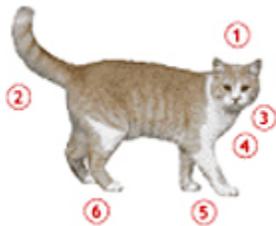


Understanding your Cat's Body Language

Cats haven't figured out to talk human (yet!) but through vocalizations, body language, and demeanor your cat is a skilled communicator. Ears are one of the easiest indicators to read, especially if you're not that familiar with cats. If a cat has tensely flattened his ears back or down and to the side, take those as two warning flags to back off! That's usually a sign a cat is angry or fearful or both. A happy and relaxed cat's ears may be attentive pointed straight up, and one or both may swivel to the side when listening to sounds to the side or behind them. Another big visual flag is a cat's tail, but it should be "read" with the rest of the cat's body posture. A kitten may lash his tail back and forth before pouncing on a toy, while an adult cat may lash his tail back and forth before attacking a perceived threat. Unlike dogs, a cat wagging his tail is not generally a happy greeting! Some cats when really happy will stick their tail straight up and vibrate it, we like to think of that as a sort of royal wave, usually greeting someone they like and know. Cats also communicate with their eyes. You can see the content half-closed eyes on the tuxedo kitty in our photo — you can't hear him happily purring, but he was when we took his photo! Here's some more tips how to read the non-verbal messages your cat is communicating.

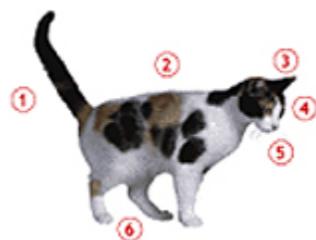
These numbered images are courtesy of our friends at Purina.



On Patrol Of Her Territory

1. Perked ears indicate curiosity
2. Tail provides balance
3. Whiskers measure width
4. Sebaceous glands secrete an oily substance with a distinct smell
5. Paws planted firmly and confidently on the ground
6. Paw pads act as shock absorbers

Ready To Take Action



1. Tail acts as a counterbalance as center of gravity shifts forward
2. Smooth body fur indicates confidence
3. Forward ears show assertiveness
4. Dilated pupils indicate excitement
5. Concentrated expression
6. Hind legs bent, ready for action

Relaxed and Content



1. Each whisker is used for sensory perception
2. Direct eye contact demonstrates trust
3. Tail in relaxed position
4. Slanted eyes indicate contentment
5. Nose pad receptors
6. Ears always attentive