Capturing a Bat: What You Need and How to Do It

Items for a Bat Capture Kit

- **Gloves** – heavy, preferably pliable, thick leather.
- **Kitchen tongs or forceps** – 9″ to 12″ in length.
- **Coffee can or other similar container** – preferably with a tight-fitting lid.
- **Sheet of cardboard**
- **Tape**
- **Net** – with fine mesh and long handle.
- **Flashlight** – to locate the bat without scaring the animal and causing it to fly around in alarm.
- Guidelines for **How To Handle Bats at Summer Camp** or **What To Do If You Find a Bat In Your Home** – to determine when a bat should be captured.

When to capture a bat

- If contact between a person and a bat may have occurred, even if no wounds can be seen.
- If a bat is found close to an unattended child, a person who was sleeping, a person with sensory or mental impairment, or a pet.

To obtain the items listed above, the following types of vendors are suggested:

- **Hardware store/home & garden center** - gloves, flashlight, batteries, tape, tongs
- **Medical supply company** - forceps
- **Forestry supply company** - fine mesh insect net

How to capture a bat on a wall

Use a container – Close the doors and windows to the room, then wait until the bat lands. Approach slowly, placing the container over the bat (**1**). Slide the cardboard between the wall and the container, lifting away from the wall as a unit (**2**). Slowly slide the cardboard off the container while simultaneously slipping on the appropriately sized lid (**3a and b**). Tape a lid to the container so the bat can not escape and label the container so it is not accidentally opened (**4**). Contact your local board of health.

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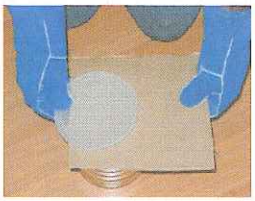
How to capture a bat in a high place or in flight

Use a net – Bats are very sensitive to movement around them. To capture a bat with a net you have to come from behind. Transfer the bat to a container with forceps or thick leather gloves.



3a

3b

4

For questions about bats and rabies please contact your local board of health or call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at 617-983-6800.

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