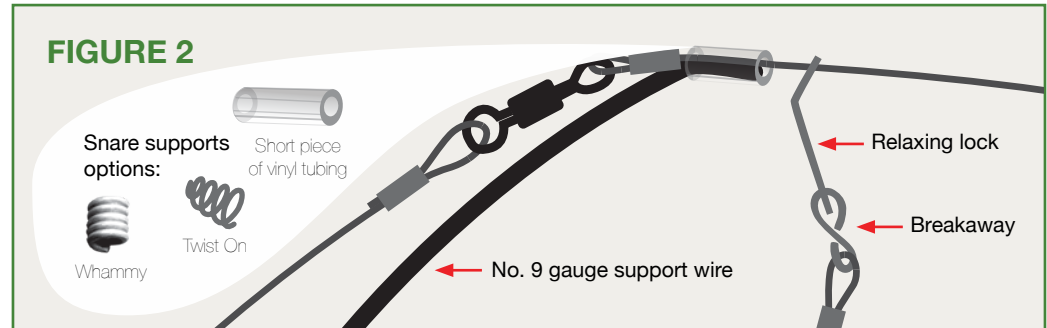
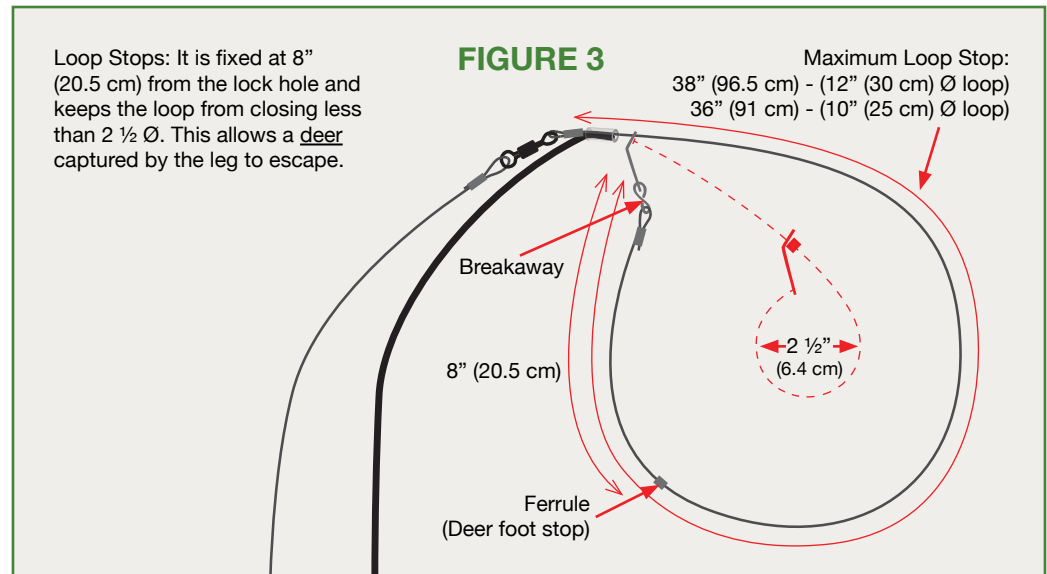


FIGURE 3



→ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

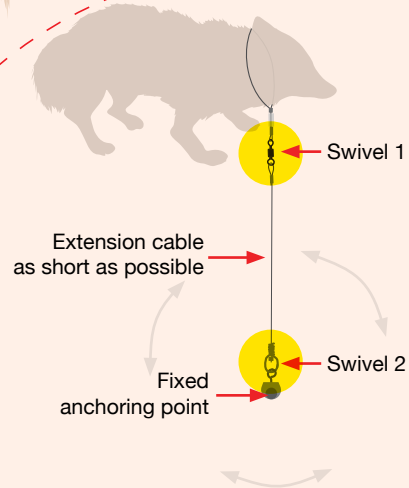
! NO ENTANGLEMENT OF CABLE



SWIVELS MUST ALWAYS BE FUNCTIONAL

FIGURE 4

Catch Circle



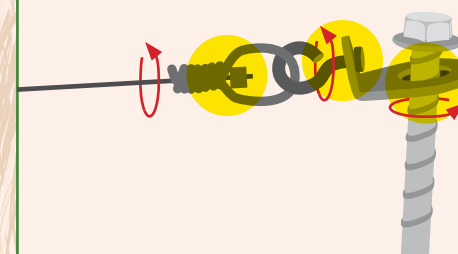
No obstacle in catch circle to avoid any entanglement of cable and maintain swivelling action.

Cable must circle freely (360°) around anchoring point.

FIXED ANCHORING ONLY

FIGURE 5

Ground Stake



➔ Check with the authorities in charge of wildlife to confirm regulations related to trap use in your trapping area

COYOTE RELAXING CABLE RESTRAINT MEETING AIHTS* REQUIREMENTS DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

KAATZ RELAX-A-LOCK, BERKSHIRE LOCK, 90-DEGREE BEND WASHER LOCK (PENNY LOCK) AND MICRO LOCK



Kaatz Relax-a-Lock



Berkshire
Washer Lock



90-Degree Bend
Washer Lock
(Penny Lock)



Micro Lock

SNARE + SET CHARACTERISTICS

- 3/32" diameter 7 x 7 or 1 x 19 weave cable (both loop and extension).
- Devices of a total of 6' (1.83 m) in length composed of two parts: a 38" (96.5 cm) catch loop cable and a 34" (86.5 cm) extension cable.
- A first No. 8 barrel swivel placed between the loop and extension cables, 38" (96.5 cm) from the cable loop end (to create a maximum catch loop diameter of 12" (30 cm)).
- A second No. 9 wire end swivel attached for staking.
- A ferrule stop placed 8" (20.5 cm) from the cable end loop to create a 2.5" (6.4 cm) diameter loop stop (deer stop).
- A breakaway ferrule clamped on the cable end (behind the lock) and designed to break at 350 lb.
- Vinyl tubing as the snare support collar.
- Bottom of cable loop set between 9-12" (23-30 cm) from the ground or packed snow.

*Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards

Source: Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, USA

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