How To Get Rid of Skunks

By DoMyOwn staff

When it comes to getting rid of skunks, there is no magic spray or repellent. These chemicals and other products like sound devices are really just gimmicks. The only proven way to get rid of a skunk is through preventing access, limiting food sources, and trapping and removal.

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Step 1) Prevent Access

To prevent skunk access, inspect the home or structure for all possible openings, and then seal them off. Methods of preventing access include:

- Trim trees and other shrubbery away from the house and roof
- Secure a cap of sheet metal over the chimney outlet
- Repair openings or holes in the home with heavy wire cloth or wood secured into solid substrate with screws
- Electric fences may keep skunks out of lawn and garden
- Placement of floodlights underneath a desk, raised proch or crawlspace may drive wildlife from making homes near the structure.

Step 2) Limit Food Sources

Skunks are not going to stick around long or make your home their home unless there are enough food sources to sustain them. To limit or eliminate food sources:

- Keep all trash in metal cans or bins with tight fitting lids
- Regularly splash the outer sides and lids of metals cans with ammonia, since Skunks are repelled by this scent and it also covers up food smells
- Weight trash can lids with something heavy like a brick to keep Skunks from removing the lid
- When throwing away meat or other foods with a strong odor, double-bag them to reduce smells
- Elminate as many sources of water as possible in your hard and near your home
- Regularly clean up fallen fruit such as berries in your garden
- If possible, cover garden crops with a cage of wire netting.
- Don't leave pet food out at night

Step 3) Bait and Trap

One of the safest and most effective traps for skunk capture is the**Havahart Cage Trap Model 1078**. Havahart recommends contacting the Humane Society, or the local or state game commission before setting a trap to determine the lawful method of releasing a captured wild or nuisance animal. Many species are protected by law in various states. Follow these guidelines when trapping with Havahart:

- **Read the instructions** completely and contact the manufacturer or a pest control professional if you have any questions about its operation.
- **Test the trap.** Spring it a few times by touching the trip plate to make sure that it works properly. If you feel the doors do not work fast enough, placing a small stone on top of the door will cause it to drop faster.
- **Bait the trap.** The following are good bait suggestions for Skunks: fish (canned or fresh), fish-flavored cat food, chicken parts, bacon, or peanut butter on bread.
- **Camouflage the trap** by placing twigs or leaves all over it to reduce the glare of the metal. You can also slather mud on the metal to give it a more conditioned look.
- **Place the baited trap,** without setting it, where you intend to catch the Skunk and fasten the doors open with a stick or wire. Do not set the trap at this point
- **Set the trap.** After several days, if the bait has been disturbed or taken, it is time to refresh the bait and set the trap.

Step 4) Release and Removal

Once you have successfully trapped your Skunk, it is time to call the Humane Society or the local or state game commission to either direct or assist you in releasing the animal. This is important because Skunks are very aggressive animals and an inexperienced homeowner is likely to be attacked or bitten if attempting to release the Skunk without explicit direction and/or assistance from a trained wildlife professional.

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