

HOW TO GET TRAPPING

STEP 1 – get a trap

We are fortunate to have 58 community trapping groups mobilising the predator free movement across Wellington – that's one for every suburb in Wellington and most of the reserves in between! You can get in touch with your local group for your own Victor trap in a wooden tunnel to set and monitor in your backyard!

STEP 2 – find a good spot for the trap

Think like a rat! Choose a location that a rat or mouse is likely to go and feel safe to stop. Rats and mice don't normally like wide open spaces and tend to run close to walls, plants and fences so that's a good place to put your trap. They like places they can find food and water like compost heaps and streams or creeks. Ensure the trap box is on firm, solid ground so it doesn't move or rock when a rat enters the box, as this can put them off going into the tunnel.

Top tips:

- Rats prefer concealment to being out in the open
- They navigate along wall edges and fence lines
- They like the safety of thick, matted vegetation
- Rats use trees as on-ramps to the canopy motorway, so a trap screwed onto a fence, or a branch can be a great place



Too exposed



Better – good cover



Fence line is good, but...



...a fence with cover is better!



Old garden waste = rat heaven!



Poke the trap into thick cover



Rats LOVE trees



Fence lines = rat highways

STEP 3 – lure them in

Choosing the right bait is a hotly debated, and often fiercely competitive topic! Most people swear by peanut butter, but researchers at Victoria University of Wellington have put the different baits to the test, and found that stock-standard peanut butter might not always be the best bet. They found wild rats prefer cheese, milk chocolate, Nutella and walnuts to your standard peanut butter. In any case it's often trial and error, and the reality is that rats will eat almost anything. Experiment with different baits and make sure you tell your local predator free group what's working so we can monitor the results.

Bait your trap and consider offering a bit of 'free' bait in the tunnel in front of the trap - this encourages them in to the tunnel and helps attract more rodents as they may go back to the nest with the first haul (and bring their family back).

STEP 4 – set the trap

Practice setting the trap and be careful with your fingers – you should generally be handling the trap from behind to keep your fingers away from the action. Don't forget to put in the nail to hold the back mesh door in place. Check out this useful video from Predator Free Miramar. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05htuGIq98U&feature=youtu.be>

STEP 5 – check your trap frequently

Try checking your trap daily or at least every 2-3 days when you get started so you can get an idea on the activity in your backyard. You will need some patience as it may take time for the rodent to be happy to enter the tunnel. You may need to re-bait occasionally to keep the bait fresh (worth getting in to a weekly routine such as recycle day). If you get no results after 2-3 weeks, try another place in the garden.

STEP 6 – dispose of dead rats

We recommend either burying them in the garden or putting them in the rubbish, wrapped in newspaper if your rubbish day is a while away.