

Chapter 8

Trapping Equipment



Content Standard - *Students identify essential and non-essential clothing and equipment used to set traps and run a trapline*



Describe clothing needed for various trapping methods and weather conditions



Ohio DOW Photo

Trapper dressed in layers.

Water trappers will need hip boots or waders.

Trappers need clothing for a variety of weather conditions. Weather conditions change over the length of a trapping season, or even during a single day spent checking your trapline.

When trapping on land it is recommended that you have a pair of sturdy rubber boots with soles that won't slip easily on rough terrain, snow, or ice. Keep them free of unusual scents.

Dress in layers. You can remove some clothing if temperatures rise during the day. When trapping in cold weather, wool clothing is a good choice. Wool retains heat even if it gets wet. Wool allows perspiration to evaporate, so you don't get damp and cold. Some clothing is made of perspiration-wicking materials. This type of clothing may be a good choice as well. Thermal underwear may be needed for the coldest days.

Carry a lightweight parka or rain suit with you when you trap. Rain gear will keep you dry, and block the wind.

Keep your clothes clean and free of unusual scents. Predatory animals like fox and coyotes are especially wary of certain scents. Some kinds of clothing are noisy when you walk. If you move quietly, you will see more wildlife.

Visibility to other people is important during certain hunting seasons. Make yourself easy to see and identify. Trappers may be concerned about being too visible because of concern about trap thieves. From a distance, most people will assume you are hunting if they see hunter orange clothing. Your personal safety is more important than the potential loss of a few traps.

Water trappers need hip boots or waders. Shallow water trappers can use hip boots. Chest waders are needed for deep water, and they can help keep you warm.



Water trappers often wear Coast Guard approved float coats. These will help keep you afloat if you fall into deep water. Inflatable Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) are another water safety item you can wear. These are worn like a vest. If you need more flotation you can pull the string on an inflatable, which releases gas into the vest and expands it. A mouth tube should be available to use in case the gas canister doesn't work.

Trappers use a variety of gloves. Water trappers use long rubber gloves to protect their hands and arms from cold water. Canine trappers may use two pairs of gloves, one of which they wear only when handling traps so they keep the traps scent free.

All trappers should have warm hats. Body heat can escape through your head if you do not wear a hat. A hat also protects your head and face from sun and wind.

When you trap, carry a flashlight, ice picks, waterproof matches, firestarters, a map, and a compass with you at all times. If you have a cell phone, take it with you, too. Keep them in the same place so you will know where to reach for them in an emergency.

Use a flashlight when walking in the dark, even at dawn and dusk. A flashlight will help you follow the trail and make you clearly visible to any hunters in the area. You can also use a flashlight to signal searchers if you get lost, become ill, or suffer an injury.



Identify tools, materials, and supplies needed to make sets and run a trapline

Beginning trappers should start out with basic gear needed to trap one or two species of furbearers. If you need to buy all new equipment, you will spend a lot of money. Learn to be successful with basic gear so you can make some spending money from fur sales before you invest too much. As you gain experience you will also learn where to get good prices on equipment, and develop a better sense of the gear needed for other types of trapping.

You can purchase used equipment to save money. Be careful about buying used waders or hip boots. Old boots and waders may leak. Check used traps to make certain they are legal and in good condition before you buy them. Trap springs may weaken over time.



Ohio DOW Photo

Gauntlet gloves

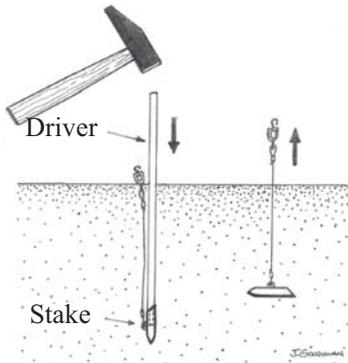
Trappers use a variety of gloves to keep dry and warm. Some canine trappers use separate gloves for handling their traps. This keeps other scents from getting on the trap.

PFD stands for Personal Flotation Device, an inexpensive item that can save your life!

When walking on ice keep ice picks where you can reach them fast. If you fall through in deep water you will need the picks to pull yourself out to safety.



Trap stakes



Earth Anchors.

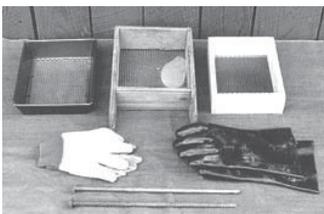


Ohio DOW Photos

Hammer and hatchets.



Bucket, bag, and pack basket.



Dirt sifters, gloves, stakes for land trapping.

Trap Tags - Check Michigan's trapping regulations for requirements to tag your traps. Many states require the trapper to have his or her name and address attached to each trap.

Trap Stakes & Grapples - Steel stakes are needed to anchor traps. Know the length and size you need for specific furbearers and soil conditions. You may need to use grapples in certain sets.

Pliers and Cable Cutters - Pliers are needed for trap adjustments, plus cutting and bending wire. If aircraft cable is used for snares or anchoring systems you will also need cable cutters.

Hatchet - A hatchet is used for cutting limbs, driving stakes, chopping ice, and making certain kinds of sets.

Wire or Aircraft Cable - Wire or aircraft cable (3/32 or 1/8 inch) can be used to make submersion sets and fasten traps. Wire can also be used to support cable devices.

Trapping Staff - A staff has many uses. Use a staff to check water depths when wading, detect underwater dens, and retrieve traps from the water.

Trowel - Trowels are used to make dirt holes or pocket sets in water.

Pack basket, Bucket, or Heavy Bag - Any of these items can be used to carry your other equipment and traps.

Knives - Folding lock back knives are recommended for trappers. You will find many uses for a knife on the trapline.

Dirt Sifter - A dirt sifter is a frame about eight inches square and three inches deep with a quarter inch mesh screen on the bottom. The sifter is used to cover traps with fine soil. Sifters remove rocks or chunks of dirt that could interfere with the trap closing properly.

Pan Covers - A pan cover is recommended to keep dirt and debris from getting under the trap pan on land sets. Wax paper, screen, plastic, and clean patches of cloth are used for pan covers.

Trapper's Cap - A trapper's cap can be used instead of pan covers. This device temporarily fits over the trap pan while dirt is packed inside the jaws. When it is removed it leaves the area beneath the pan free of dirt.



Underalls - Some trappers use pieces of foam rubber or fiberglass insulation cut to the shape of the trap pan and to the thickness of the space under the pan. This is another way to keep dirt and debris from getting under the pan.

Catchpole (Release Noose) - A release noose is used to hold an animal so it can be safely released or dispatched. A catchpole is an essential tool for a land trapper.

Gloves - Trappers use a variety of gloves. Latex gloves are used when skinning animals. Water trappers use gauntlet gloves that cover the arm to the shoulder to keep dry in cold weather. Land trappers use rubber or cotton trap setting gloves to keep human scent off their traps.

Kneeling Pad - Some land trappers use cloth, canvas, or rubber pads to kneel on when making land sets. Kneeling pads help keep human odor off the set. The kneeling pad is also a good place to put dirt when digging the bed for a trap.



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Catchpole.

Many trappers work hard to avoid contaminating their trapping areas with unusual scents or human odor.



Content Standard - Students identify essential and non-essential clothing and equipment used to set traps and run a trapline.

Describe clothing needed for various trapping methods and weather conditions (pages 62-63).

The clothing you will need varies by the type of trapping you will do and the climate in your area. Below, describe the primary type of trapping you will do and make a list of the clothing you will need.

- Furbearers you will trap: _____

- Clothing you will need:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Identify tools, materials, and supplies needed to make sets and run a trapline (pages 63-65).

- For the types of furbearers you will be trapping, make a list of the tools, materials, and supplies you will need:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____