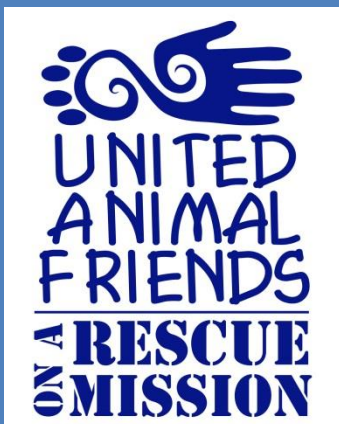


The Joy of Cats

Cats are considered to be independent, aloof, and indifferent to human housemates. None of this is true, as any cat lover will tell you. Cats want very much to be with their humans. Most love petting or just sitting quietly with someone, and they are always interested in what is going on around the house. Cats do some things that make us wonder, though, and knowing more about them will add to your pleasure of living with and loving them.



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My cat acts like he is burying his dinner when he is through eating. Is this a comment on the menu?

No. In the wild, cats typically bury leftovers so they can come back later and finish the food. This trait is still visible in your sweet domestic cat.

My cat makes pawing motions before she drinks from her water bowl. What is that about?

Back to the wild old days - your cat is clearing the water of leaves or debris before she drinks, even though it isn't necessary. Her brain is still instructing her from her species' past.

Why does my cat sleep so much?

Cats are predators, and don't require as much time during the day (or night) to search for food. Meat is high-nutrition food, unlike grass or other vegetation, so once your cat's hunger is satisfied, she needs time only to play or socialize, or nap.

Why does my cat chatter when he looks out the window at birds?

He is chomping his teeth in anticipation of chomping that bird, even though he can't get to it. It is another way he shows his excitement, like swishing his tail and staring intently.

Is catnip harmful? My cat goes crazy when he gets it.

Catnip won't hurt your cat. It is not addictive either. Some cats, about 25 - 30%, don't react to catnip at all because they don't have the gene that elicits the response. Some cats like to eat it, some roll in it or snuffle it up, but all are just enjoying the sensation, which may last for a few minutes. With most cats the effect is calming, but some cats get aggressive or hyperactive for a little while.

If cats are carnivores, why does my cat eat grass?

There are many theories about this but the truth is, no one knows. Maybe it helps move the swallowed hair through the digestive system, maybe they need the vitamins in greenery, or maybe they just like it. It usually, though not always, makes the cat throw up so be mindful of your carpets. Grass is available at pet

supply stores, which are a good source because many plants are poisonous or harmful to cats. (See our list in the online Resources page.)

It seems like my cat is always grooming his fur. Why?

Cats like to be clean! An average cat spends about 1/3 of its waking hours grooming itself. Grooming is also an important social activity. Cats lick each other to show friendship and acceptance, and to reduce tension between group members. Cats will even groom their favorite humans. Have you ever seen your cat fall off a chair and give itself a few quick licks? Grooming helps cope with embarrassment or sometimes conflict. You can bond with your cat by setting aside specific times to groom your cat by brushing and petting, and as an added bonus - fewer hairballs!

I thought that cats hated water. So why does my cat play in it?

This is one time when the cat's independence does come into play. Most cats don't mind getting wet, but it has to be on their terms. This includes fishing, playing with a dripping faucet and "washing" toys in their water bowl, but not baths! If you do decide to bathe your cat, get advice from the experts... it's not easy or neat and can result in you getting injured. Fortunately, cats are self-cleaning and rarely, if ever, need a bath.

My cat is grown but still sucks on a blanket like a kitten. Why?

He is probably getting some comfort out of doing that. Some cats grow out of it and others never do. Make sure your cat has a suitable blanket to use. Plush cushions work, but make sure the cat can't get the fibers loose and swallow them. Anything made of wool works best.

When I pet my kitty, she kneads me with her front feet. Why does she do that?

Kittens and cats knead as a sign of pleasure and contentment. Kittens and mother cats do it, and cats do it to each other and humans. They may also knead their paws when they see something that pleases them.

Fun Cat Facts:

- Cats have two eyelids.
- Cats have no collarbones, so they can get into very small spaces for their size.
- A cat can't spit out ribbon or string because of the barbs on its tongue, so don't leave these around where the cat can get them.