

# Capturing a Bat: What You Need and How to Do It

## When to capture a bat

- If contact between a person and a bat may have occurred, even if no wounds can be seen.
- If a bat is found close to an unattended child, a person who was sleeping, a person with sensory or mental impairment, or a pet.

## Items Needed for a Bat Capture Kit

- **Gloves** – heavy, preferably pliable, thick leather.
- **Kitchen tongs or forceps** – 9” to 12” in length.
- **Coffee can or other similar container** – preferably with a tight-fitting lid.
- **Sheet of cardboard**
- **Tape**
- **Net** – with fine mesh and long handle.
- **Flashlight** – to locate the bat without scaring the animal and causing it to fly around in alarm.
- Guidelines for **How To Handle Bats at Summer Camp** or **What To Do If You Find a Bat In Your Home** – to determine when a bat should be captured.

**To obtain the items listed above, the following types of vendors are suggested:**

- **Hardware store/home & garden center** - gloves, flashlight, batteries, tape, tongs
- **Medical supply company** - forceps
- **Forestry supply company** - fine mesh insect net

## How to capture a bat on a wall

**Use a container** – Close the doors and windows to the room, then wait until the bat lands. Approach slowly, placing the container over the bat. Slide the cardboard between the wall and the container, lifting away from the wall as a unit. Slowly slide the cardboard off the container while simultaneously slipping on the appropriately sized lid. Tape a lid to the container so the bat can not escape and label the container so it is not accidentally opened. Contact your local board of health.

## How to capture a bat in a high place or in flight

**Use a net** – Bats are very sensitive to movement around them. To capture a bat with a net you have to come from behind. Transfer the bat to a container with forceps or thick leather gloves.

**For questions about bats and rabies please contact your local board of health or call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at 617-983-6800.**