



APL Barn Cat Program

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Successful Relocation of Barn Cats

Confinement to Kennel

The most important thing you can do for your new barn cats is to confine them for 2-4 weeks to ensure they'll stick around upon release. With 2 weeks of confinement, about 75% of cats will stay, and with 4 weeks about 90% will stay. Place the kennel inside the barn or building you want the cats to reside in. Place it somewhere convenient for you so you can feed/clean the cats easily for the next few weeks.

Kennel Set-Up

Kennels should be lined with newspaper or bedding, or with straw in winter. Cover kennel with an old sheet or blanket, save for a few inches at the bottom for air flow. In the summer leave one side uncovered for ventilation. In winter, cover with heavy blankets for warmth. In the back of the kennel, place a small carrier or box for the cats to hide in. If you use a box, the opening of the box should face the side of the kennel so that the cats cannot see you when you open the door to feed and clean. This will ensure the cats don't try to escape when you're cleaning. Place bedding in and on top of the box or carrier. Place food, water, and litter toward the front of the kennel. SEE PHOTOS BELOW FOR KENNEL SETUP.

Transferring your Cats from Carrier to Confinement Kennel

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO HANDLE THE CATS; you will be bitten or the cats will escape. Most cats will move from the transport carrier to the confinement kennel with a little bit of coaxing from outside the carrier. Set up your confinement kennel and cover it with a sheet or blanket. Uncover the transport carrier, place it just inside the kennel. Open the carrier door and gently tap the back of the carrier, jostle it a bit, or blow air at the cats from behind. The cats will usually run into the hiding carrier or box within a few moments. If the cat still will not come out, give the cat a break and try again later.

Care

During confinement, feed, water, and change litter daily. Each cat should eat ½ to 1 cup of dry food per day. **Poor appetite for more than a couple of days is cause for concern**; contact us if you notice that. Most cats will stay at the back of their crate, inside their hiding box, while you feed and clean. Most will not try to escape, but use caution. While you feed, talk to the cats, make "kitty kitty" calls, etc so the cats learn that the sound of your voice means food!

Releasing

At the end of the 2-4 week confinement period, simply leave the door open and allow the cats to come out at their own pace. Leave the crate in place and continue feeding nearby, but outside of the crate. Often the cats will continue to use the crate to sleep. When the cats have stopped using the crate, you may drop it off any time outside our clinic or email us at barncats@apl-shelter.org and a volunteer will pick it up. If you have any questions at all, please contact us! We are here to help!



36" kennel setup
with small carrier



36" kennel setup
with cardboard box



Place litter away
from box opening