



## Barn Cat Acclimation Facilities

Two things need to be considered when taking on a set of barn cats: secure, escape-proof housing during the three week acclimation period, and long term comfortable housing that is safe from predators (e.g., coyotes and loose dogs). Ideally, the acclimation facility should be set up in the same area as the long-term housing. A loft in a barn, garage or shed is ideal because it is up off the ground and relatively safe from predators, and heat rises inside buildings, thereby providing extra warmth in cold weather. Over the years landowners have come up with some ingenious approaches for acclimating and housing their barn cats. Here are few of the things people have dreamed up.

### A Garage Attic in Federal Way



The attic has two interconnected parts. The litter box and food were set up in one area, and a wooden box stuffed with straw was set up in the other. The cats accessed the attic using a wooden ladder.

### A Framed-In Corner in A Shop Building in Redmond



The owner has allergies, but still wanted to see his cats, so he framed in a corner of his workshop, and equipped it with a Plexiglas viewing window one side...

... so he could look in on his cats without risking an allergic reaction. He installed a second window on the other side so the cats can see outside, along with a cat door (not shown). Sweet!

### A Kitty Enclosure in a Maple Valley Barn



The owners built a wooden cat closet with a door that could be used to access the bowls and litter box closed during the acclimation period.

Inside shelves with bedding, food and water bowls, and a litter box (not shown). A cat door on the side of the closet was kept closed during acclimation, and after the acclimation period, this box became their permanent home.

### A Home-Made Acclimation Cage Inside a Barn in Seabeck



This 3' x 3' x 8' temporary acclimation cage made of 2x4s and chicken wire was placed inside an open barn. It was stuffed with hay, and equipped with a flap of chicken wire that could be folded back to attend to the bowls and the litter box. The advantage of using wire covering is that the cats could see out and orient themselves to their new home. After acclimation, the landowner cut the frame down to a more compact size, covered it with plywood and placed in a cat-accessible hayloft to create a permanent cozy home for her cats.

### A Cat Acclimation Tent Set Up Inside A Fox Island Garage



The mesh pop-up tent is available from Amazon.com for about \$50.00. You can also use a regular camping tent.

The cats each had their own straw-bedded crate, but they bonded instantly release in the tent.

### A Cat House Inside a Tool Shed in Federal Way



The landowner cleared out some space in a tool shed, and set up food and water bowls on one side...



...and a shelf on the other. Each cat has his own bed, with a blanket curtain for privacy and warmth. The litter box is on the floor behind the tarp.

### A Metal Acclimation Cage Placed In An Open Building in Snohomish County



Where it isn't possible to close up a barn, garage or shed, a spacious metal cage can be used to confine the cats during the acclimation period. In the setup on the left, the cats could see outside, which helped them orient to their new surroundings.

Cats love to perch and rest in high areas. Therefore, it is ideal to place an acclimation cage in a loft. Cats need steps or a ramp to get up to their loft beds.

### An Old Chest of Drawers Made Into a Cat House in North Bend



The landowner went to Goodwill and bought a beat up old chest of drawers for \$5.00. He took the drawers out, installed a shelf with a hole cut in it, and placed it inside a shed equipped with a cat door small enough to exclude predators. The litter box and cat bowls were placed on the bottom shelf, and the top shelf was the cat lounge. After acclimation, the chicken wire was removed and the chest of drawers became the permanent cozy home of two happy barn cats.

### A Horse Stall in Snohomish



The landowner converted a vacant horse stall into a “high security” acclimation chamber by using lengths of chicken wire fastened with zip ties to block off the top and upper front side of the stall. She placed a cat crate and cardboard box full of bedding, a litter box and food and water water bowls and a few cat toys inside. Upon release, her new cats immediately explored the cardboard box, and by the next morning two of them were in it snuggling together. Her horses gave this project a resounding “hoofs up.” Following their acclimation period, these cats moved into a loft outfitted with a feeding station and a wooden cat house stuffed with straw bedding.