

Using one-way gates on badger sett entrances

One-way badger gates were developed by Wildlife Management & Licensing Service technical staff as a method of excluding badgers from setts or specific parts of setts. The purpose of using one-way gates is to help ensure that when sett tunnels are closed down under licence, no badgers are harmed or remain trapped underground. One-way gates must only be used under licences issued by Natural England or other statutory nature conservation organisations under the *Protection of Badgers Act 1992*. The use of such gates at badger setts without an appropriate licence may constitute an offence under the Act.

Constructing the gates

The gates should be constructed using figure 1 overleaf as a guide. It is important to ensure that the gate flap fits well enough in the frame to prevent badgers lifting the flap, but not so tightly as to jam should the wood swell following rain.

Materials required

- 1.5 m of 40 mm x 40 mm untreated timber, for the gate frame.
- 250 mm x 200 mm x 40 mm untreated timber, for the gate flap.
- A small doorstep and suitable nails.

Note: the timber used must not be treated with any preservative product either before or after construction.

Fitting the gates to sett entrances

The gates should be fitted tightly into the tunnel entrances. If necessary, slightly alter the shape of the entrance or block gaps around the gate frame with soil and stones.

Position the gate at a slight angle, with the top leaning back towards the tunnel, so that the flap readily drops shut under its own weight.

Once in place, ensure that the gate will open and close freely and is not blocked by stones or other obstructions.

To prevent badgers digging back in around the gate, an apron of heavy duty chain-link (or similar material) can be attached to the gate frame and secured firmly to the ground around the entrance.

Monitoring badger activity

It is important to know whether or not badgers have managed to regain entry to the sett tunnels.

A simple monitoring technique is to lightly place two small sticks (about 15 cm (6 inches) in length) just inside each gate, such that they will be knocked over if a badger passes through. An alternative method is to attach weak cotton or a strand of grass across the front of the gate using thumbtacks to secure each end to the uprights.

The gated sett should be monitored at least once every three days; entrances should be checked for signs that the badgers have left and not re-entered the sett, and the gates should be checked to ensure that they still swing freely and close properly.

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Subsequent action

The period for which the gates must be left fitted to the entrances will be specified in the conditions of the licence. Other conditions and subsequent action, such as permanent blocking and proofing, will be detailed in your licence or covering letter.

Important note

This leaflet is for guidance only. If any advice given appears to contradict any conditions of a licence issued under the *Protection of Badgers Act 1992*, the conditions of the licence must take precedence.

Further information

In England, further advice on the use and construction of one-way gates and an application form for a licence under the Protection of Badgers Act can be obtained by

contacting Wildlife Management and Licensing at:

Natural England, Wildlife Licensing Unit,
First Floor, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square,
Bristol, BS1 6EB
Tel: 0845 6014523 (local rate)
E-mail: wildlife@naturalengland.org.uk

A range of leaflets on wildlife topics is available online on the Natural England website at: www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx

Natural England Technical Information Notes are available to download from the Natural England website: www.naturalengland.org.uk

For information on other Natural England publications contact the Natural England Enquiry Service on 0845 600 3078 or e-mail enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

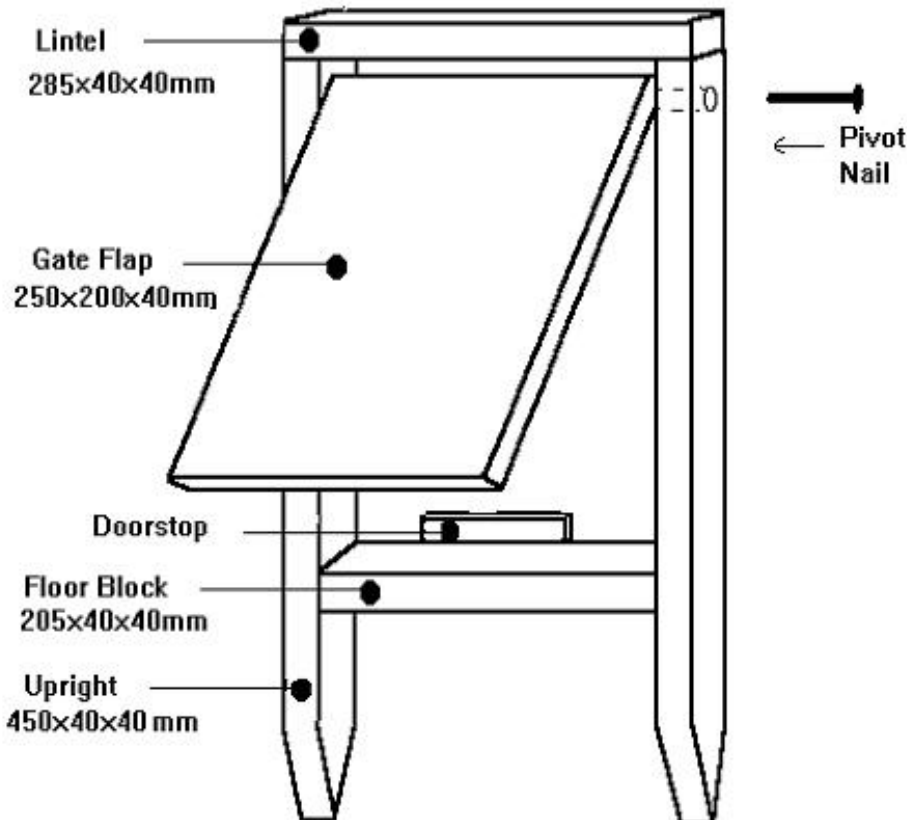


Figure 1