

Hello cat

So, there you are, with your cat. You may have an adorable little kitten, or perhaps you are already together for many years now.

He probably likes it to sit on your lap, on your keyboard or on the piano. You probably think your cat is super sweet. And a little weird. And that's right. A cat is quite weird.



People who don't love cats will come back as mice in their next life.

^^ ≡ Crazy cats ≡

How crazy are cats really?



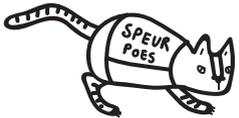
Cats are very good sleepers

Cats sleep during 2/3 of the day.



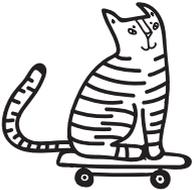
Cats are able to restore muscles

The purring of cats can help healing injuries to tendons and muscles.



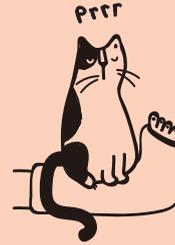
Cats have a good nose

A cat is able to distinguish eighty million smells, a human five million.



Cats are fast

Cats can run no less than 48 km per hour.



Cats can make you feel better

Purring might help against swelling, shortness of breath and inflammation. Cat owners have also 40 percent less chance of getting a heart attack.



Cats can talk

Dogs can make approximately ten different sounds, cats can make more than hundred different sounds.



Cats can't taste sweet

Cats do not have taste buds for sweet flavors.



Cats are unique

Each cat has its own paw print and ribbed pattern on its nose.

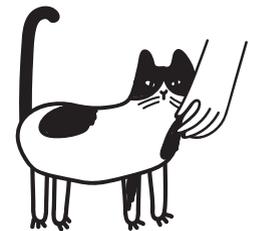


Cat vs. dog

There are real dog lovers and real cat lovers. And – according to science – there are real cat countries and real dog countries. The Netherlands and Belgium are real cat countries, for example. The dog is more popular in the south and south-west of the United States. According to researchers this has something to do with the population density in cities. Cats are namely easier to keep in cities compared to dogs. Dogs need more living space.

Mother or cat?

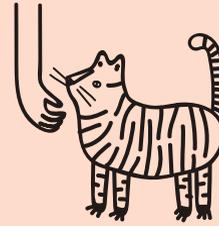
It remains unclear if cats see us as a bigger species, a family member or as a surrogate mother. There are theories that claim they see us as family. They even lick you, so they argue. Other theories assume they see you as a surrogate mother, because wild cats only meow to their natural mothers. There are also theories that assume cats see us as different kind of cats. They say that cats don't adopt their social behavior to our behavior, something dogs do.



How to become a cat's friend?

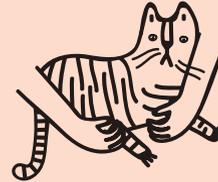


It's not that easy to become a cat's friend, you have to work for it. Follow these steps and become big buddies with your cat.



Tip 1

A cat enjoys it when you pet him below his chin and on top of its head. If you don't know the cat that well, it's better to no pet its whole body. That's too much. See also page 24: workshop How to pet a cat.



Tip 2

It's important to support a cat's paws when you hold him, so they don't hang loose. When the cat wants to leave, let him go. And, of course, don't hold him too tidy.



Tip 3

Make sure the paws touch the ground when you place a cat on the floor. This way the cat will know it can trust you, and that you won't let him fall.



Tip 4

Give him food. Sometimes a cat snack will work too. Cats love people who feed them.

Cat behavior specialist

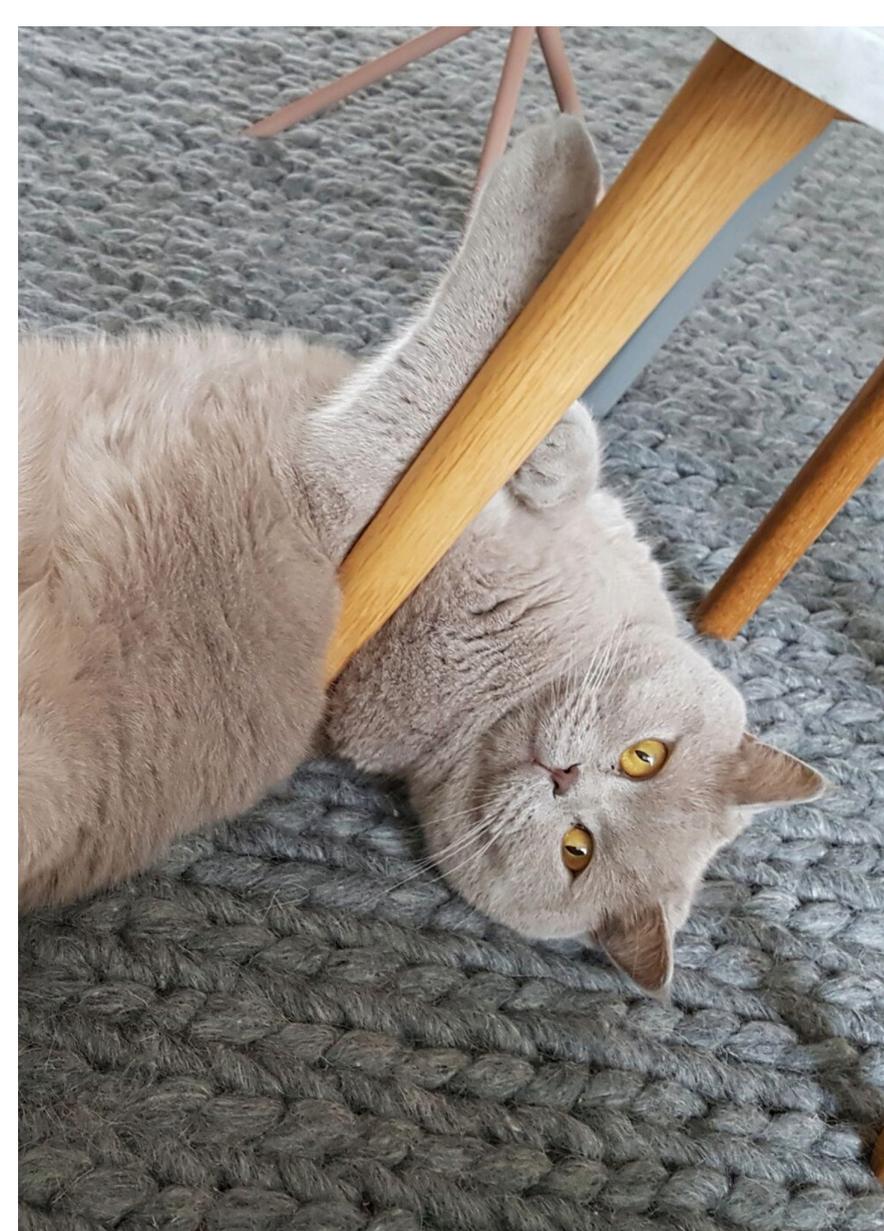
Because it's really fun to have a cat around, but not so easy when you don't know what it needs: an interview with cat behavior specialist Maggie Ruitenberg who works at Kattenkenniscentrum.



Maggie: "I think a lot of cats are feeling stressed and perhaps even unhappy. Most cat owners experience this as well and would love to help their cat. They often just don't know what to do best."

What makes cats unhappy?

"A cat has barely influence on its own life. The owner determines almost everything for him. This is often an issue with cats that don't come outside. The temperature, which rooms they may enter and which are forbidden, the time his food bowl will be filled, the number of people who visit the home: everything is determined by the cat owner. A cat could feel really stressed when he isn't able to leave a room when he wants to."



How do you recognize a cat with stress?

"It's sometimes really hard to see, but a cat that hides a lot or that's being scared easily can be a stressed cat. Or inactivity: a fat cat that sleeps a lot looks content, but there's a good chance he's really unhappy. An important criterion is: can you provoke a cat into playing hunting games? If he's not likely to play along, he might feel bad. This can be caused by something physical, but also because he's feeling frustrated or unsafe."

How can you solve this?

"The best thing to do is imitating a cat's wild life as good as possible. A cat sleeps three or four hours in the wild, then goes for hunting and enjoys his little prey after. The hunt is essential for cats. Dopamine releases at all components of hunting behavior and the cat feels really happy when it actually catches his prey. He misses an essential part of his existence when he can't go outside to hunt. That's why it's good to play more often with indoor cats, but also to do some food enrichment. This means you make sure that the cat must 'work' for his food. Use a food ball or feed puzzles for kibbles. And make sure the cat can move sufficiently, also in height. That will keep him active and happy."



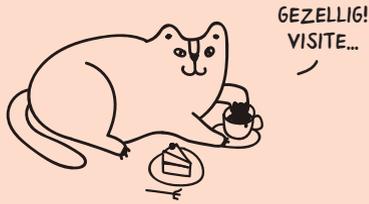
^^ ≧How to make a cat≦ super happy

according to cat behavior expert
Maggie Ruitenberg



Every cat has to feel safe

Cats must have the possibility to find a quiet place so he can rest. Especially in homes where there are several cats, babies and/or dogs. If he cannot go outside, you should give him the opportunity to go to another room where it's quiet. Think also about high places in the livingroom.



2 A cat needs multiple sources

A cat prefers to decide for himself where he eats, drinks, plays and where he can visit the litter box. For example; it's for a cat very stressful when he has to go to the living room because he's hungry, while you're having company that frightens him. Put also water bowls and litter boxes at several places.

3 Make sure your cat can hunt

Hunting is an essential need for cats. An outside cat often gets what he needs, but this doesn't apply for stay-at-home cats. Yet it's important for both to hunt and work for food. This makes them happy. Hide food, use a special food ball or puzzle and play often with your cat.

Fun fact

When you let your cat choose between food that comes in a puzzle or food from a food bowl, it's more likely that he prefers the food bowl. That's because the cat is known as an energy saver (others would say lazy); he'll always choose the easy way.

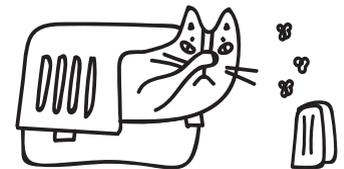
4 A cat loves a consequent and predictable life

Unpredictability is difficult for a cat. A chair that you've suddenly moved, a baby that's acting crazy: they're a great stress factor for a cat. And also the owner isn't always consequent; one time he can act angry when the cat jumps on the table, the other time he's too busy to even notice. Try to respond the same as much as possible. Keep also in mind that punishing will damage the bond between you and your cat and will give him stress. It's better to prevent unwanted behavior and to reward desired behavior.

5 A cat should be able to use his nose

A cat communicates through smell, so its nose is very important to him. He leaves traces of his scent everywhere; outdoors to mark his territory, but also inside your home. He feels safe and happy when he smells his own scent. Take this into account when you clean the house. For example, don't brush all the corners and holes in one go. And never use a scent freshener near the litter box; it's better to clean it more often.

Would you like to read more tips
on how to make your cat happy?
Visit www.kattenkenniscentrum.nl





Follow me, I'll show you where you keep my food.



The cat from head to tail

Ninety percent of a cat's genes corresponds with the genes of mankind. And just that other ten percent creates remarkable differences.