

Design and Plans for a Small Mammal Cage

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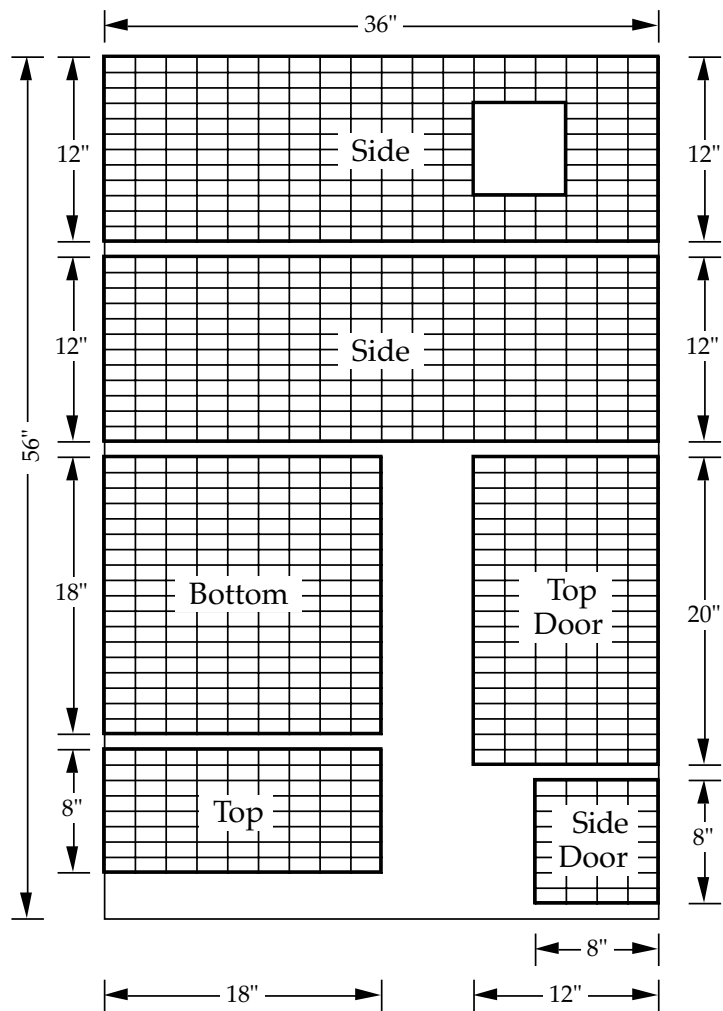
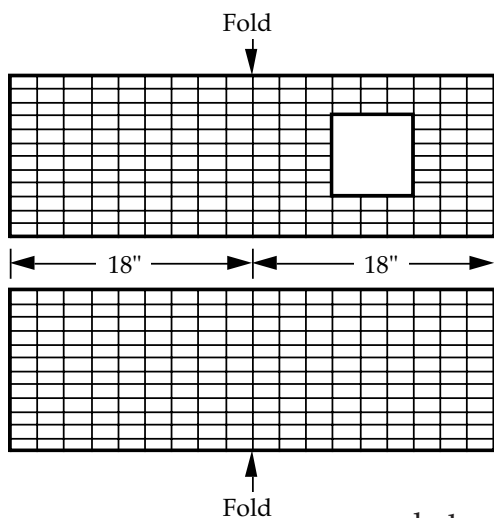
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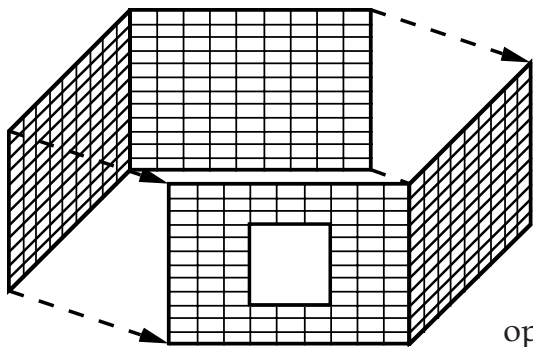
The design and plans for this cage yield a small cage well suited for small mammals such as older juvenile or adult squirrels recovering from neurological injuries or fractured limbs. It is constructed with 1" x 2" welded wire using J-clips as fasteners. It has two doors for ease of entry, one larger opening on the top of the cage and one smaller door for periodic feeding. The smaller door helps prevent escapes. The cost for this cage is approximately \$15, depending on the price of the welded wire.

Start with a piece of 1" x 2" welded wire that is 36" wide and 56" long. Then cut the wire as shown in the diagram. After cutting, file down the sharp points of the wire using a bench grinder, a hand held drill with



a grinding wheel, or a hand held metal flat file. This will help prevent cuts to humans as well as prevent injuries to the animals.

Next, take the two longer pieces and fold them in half to form a 90° angle as shown. Use the edge of a workbench or table as a guide to help support the wire when folding. Then attach these two bent pieces together with J-clips to form the four sides of the cage. Space the J-clips approximately 4" - 5" apart along the seam.

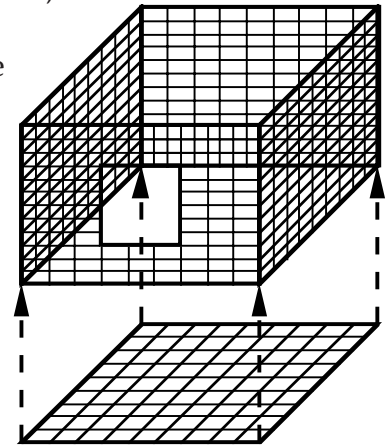


Use J-clip pliers to insure a secure and tight crimp on the J-clip. This helps prevent small toenails from getting caught in the closed J-clip.

Once the sides are together, attach the bottom of the cage next. Start with one corner and attach one J-clip. Then go to the opposite diagonal corner and attach another J-clip.

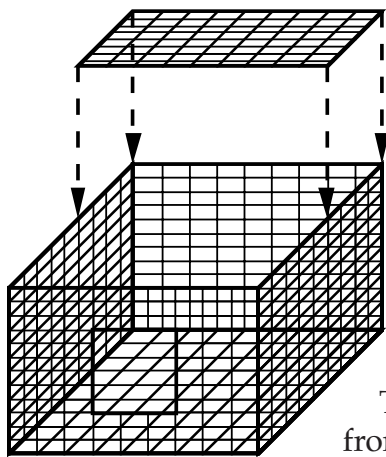
Then finish the other two corners. Once the bottom is "squared-up" with the sides, finish the seams with J-clips, spacing the clips about every 4" - 5."

The next step is to attach the stationary part of the top (the piece of wire that is cut to 12" x 20"). Fasten with J-clips.

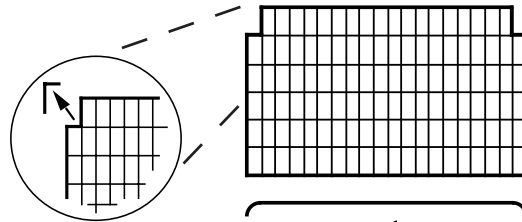


The last step is to attach the

two doors. The top door piece will be hinged with J-clips and have a lip that forms a secure seal around the top door opening. To construct this lip, notch the two upper corners of the door as shown by removing the outer wire as shown in the small inset.



Then fold the front of the top door and its two sides to form a rounded lip as shown.



Once these three overlaps are formed, attach the door to the top of the cage with J-clips acting as hinges. The overhangs from the top door should then form an escape-proof seal around the top of the cage. (This top door is then held securely in place during use by 2 - 3 metal snaps and small bungee cords.) The smaller side door is first fitted with a door clasp that is available generally wherever J-clips are available. This clasp is attached to the door with J-clips. The door is attached to the side of the cage using J-clips as hinges.

