

SHELTER MANAGEMENT



SAFE USE OF NETS TO CATCH STRAY DOGS



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Introduction

This manual provides guidance on the safe, humane, and effective use of nets to capture stray dogs.

The aim is to ensure animal welfare, handler safety, and efficiency during capture operations.

Nets should only be used by trained individuals as part of a coordinated approach to stray dog management and rescue



Principles of Humane Capture

Animal Welfare First: The goal is to capture without causing pain, injury, or undue stress.

Least Stress Method: Nets should only be used when other gentle methods (coaxing, containment, food lure) have failed.

Safety for All: Protect the animal, handlers, and bystanders

Calm Environment: Reduce noise, sudden movements, and crowds.



Types of Nets

Landing Nets: Handheld, with deep mesh and a long handle. Suitable for smaller or cornered dogs.

Throw Nets / Drop Nets: Designed to be cast over the animal from a short distance. Useful for medium to large dogs.

Telescopic Nets: Extendable handles, used to reach dogs in confined areas.

Net Materials

Soft, knotless mesh to prevent cuts and abrasions.
Strong, lightweight frame to allow quick handling.

Preparation Before Capture

Assess the Situation

Observe the dog's behaviour (calm, fearful, aggressive, injured).

Identify escape routes and potential hazards.

Ensure adequate team members are present.

Equipment Check

Inspect the net for holes or weak points.

Ensure handles, frames, and mesh are intact.

Carry gloves, protective clothing, and a transport crate.

Safety Briefing

Assign roles: netter, assistant, handler with crate.

Establish signals for when to act.

Capture Technique

Approach

Move slowly, avoid eye contact, and stay non-threatening.
Position team members to block escape routes.
Allow the dog to settle if agitated.

Using a Handheld Net

Hold the net low and behind your body until ready.
Swiftly but calmly lower the net over the dog, aiming for the
shoulders and back.
Twist the handle slightly to close the net around the body.

Using a Throw Net

Stand at the appropriate distance (2–3 meters).
Throw the net in a smooth, wide arc so it spreads fully.
Quickly secure the edges to prevent escape.

Securing the Dog

Keep the net low to the ground to prevent thrashing.
Reassure the dog with calm tones.
Transfer the dog into a crate or carrier as soon as possible.



After Capture

Check the Dog: Look for injuries, cuts, or breathing issues.

Remove Stressors: Move the dog to a quiet, safe holding area.

Transport Safely: Place directly into a secure crate.

Clean Equipment: Disinfect nets after each use to prevent disease spread.



Safety Considerations

Never attempt to net aggressive dogs without backup.

Do not use nets on puppies under 4 months or frail animals unless no alternative exists.

Avoid prolonged restraint in the net transfer immediately.

Wear gloves and protective gear to prevent bites or scratches.



Common Mistakes to Avoid

Chasing the dog, which increases stress and risk of injury.
Using torn or inappropriate nets.

Netting in hazardous areas (roads, near water, on steep ground).

Lifting the dog in the net rather than transferring to a crate.



Emergency Protocols

If the dog panics and risks self-injury: Release immediately and attempt a calmer approach later.

If the handler is bitten or scratched: Follow first aid and report protocols (wash wound, seek medical care).

If the dog shows breathing distress: Free the airway and transport to a veterinarian urgently.



Training & Practice

All handlers must undergo supervised practice before fieldwork.

Regular refreshers should be conducted to maintain skill.

Simulation with dummy animals is recommended for training.



Conclusion

Nets are a valuable tool in humane stray dog rescue when used correctly.

Proper preparation, calm handling, and prioritizing animal welfare will ensure safe outcomes for both dogs and handlers.

Disclaimer

This manual is intended as a training guide for the safe and humane use of nets in capturing stray dogs. It is provided for educational purposes only.

Dog Desk Animal Action accepts no responsibility for any injury, accident, or damage resulting from the application of the techniques described herein.

All capture activities should only be undertaken by trained and authorised personnel, in accordance with relevant animal welfare legislation and safety regulations.

This manual does not replace professional judgment, on-site risk assessment, or veterinary advice.

In cases of injury to either animal or handler, immediate professional assistance must be sought.