

There's a Squirrel Loose In the House!

No need to panic - you can get her out safely and humanely

Adapted from the book Wild Neighbors



A squirrel inside a home is likely terrified and frantic to get out—keep calm and open a door or window to the outside. Ruth Arnold



If you must use a humane trap to remove the squirrel from your home be sure to let it go right outside the house. John Griffin/The HSUS

Sometimes they get in through an open door or window. Others may come down the chimney and through the fireplace.

However she got there, a squirrel who has entered a house is there by accident and will be desperate to get out.

Show that squirrel the door

Place your pets in another room. Close all interior doors and open a window or exterior door in the room. Leave the squirrel alone, so she can find her way out. She may even jump from a second-story window onto a lawn without harming herself, but don't let her jump onto concrete.

If there is no possible exit, set a humane trap baited with peanut butter on the floor near the squirrel and leave her alone for a few hours. If obtaining a live trap isn't an option, try this method using a blanket:

Put on heavy gloves.

Slowly approach the squirrel with the blanket held in front of your body, so that she doesn't see a human form.

Drop the blanket on the squirrel and quickly roll it up, taking care not to put too much weight or pressure on her.

Take the squirrel in the blanket immediately outside and gently open the blanket on the ground, letting the squirrel escape.

Once the squirrel is out, look for the entryway and take steps to keep it from happening again. Look for tracks in soot or dust around the fireplace or furnace that may show she came down the chimney or flue, and check the attic for evidence of a nest or entrance hole that may need repair.

Relocating doesn't work

Live-trapping squirrels and taking them to "the woods," where they will live happily ever after, is not the ideal solution to local problems. Studies show that few squirrels may survive the move. And when a squirrel is removed from a yard, another squirrel will move in, sometimes within a few days.

Resources

[More squirrel problems and solutions](#) »

- » Purchase a copy of *Wild Neighbors*; the go-to guide for useful, humane solutions to conflicts with wildlife.
- » If you live within the D.C. Metro Area, take advantage of our [wildlife conflict resolution service](#).
- » Kim Long, *Squirrels: A Wildlife Handbook* (Johnson Books, 1995)
- » Michael Steele and John Koprowski, *North American Tree Squirrels* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 2003)