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Cats!

by
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Cats were originally domesticated because they hunted mice who would eat stored grains, protecting the food stores. It was a beneficial situation for both species: cats got a reliable source of prey, and humans got effortless pest control. This mutually beneficial arrangement began the relationship between cats and

humans which continues to this day. While the exact history of human interaction with cats is still somewhat vague, a shallow grave site discovered in 1983 in Cyprus, dating to 7500 BC, during the Neolithic period, contains the skeleton of a human, buried ceremonially with stone tools, a lump of iron oxide, and a handful of seashells. In its own tiny grave (18 inches) from the human grave was an eight-month-old cat, its body oriented in the same westward direction as the human skeleton. Cats are not native to Cyprus. This is evidence that cats were being tamed just as humankind was establishing the first settlements in the part of the Middle East known as the Fertile Crescent. Cats played a large role in ancient Egyptian society. They were associated with the goddesses Isis and Bast. Cats that were favored pets during the Chinese Song Dynasty were long-haired cats for catching rats, and cats with yellow-and-white fur called 'lion-cats', who were valued simply as cute pets. Cats could be pampered with items bought from the market such as "cat-nests", and were often fed fish that were advertised in the market specifically for cats.

Cats have five toes on each front paw, but only four toes on each back paw.



Newborn kittens have closed ear canals that don't begin to open for nine days. When the eyes open, they are always blue at first. They change color over a period of months to the final eye color.

Most cats have no eyelashes.

A cat cannot see directly under its nose. This is why the cat cannot seem to find tidbits on the floor. You can tell a cat's mood by looking into its eyes. The pupil size is related as much to the cat's emotions as to the degree of light.

It is a common belief that cats are color blind. However, recent studies have shown that cats can see blue, green and red.

A large majority of white cats with blue eyes are deaf. White cats with only one blue eye are deaf only in the ear closest to the blue eye. White cats with orange eyes do not have this disability.

Cats with white fur and skin on their ears are very prone to sunburn. Frequent sunburns can lead to skin cancer. Many white cats need surgery to remove all or part of a cancerous ear.

A cat can jump even seven times as high as it is tall. The cat's footpads absorb the shocks of the landing when the cat jumps. [<http://www.cats.alpha.pl/facts.htm>]

Cats have always been of interest to many collectors, especially if they happen to be 'cat people' (of which, I'm one! I have two Siamese) There was even a Kitty Club in the hobby not too long ago. Toby Messmer, KY, had 1,914 of the felines in his collection as of September 2010.

