

# Cat Body Language



Just like humans cats use body movements and facial expressions to let you and other cats know what's on his mind.

- When your cat is relaxed and contented, he turns his ears forward, closes his eyes half way and purrs
- When your cat is alert, his eyes open completely and his whiskers stand out
- When your cat is afraid, he draws his ears back and folds them down
- When your cat is feeling aggressive, he has flattened ears, taut facial muscles, bared teeth and dilated pupils. He also brings his whiskers forward.
- When your cat feels threatened, he stares. In fact, when you look at your cat, it's a good idea to blink your eyes occasionally to let him know it is a friendly look.
- When your cat feels threatened, he arches his back and puffs up his fur. This makes him appear larger to other cats.
- If your cat trusts you, he may roll over and show you his belly. This is a very friendly sign. Don't try to rub his belly, though. He may not like that and may claw your hand.

## THE TAIL END

Moving his tail is another way your cat "talks" to you.

- Tail held erect for the full length-friendly greeting to another cat or human.
- Tail curves gently down, then up at the tip-cat relaxed and at peace with the world.
- Tail raised slightly and softly curved-cat becoming interested in something
- Tail lowered and possibly tucked between the hind legs-sign of defeat or total submissiveness.
- Tail swishing from side to side-angry cat about to attack.
- Tail held still but with tip twitching-mild irritation.

## **CAT TALK**

Your cat may also use his voice to communicate. Cats make over 100 different vocal sounds from meows to gurgles to purrs. The more you talk to your cat, the more he will talk back to you. Soon you will recognize his sounds and know what he wants.

Generally, the more rapid, intense and loud the sounds, the more panicked scared and anxious your cat may be. And the slower and less intense the sounds, the more confident or potentially assertive your cat is.

## **FOLLOWING THEIR NOSES**

You've probably noticed your cat nuzzling up to you. He takes his face and rubs against your hand or your face or even your foot. He may also nuzzle up to the other things like chairs or his scratching post. It feels like a hug, doesn't it? What your cat is doing is leaving his scent through a special substance called a pheromone (fer'-a-mon). This substance is secreted from glands on your cat's cheek (he also has these glands on the underside of the paws and under his tail).

Smells are one of the most important ways your cat learns about this environment and other cats in it. When your cat deposits his scent around the house, it makes him feel comfortable. The house seems familiar to him. If you have more than one cat, you may notice them butting heads and rubbing their cheeks on each other. Only cats, comfortable with each other will engage in mutual rubbing.

## **I LOVE YOU**

Does your cat say I love you? S(he) sure does. When s(he) wants to let you know he loves you he might nuzzle your face and touch your nose with his. Or he might bring you a present that he has killed. Or he might just try to be with you wherever you are in the house. Your cat may do something else to say I love you that is something special and unique between you and him/her.

