



FACTSHEET

Stray cats: your options

There are a few options available for you if you have a stray cat in your yard.

First and most importantly, you should check the neighbourhood for an owner. Ask around and put up posters. Even if the cat doesn't seem friendly, they may still have an owner.

Is the cat friendly?

If the cat is friendly and will let you pick them up, you should try to contain the cat. Put the cat in the bathroom or laundry and give him a bowl of food. Call your local council and ask where the pound for your area is. Once you have found this out you need to take the cat to the pound where the cat will be scanned for a microchip as the cat may be lost.

Remember that when you transport the cat, you will need to have the cat in a secure cage or box. Never transport the cat in the boot of your car or leave the cat alone in the car. If you have no transport, ask the council whether they have a pick up service for the pound. If your council doesn't have a pick up service, you may need to call an animal welfare agency to see whether they can pick up the cat for you. This should be your last option as these organisations are charities and may not have the staff to assist you. You will need to pay a fee for this service.

If the cat is friendly and you would like to keep the cat you should be responsible and take the cat to your local vet or pound to be scanned for a microchip as the cat may be a lost pet. Once you have established that the cat is not owned, you should have the cat microchipped, vaccinated, desexed, wormed and flea treated at your local vet. Just feeding the cat only feeds the problem of feline overpopulation and does not help the cat. All cats need a responsible owner to take care of them. You need to make the decision to be a responsible owner or surrender the cat to the local pound or animal welfare agency.

If the cat is not friendly

If the cat is wild or scared and will not let you go near them you have a few options. First, you should call the local council and ask whether they hire cat traps to residents. These traps do not harm the cat and are food activated. Food is placed at one end and a trap door is at the other: when the cat goes in to eat the food, the door closes behind them. If your council does not have traps for hire you will need to call Kennard's Hire. They hire out cat traps on a weekly basis for a small fee.

All cats caught in the traps, council or Kennard's will need to be taken by you to your local pound. If you have no transport, and no one who can transport the cats for you, you can call a welfare agency to see whether they have a trapping and pick up service. Some do but may have a long waiting list. As these agencies are charities you will be expected to pay a fee for this service and you will need to trap the cats once the traps are left for you. This should be your last option as these organisations are very busy and have limited resources.

If the cat is not friendly but you like having the cat around you should still try to trap them so you can take them to your local vet to be scanned for a microchip. This will make sure the cat is not lost. While at the vet you should have the cat desexed, microchipped and vaccinated. All cats need a responsible owner and if you decide to take care of the cat, you need to think about what will happen to the cat if something happens to you.

Deterring stray cats

If you have a stray cat, or many stray cats, in your area and don't want them to come into your yard there are a few things you can do.

- Don't leave any food outside. If you have a cat, feed them inside or only leave food out for an hour. This will not only stop stray cats eating your cat's food but stop your cat's food spoiling
- Plant cat deterrent plants as a border in your yard. These are generally herbs that have a scent or texture cats don't like. If you have a cat these plants will also form boundaries to your yard that will help keep your cat in. Some of these plants are listed below
- Use a spray or pellet form of pet deterrent. These are available from most pet stores or vet clinics and are not harmful to cats. As with the herbs, the scent of the spray or pellets is unpleasant to the cat
- Remove all faeces from your yard. The smell of faeces and urine will attract cats back to your yard.

Having a cat deterrent garden

- Use mulch or pebbles around your garden beds and plants as many cats do not like the feel of this on their paws
- Use plants in your garden with citrus smelling foliage as cats don't like the smell of citrus as they brush past the plant
- Plant 'cat deterrent' plants in your flower beds such as Pyrethrum, Dogsbane, Cinquefoil, Lavender, Lemon Thyme, Geranium, Pennyroyal and Coleus canina. These plants will not harm the cat, instead they have a scent or feel that the cat will not like. Check your local garden store for these plants
- Always remove any faeces from your yard as this can attract cats
- NEVER leave uneaten food in the yard as this will attract any hungry cats
- Install a sensor light. Most stray cats will enter your yard at night. By installing a sensor light that is activated by movement, the cat will think they're being watched when the light comes on and may be wary to enter the yard again.