

All About Cats



What Are Cats?

Cats are furry, four-legged animals.

There are big cats, like tigers and lions.
Big cats live in the wild (or in zoos).



There are also smaller cats.

Humans have kept cats as pets
for thousands of years.

We call these 'house cats'.



Did You Know...?

The biggest cat in the
world is the Siberian tiger.

Pet Cats

People probably started keeping cats because they are good at catching mice.

As well as keeping mice away, cats are friendly and make good companions.



Cats are one of the most popular pets on Earth.

There are now over 500 million pet cats in the world!



What is a baby cat called?

Kittens

Cats are mammals, so the females give birth to live young.

Baby cats are called kittens.

A female cat usually gives birth to three to five kittens at a time.

A set of kittens born together is called a litter.

Kittens cannot see until they are two weeks old.

They feed on their mother's milk until they are around eight weeks old.



Did You Know...?

Cats should not drink cow's milk. It can make them ill.

Cat Features

A cat has a long tail to help it balance.

Cats can move their ears to help them hear or to show when they are happy or angry.

A cat's eyes help it to see in the dark.

A cat has pads on its feet and claws to help it grip.



Each cat's nose pad is unique – similar to a human's fingerprint.

24 whiskers help a cat to measure spaces and work out if it can fit through gaps.



Can you think of another animal that has whiskers?

Fantastic Feet

Cats have amazing feet!



Most of the time, a cat's claws will be inside its paws. A cat gets its claws out when it needs to.



They have retractable claws. This means that cats can pull their claws in and out!



A cat might use its claws to grip and climb or when playing.



Did You Know...?

Cats do all their sweating from their feet! They don't sweat from anywhere else.

Cats sometimes use their claws when hunting or to scratch when they feel like they are in danger.

Moving

Cats are very agile animals. This means that they can move quickly and easily.



Cats can jump seven times their own height!



Why do you think a cat might climb a tree?



They are great climbers.



They are very good at balancing.

Cats almost always land on their feet.

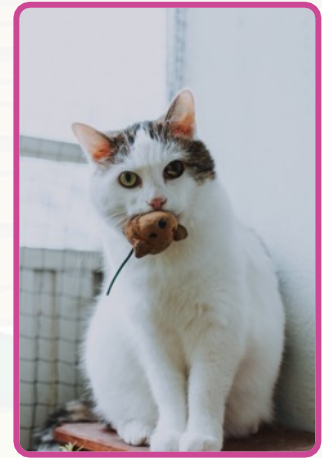


Playing

House cats, especially young kittens, love to play.

Cats enjoy playing with toys and this helps to stop them from getting bored.

Chasing and catching toys is also great practice for hunting.



Why do you think a lot of cat toys look like mice?

Hunting

Cats are carnivores, which means that they eat meat. They are very good hunters. They catch and eat lots of small animals, like mice, birds and insects.



Powerful night vision helps them to spot prey in the dark.

Excellent hearing allows them to listen to small animals moving.

A super sense of smell helps them to track down animals.



How are cat eyes different to human eyes?

Hunting

When a cat spots its prey, it creeps along with its body near to the ground to stop it from being spotted.

When the cat is close enough to its prey, it pounces.

Did You Know...?

Unlike humans, cats do not need to eat any fruit or vegetables to stay healthy.



Eating and Drinking

Pet cats usually eat cat food, given to them by their owners.

This food is made of almost all meat or fish. These foods have the nutrients that a cat needs to stay healthy.

Cats have sharp teeth that are perfect for ripping and eating meat.

Cats cannot taste sweet foods.

Did You Know...?

Unlike most animals, cats can drink salt water! Their kidneys filter out the salt so that it is safe for them to drink.



Communicating



Cats communicate by meowing, yowling (a cross between a meow and howl), purring, hissing, growling, squeaking, clicking, and grunting.

Kittens meow to their mothers if they are cold or hungry.

Adult cats do not meow at each other. They only meow at humans to get their attention.



Can you think of a reason why a cat might meow at a human?

Click to hear a meow.



Click to hear a purr.



Click to hear a yowl.



Click to hear a hiss.



Communicating

Cats greet each other by touching noses.



They mark trees or fence posts with their claws to show other cats that this is their home.



When a cat is scared or angry, it arches its back and make its hairs stand up.



What might make a cat scared or angry?

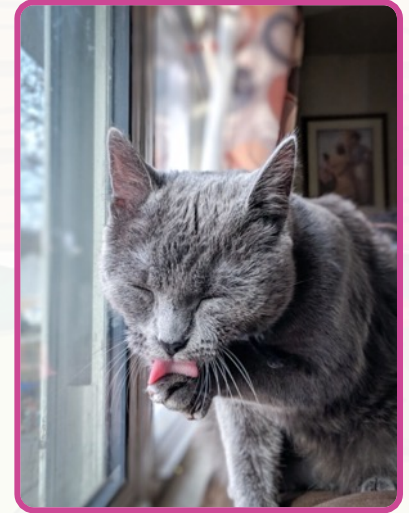
Grooming

Cats lick their fur to keep themselves clean.

A cat's tongue is covered in tiny hooks that make it a bit like a hairbrush.

Did You Know...?

As cats lick their fur, lots of hairs end up in their tummies. This is why cats sometimes vomit up hairballs!



Sleeping

Cats save energy by sleeping for up to 16 hours each day.

This means that cats can spend two thirds of their lives asleep.



How many hours a day do cats spend awake?



Cats Get Everywhere

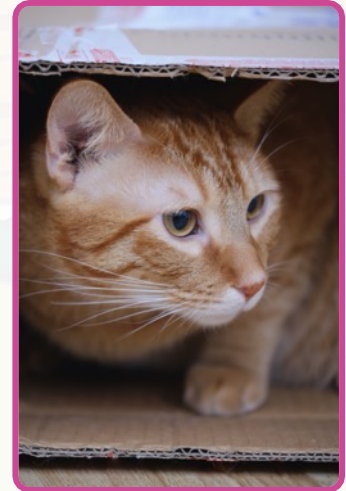
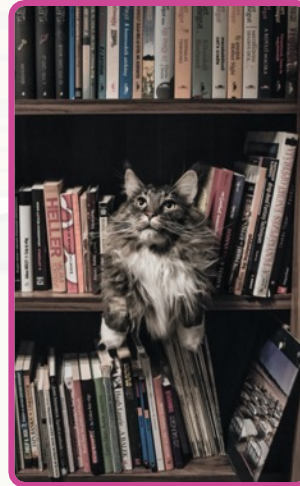
Cats are able to fit through small gaps and into tight spaces.

They use their whiskers to work out whether they can fit through a narrow alley or into a little space.

Cats often end up in strange places. They love to get into boxes!

Did You Know...?

Cats without whiskers are more likely to get stuck in small spaces. They also have trouble balancing and walking straight.



Clever Cats

Cats are very intelligent animals.

A cat's brain is 90 percent the same as a human's.

Cats are particularly good at solving problems.

Some clever house cats have even taught themselves to open doors!

Did You Know...?

Scientists cannot agree on whether dogs are smarter than cats. What do you think?



Athlete Cats

Cats can run very fast over short distances.

They can go as fast as 30 miles per hour.

A cat could beat the record-breaking sprinter, Usain Bolt, in a 200-metre sprint!



Mayor Cat

There was once a cat that became a mayor!

A mayor helps to run a town or city.

Stubbs was an orange tabby cat.

He was the Mayor of Talkeetna – a small town in Alaska, USA.

He wasn't able to make any decisions but he was a very popular mayor.

He remained mayor for 20 years!



Space Cat

A cat was once sent up into space!

On 18th October 1963, a cat called Félicette went to space.

She was nicknamed 'Astrocat'.

No other cats have ever been to space.



Can you think of any other famous cats?



