

Just Thinkin'
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Onions - A friend of mine told me how he placed a board, on edge, along each side of his onion rows. As the onions grew, he kept adding dirt between the boards to force the onions to grow taller, which caused considerable more white on the onions.

Fence holes for canines - In as much as almost everyone uses a dirt hole as a basic set for canines, a few change-up sets are usually in the back of most trapper's minds and put to use when the occasion arises. Some years ago, Charlie Dobbins taught me to be a situation trapper. By this I mean if the location is good and there is good reason to feel a target animal would pass by on that location, then by all means that is the spot to make a set.

It sounds all too easy, until you look around to see what you have to work with to make the normal dirt hole set. Sometimes a spot has very little to offer in helping you to get the job done. This little scenario may help to explain my point.

One time I was trapping some farming country near home when I drove over a hill along an old dirt road and spotted a parked car on down the road. I knew that it belonged to another trapper from my area. I stopped to see if I could figure out where he was trapping as I didn't want to make any sets next to his.

Directly I saw him walking up to the back edge of a hay field, which was bordered by a large piece of woods. There was an old tractor road entering the woods from the field at that point, and I could tell we both knew it to be a good location for a fox set. I decided to sit in my car, which was several hundred yards away, and watch him make his set while I enjoyed a coffee break.

The next several minutes were spent watching the man walk this way and that, and then toward the old road and back again. It quickly became apparent that he was looking for the perfect spot to make the set. He finally settled on a spot and commenced to dig in a dirt hole set.

As I drove on, I did some thinking about his wondering around that location and wondered how much it might effect his results. In any case, it has caused me to spend more time using my eyes, rather than my feet, to pick a spot for my set. It also has caused me to make the best of the situation at hand. Don't spend too much time trying to locate the perfect grass clump, stone for backing, right soil conditions or ground cover, the best side to deal with the wind as well as a number of other factors. "Just Do It!"

I kind of drifted off of my original thought about change up sets, however there is some merit to the point brought out in the last statement. Making different types of sets can sometimes throw curves to an educated critter and it can break the monotony for a trapper. It can also allow a trapper to add a bit of ones own creativity to a set.

One particular item that I like to use when the opportunity arises is an old fence post. They can usually be found lying along old fence lines. Quite often along lines that have been abandoned as well as lines still in use. Usually, when the old wooden posts are replaced, they are discarded nearby and are already near a location.

I like to use a post that may have more than one knothole in the side. This can appear to be, and sometimes already is, providing a home for mice. I also look for one that may have a wide crack running along the post for at least a couple of feet. Having a cavity rotted into an end can also be an advantage.

I like to place my post at a set in a way to create eye appeal as well as backing. I have found so many ways

to create sets from them by letting my imagination go. For example, if the post has a mouse hole, I lay it so the hole can be seen. I will use some mouse base lure in the hole and possibly let a small bit of the grass wad stuffing stick out of the hole. If the post has two holes I may place mouse base lure in one and mink gland lure in the other and let the fox work back and forth between them which is going to provide a great deal of foot work over the trap.

If a post is hollow on the end it can be lured and set up as a rodent den, using some rotten log ground through my sifter to blend my trap as well as for eye appeal.

Sometimes when a post has a long crack, I will lay the post so the crack is about two or three inches off the ground and add some lure to the crack. I have some dry powdered fox lure that I use to sell that I have found to work well when I sprinkle it into the cracks from end to end. This causes a critter to check out the full length of the crack. A bit of fur sticking out of the crack will also add eye appeal. (In most states, Ohio included, this would be considered an exposed bait.) I have found artificial fur works just as well and I never had a fox complain about it (maybe an opossum did once).

I like to use the end of the post for a urine post. It is easy to have a fox use the end of the post. Sometimes the post will provide a reason to use two traps. Remember, never stake the traps close enough to allow the traps to touch when the chains are fully extended.

As I mentioned earlier, don't spend a lot of time looking around for an old fence post during trapping season. This can often be done while doing pre-season scouting. After season, be sure to remove your post from the set location. "Try it, you might like it". Bobby does!

Editor's Note – The author will be giving a demonstration of this set at the convention. Check the demo schedule for more information.