

Feline Cat Types! What Are they?

By: WereBear - The Way Of Cats - wayofcats.com/blog

There are three main cat personality types.

Choosing the right cat for the right place is a path to satisfaction. It becomes crucial in tricky situations:

- If there are existing cats.
- If the household has special needs and can't handle too much disruption.
- If someone has a dearly held conception of what their ideal cat would be like.

Know the Types: The Alpha Cat

Alpha cats are the mad scientists of the cat world.

They want to manipulate their environment to suit them. Their lack of thumbs is the only factor keeping them from World Domination. That, and those naps.

Alphas are marvelous cats, but they are not for everyone. As kittens, they are the reason china cabinets have doors and kitchen cabinets have baby locks. If something can be opened, unfastened, switched, rearranged, or button pressed, it was an Alpha who did it. Their boundless curiosity and free running intelligence is fastened on their reason for being; experimentation. If a thing does interesting stuff when dumped in the water dish, it will be dumped in the water dish.

Alphas would prefer opening their own cans and getting their own water. Since their robot is not quite built yet, they will allow you to make arrangements, but expect an Alpha to add their own customization touches. If they are hungry and you are doing something interesting in another room, they will take a mouthful of food into the room where you are and eat it there. Alphas have been known to use their behind as a pushing tool to move the litter box to a better spot. Alphas know you are here to cater to their whims, or why did you sign up? When you do cater to their whims, they melt all over you with affection. You understand! You think they are great! Well, you are great too!

The most likely ways Alphas will catch your attention will be doing something that got praise, or laughter, from you in the past. They love the spotlight. They not only like to be with you while you are doing things, they will do their best to do those things too. If you don't want your Alpha playing with your art set or adding their own ideas to your embroidery, you will have to provide your Alpha with a reasonable facsimile of your own hobby, so the two of you can do the same things, side by side. Few things thrill an Alpha more.

Alphas can more than handle busy households, and most other animals. The biggest problems with Alphas and other living creatures are their tendency to take over any social hierarchies. Timid cats will be terrorized with attention, mild-mannered dogs will start saluting when they walk by, and soft-hearted humans will do their bidding. Anyone without the ability to give and take with an Alpha will need social support to hold their own.

More than any other cat type, Alphas need to be disciplined with persuasion. They want to please you, but when something interesting moves across their sensitive radar, they forget. Sometimes the only persuasion that works are cat traps; motion sensors that spritz water or make loud noises, putting open catalogs over bookcase edges, or leaving tippy boxes full of empty soda cans in forbidden areas are often the only persuaders Alphas understand. They have to make their own mistakes, and take their own consequences. Deciding to leave certain things alone must be their own idea.

Some breeds noted for their Alpha tendencies are Abyssinian, Siamese, Rex cats, and other "Oriental" breeds. Their mixes are easily spotted because of their long legs and lean bodies. Devoted acrobats, they retain their kitten playfulness and energy most of their lives. But any cat can be an Alpha. In kittens, look for a laser like gaze that seems to be constantly computing angles and trajectories, and a stubborn insistence on reaching what they focus on. In shelters, Alphas can look droopy and depressed, because their need for stimulation is so thwarted in this situation. Make some faces at them. If they show interest, they are still open to overtures. Ask the shelter folks for "really smart, kind of nutty, has to have toys" and soon you'll be the Igor in your home laboratory.

Know the Types: The Beta

Having a Beta cat is like having a Dr. Watson to your Sherlock Holmes. They are boon companions, best buddies, and always interested and admiring of your efforts on their behalf.

Beta cats see us as the way to get their environment the way they want it. So they are great talkers, or if not, big on the "Lassie Move" where they catch your attention and try to get you to follow them to the object of interest.

They want to please us, so a few corrections is usually all it takes for them to leave things alone, but they have a lot of energy and playfulness, especially as kittens, so it's best to put Grandma's hand blown vase somewhere safe until they grow up. The Beta's favourite toys tend to be prey facsimiles, such as fuzzy mice and small stuffed animals, but they are also fond of any toy that scuttles, bounces, or otherwise acts like something worth stalking.

Betas love companionship, whether it be respectful dogs or properly coached children. They are the most likely cat to meet strangers, especially if the guests are sensible enough to admire them. If your business needs a "greeter cat," look for a Beta. This outgoing quality makes them especially easy to care for, because if the food dish is getting low or the litter box isn't being kept up, you will know about it right away. Always be swift to correct problems, and Betas will shower you with love and attention in return.

Always make a point of telling your Beta if you will be gone overnight, that the store was out of their favourite flavour, or that the cat pillow needs to be washed, but it will be right back. In multiple cat households, Betas will be your translator, able to convey requests and news to the other cats.

Betas are known as "Supervisors." They love watching you do things. They especially love watching you do things that concerns them, such as litter cleaning, planting kitty grass, or putting the windowsill shelf on the correct window. Betas are the best cat for

newbies, because Betas love the chance to train you properly, and are forgiving when you mess up.

Some breeds known for their Beta qualities are the Tonkinese, Manx, Scottish Fold, Maine Coon, and Norwegian Forest Cat. The last two breeds are long haired, but "natural," so need less grooming than other long haired breeds. Which is so Beta of them. Betas tend to have muscular, rectangular bodies and a calm, inquisitive expression.

Any cat can be a Beta. In kittens, look for the thoughtful ones who pause a millisecond before they attack a new toy. They make eye contact easily, and are usually the first in a litter to show interest in people. In the shelter, they are often the ones who rub their faces on the cages or make polite noises to draw your attention. Ask the shelter folk for a friendly, playful cat, and soon you will have your own "Dr. Watson."

Know the Types: The Gamma

Gamma cats are sweet and mellow. They are somewhat shy, but once their trust is won, they love affection and have winning little ways.

They always have time for you. The challenge of the Gamma is not immediately apparent. You must make time for them.

Gammas are teddy bears, so deferential and unassuming that they will not assert themselves except in an emergency. It's up to you, as a responsible Gamma owner, to keep tabs on them, making sure the water bowl is fresh, and the food keeps coming.

Gammas hate to make a fuss. When they do, it's likely to be in very nonverbal ways; leaving the not tasty food untouched or trying to catch your eye with their pleading face.

Gammas don't mind being only cats. You are their companion. They are the most geographically oriented type of cat, feeling secure when they know where everything is, and when those things stay there. They like to know what to expect at all times, and bond with people who feel the same way. Their favourite toys tend to be the small crinkly balls or fluffy feathered things, but will chase a wand toy gladly when it is offered. They have less need than other cats for new toys, becoming fond of their old ones.

Gammas must be protected in households with dogs or children, and then they can get along. Without proper support, even with other cats, they can feel constantly under siege in these situations, and will misbehave only because of the stress, which they have difficulty communicating. Make sure they have places to unwind and times when they know they can get our attention, and they will be able to cope.

Some breeds known for their Gamma qualities are the Persian, Chantilly-Tiffany, Chartreux, Himalayan, British Shorthair, Ragdoll, and Birman. Mixes with these qualities tend to be long haired and broadheaded, with stocky legs and a compact body. But any cat can have a Gamma personality. Look for them as kittens; they hang back from new toys at first, tend to have a wide-eyed stare at new things, and will usually be found in the corners of cages at the shelter. Ask the shelter folk for quiet, gentle cats, and soon you can have one of these "teddy bear types" for your very own.

When choosing a new cat or kitten, try to get a type that fits in with your existing cats. A

younger Beta will love an Alpha kitten, or another Beta. A Gamma would do best with an older Beta, or another Gamma of any age. Alphas love everyone, but can overwhelm a Gamma, or shy Adult Beta, with too much attention.

By learning the Cat Types, we will be able to create a much more harmonious Cat Civilization.