

How to Safely Contain a Bat

1. Our first priority is your safety! Although few bats are infected with rabies, it is far better to prevent any possible exposure by following safe capture technique that prevents directly touching the bat during containment.
2. Gather your equipment. We suggest the following supplies:
 - Gloves; leather is best. Never handle a bat bare-handed!
 - A shoebox, plastic food container or other small container lined with absorbent ravel-free material. Punch numerous small holes into the container for ventilation before containing the bat.
 - A flat piece of cardboard (such as a flattened cereal box), large stiff manila envelope or lid big enough to completely cover the opening of the container.
 - Tape to secure the lid over the container once the bat is inside.
3. Put on your gloves and have your container in hand. Wait for the bat to land somewhere before trying to contain it. If the bat is not on your property, take note of the location you have found the bat – this information will be helpful at the time of release.
4. Once the bat has landed, place the container over the bat.
5. Gently and slowly slide the flat piece of cardboard, envelope or lid under the container and the bat. Keep the container close to the wall as you do this. Be careful not to injure the bat as you slide the lid underneath. Expect that the bat will chatter at you as you do this.
6. Secure the lid on the container with the tape. Be sure there are no holes larger than a dime, and that the lid fits tightly or the bat may escape.
7. Place the container in a quiet, dark environment until transport. If the container has see-through sides, cover the entire container with a pillowcase or other lightweight material to restrict the visual stimuli for the bat. Please note that bats should not be released outside during the winter in Wisconsin. Between October and April, even healthy, uninjured bats should be transported to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.
8. If you don't already have an appointment, please call Dane County Humane Society's Wildlife Center right away at 608-287-3235. The law allows a member of the public 24 hours to transport the bat to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, but the sooner the bat receives care, the better its chances of successful treatment.
9. During transport to the wildlife center, please keep the car quiet by leaving the radio off and keeping voices low. For more information about safely transporting wildlife once contained, please click [HERE](#).
10. Upon arrival with the bat, our wildlife rehabilitation staff will talk with you to determine if there has been any possible exposure that may require the bat to be tested for rabies. Staff will consult with the public health department in the county you reside in to allow them to decide whether testing should be pursued.



Additional resources:

- Video: [Capturing a Bat](#) by Bat Conservation International
- [Learning about bats and rabies](#) by Centers for Disease Control
- [Rabies Prevention](#) by Public Health Madison & Dane County