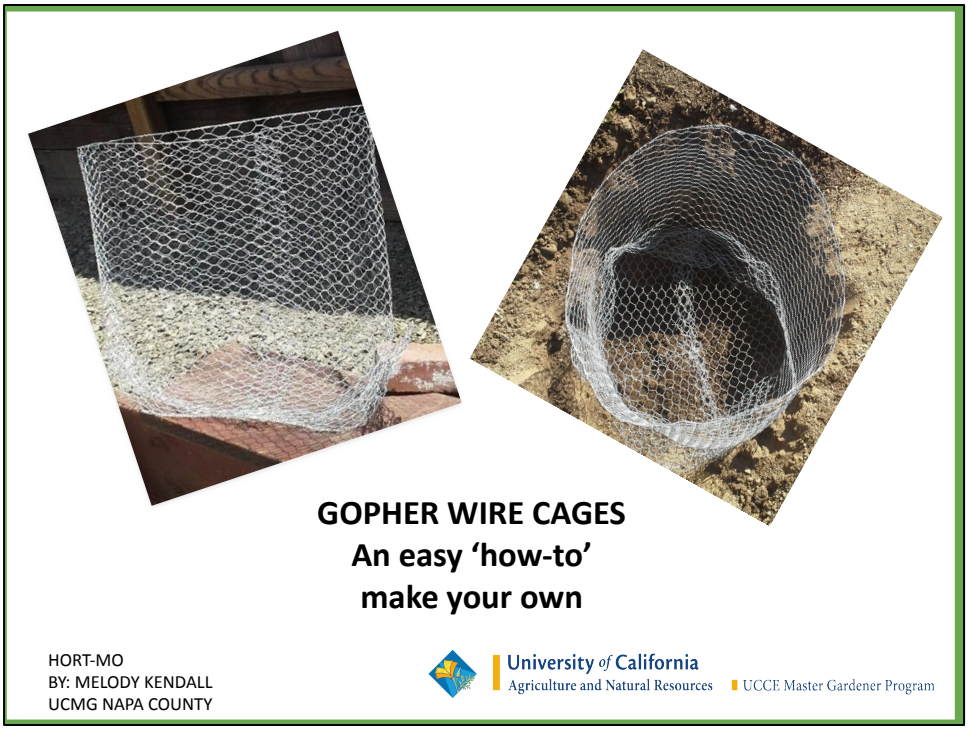

This presentation is my experience in creating homemade gopher cages from galvanized gopher wire.
There are pre-made gopher cages available but I had a roll of galvanized gopher wire left over from lining some raised beds so decided to make my own.

Supplies you will need

-Galvanized gopher wire with ½ inch cells……..galvanized is very important. I have had occasion to remove some galvanized gopher wire that I had lined some planting beds with after 5+ years and the wire was pristine. So galvanized will insure longevity and the ½ cells will discourage ingress by smaller vertebrate pests.

-Heavy wire cutters-the gopher wire is tough and heavy wire cutters are definitely needed. Some of my friends use a rotary blade on a battery operated tool to cut the wire……..don't have one of those so I do it the old fashioned way.

-Medium gauge wire-this wire will be used to connect the seams for more stability

-Leather gloves-a must as the wire and the cut edges are sharp

-Measuring tape-so you can cut to size

-Eye protection-The wire tends to bounce back into the cylindrical shape that it was originally in and, as stated, those cut edges are sharp.

Remove plastic and discard. Reserve the small gauge wire holding the roll. This will be used in the cage construction. (top left picture)
Roll out gopher wire as flat as possible. Wear safety goggles and leather gloves. Wire will want to flip back into roll so hold firmly with a heavy object. Cut ragged wire leading edge until smooth. (bottom left picture)
Use the natural tendency for the wire to roll to determine the desired diameter of the gopher cage. Mark edge to cut with a string.
(right picture)

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With the heavy wire cutters, using the string as a guide, cut along the line of cells to separate new cage from the roll of wire. Hold the one end down as you go along with a heavy object. Watch for sharp ends of wire. Cut all the way through. (Left picture) This will result in a cylinder the desired diameter of your gopher cage but it will be too tall as it is the entire height of the roll of gopher wire.

You now will need to determine the height of your finished cages.

Set the cylinder on its side and measure from the finished edge to where you will need to cut. (right picture)

My roll of gopher wire was 5 feet tall and each cage for this project needed to be 2 ½ feet tall so I cut the wire exactly in the middle. Again, follow the cells and cut to the end.

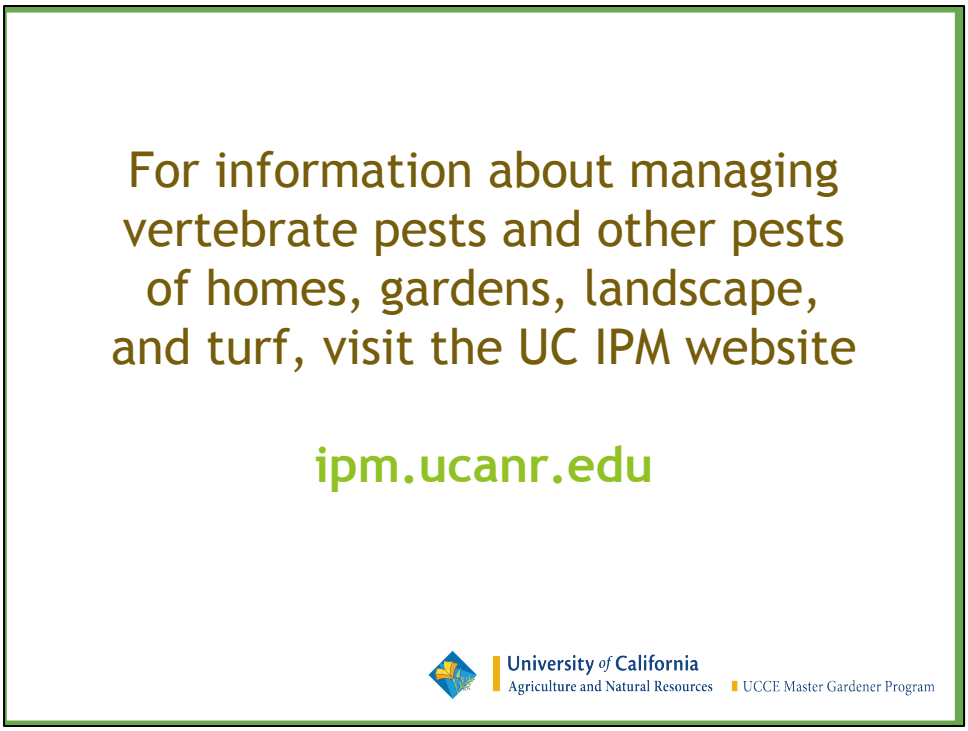
You now have a piece of wire the exact height and diameter you want for your gopher cage.
All that is required is to form the actual cage. Allow the wire to naturally form the cylinder that it will do when released.
Overlap the cut edges about 2 inches. (left picture)
The wire mesh ends are sharp wear your gloves and eye protection. (middle top picture)
Go along the seam and fold in the wire mesh ends through the wire to connect the two pieces. Do this the entire length of the cylinder. This will temporarily secure your cylinder (top right picture)
Then using either the reserved small gauge wire that was used in securing the whole roll or use a medium gauge wire and cut a piece of the wire the length of the cut side seam plus a little extra. Thread through every third cell to secure the cut side seam and tie down the wire at each end of the seam . (bottom right picture)

To form the bottom of your cage place the uncut end of the cage down and pinch the cut end flat with the seam centered in the middle. Again make sure you have your safety glasses and gloves on. (left picture)
Lay the pinched end on a hard surface and pound out flat then fold up an inch to form a seam. (top right)
Then cut a piece of medium gauge wire and thread through every third cell and secure ends. (bottom right)

The cage bottom is now secured and ready to be formed (top left picture)
Set the cage on the closed end on a flat surface and flatten the bottom. (bottom left picture)
Note: I personally just step inside the cylinder and while holding the sides gently push down and walk around the inside of the cage forming a flat bottom with the seam in the middle of the newly formed base.
Two points will form on the side as the flat bottom of the cylinder is formed (top right picture)
Fold those up parallel with the sides of the cage (bottom right picture)

Finished product
When making cages I usually make more than one.
You have all the tools etc. out and you're in the mood and why not??
They last a long time and are easy to store until needed.
AND when the gophers strike they will be ready for you to install.

I had made these cages specifically for my rose garden which had been visited multiple times by gophers that had munched freely.
Yes, uprooting the rose bushes was time consuming and fraught with poked fingers and arms but well worth the effort.
Now, the gophers will have to go elsewhere for a meal



For information about managing vertebrate pests and other pests of homes, gardens, landscape, and turf, visit the UC IPM website ipm.ucanr.edu