



PENINSULA
HUMANE
SOCIETY
& SPCA

Boobytraps

Boobytraps operate under the principle that if the animal associates something with an unpleasant experience, he will want to avoid that particular thing in the future. They are never designed or meant to cause physical harm or to torment the animal. They are used to discourage a particular behavior. Here are a few examples:

- If your pup is *stealing* objects such as clothing from a laundry basket, trash out of cans, or food from the table, a boobytrap can convince him that such activities are no fun. Take a piece of string and tie one end of it to the object the dog will try to steal. Do not use real food on counters or in trashcans. Use a paper towel that has been slightly daubed in bacon drippings or something that will attract Fido. In case the boobytrap fails, you don't want him to be rewarded for stealing by getting to eat the treat. Tie the other end of the string to a "shake can" (an empty aluminum soda can with several coins in it and the top taped shut). When this can falls or is shaken, it makes a loud, obnoxious noise. Set this can down, and about a foot away, place another shake can. Place a piece of cardboard on top of these two cans. Now put as many shake cans as possible on the cardboard. When the animal tries to steal the boobytrapped article, the string is pulled, and down come all the cans, making a terrible racket. Fido will probably never again approach the object that set it off. The boobytrap may need to be set off twice before the animal learns, but usually once is enough (Figure 1.)
- If Kitty is *jumping up on countertops*, make a false edge to the counter by laying down a piece of cardboard with 2 or 3 inches protruding over the edge. Weigh down the other edge of the cardboard with shake cans (described above). When her paws hit what she thinks is the counter-top edge, it will give way under her paws, and a dozen cans will come crashing down (Figure 2).
- If your animal companion is *clawing* at certain areas (doors, windows, fences), attach inflated balloons to the area. When claw meets balloon, the sudden burst of air and loud noise will keep the animal away from the rest of the balloons and therefore the door, fence, etc.
- Cats don't like their little paw pads to stick to surfaces, so often two-sided sticky tape put on tabletops for a short time proves useful in keeping cats off tables.
- Many animals dislike the feel and sound of aluminum foil. This will keep them off furniture and out of potted plants. Cats hate to snag their claws, so covering an object with netting will help stop the cat from scratching it.