



Understanding cat behaviour

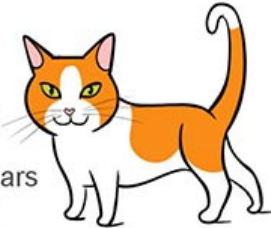
YOUR CAT'S BODY LANGUAGE CAN HELP YOU TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY ARE FEELING

A happy cat

These cats are relaxed and happy.

1

Cat is standing, has a relaxed body posture, ears are in a natural position, tail is held upright with the tip of the tail curved, eyes are a normal shape, mouth is closed.



2

Cat is lying down, belly is exposed, body posture is relaxed, body is stretched out, ears are in natural position, eyes may be partly closed, mouth is closed.



3

Cat is sitting, body posture is relaxed, tail is held out loosely from body, ears are in natural position, eyes are a normal shape, mouth is closed.

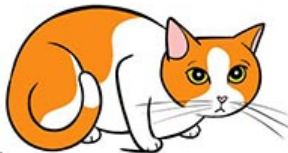


A worried cat

These cats are telling you that they are uncomfortable and don't want you near them.

1

Cat is in a crouched position, muscles are tense, body is held tightly, tail is tucked tightly into body, ears are slightly swivelled sideways, head is slightly lowered and tucked into body, pupils are dilated, mild tension shows in face.



2

Cats who are worried or anxious may hide.



An angry or very unhappy cat

These cats are not happy and want you to stay away or go away.

1

Cat is lying down, body is flattened, ears are flattened to the head, pupils are dilated, tail is held tightly into body, body is tense, limbs are held tight and



2

Cat is lying down, body is flattened, ears are flattened to the head and drawn back, body is slightly rolled over to one side, pupils are dilated, mouth is open



3

Cat is standing, back is arched, body is held sideways, hair is raised, posture is tense, front paw is slightly lifted off the ground (ready to swipe if needed), ears are lowered and pointing out to the side, mouth is open and



close to body.

and tense, teeth are showing.

tense, teeth are showing, tail is tense.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 9RS

www.rspca.org.uk [facebook.com/RSPCA](https://www.facebook.com/RSPCA) twitter.com/RSPCA_official

The RSPCA helps animals in England and Wales. Registered charity no: 219099 **The RSPCA only exists with the support of public donations.**

Illustrations: Lili Chin, © 2011. All rights reserved. With thanks to Julie Bedford, certified clinical animal behaviourist.