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Gender	♂ Male / ♀ Female
Type	Normal

Design and characteristics



Meowth's design was inspired by the Japanese good luck charm *maneki-neko*.^[7]

Meowth was one of 151 different designs conceived by Game Freak's character development team and finalized by [Ken Sugimori](#) for the first generation of *Pocket Monsters* games *Red* and *Green*, which were localized outside Japan as *Pokémon Red* and *Blue*.^{[8][9]} Called "Nyarth" in Japanese, Nintendo decided to give the various Pokémon species "clever and descriptive names" related to their appearance or features when translating the game for western audiences as a means to make the characters more relatable to American children.^[10] Due to its appearance in the anime series as a speaking character, the species was renamed Meowth, a combination of the words "[meow](#)" and "[mouth](#)".^[7]

Meowth has a distinctly feline appearance, resembling a small housecat. It has cream-colored fur, which turns brown at its toes and tail tip. Its oval-shaped head features prominent whiskers, black-and-brown ears, and a [koban](#), a gold, oval coin (also known as a "charm") embedded in its forehead. Meowth are valued for their ability to collect coins using their signature move, "*Pay Day*", as it is the

only Pokémon that learns it. Meowth's coloration, its love of coins,^[11] and its charm indicate that Meowth is based on the Japanese [Maneki Neko](#), a cat-shaped figurine that is said to bring good luck and money to its owner. Aspects of Meowth were drawn from a Japanese myth dealing with the true value of money, in which a cat has money on its head but does not realize it.^[12] Meowth also draws inspiration from the [Bakeneko](#), as, in Japan, its category is the Bakeneko Pokémon. When a Meowth receives enough experience from battles, it evolves into [Persian](#) at level 28. Meowth is an urban nocturnal Pokémon, spending most of the daytime sleeping and prowling the city streets at night.^[13] They retract their claws back into their paws, which grants them silent movement and protecting them from leaving distinctively incriminating pawprints that alert people to their actions.^[14] Meowth loves round objects, as well as shiny, glittering things.^[15] The item it adores collecting the most, however, are coins, since they are both round and shiny.^[14] Meowth collects the objects at every opportunity and hoards in its nest. [Murkrow](#), a Pokémon similar to the [bowerbird](#), exhibits similar behavior and members of the two species have been known to steal from the collections of the other.^[16]

Appearances

In the video games

Meowth first appeared as a version exclusive Pokémon in *Pokémon Blue*.^[7] It later appeared in subsequent titles, including *Pokémon Silver*, *Pokémon Crystal*, the *Red* and *Blue* remakes *Pokémon FireRed* and *LeafGreen*, *Pokémon Emerald*, *Pokémon Diamond*, *Pearl*, and *Platinum*, *Pokémon SoulSilver*, *Pokémon*

Black and White, Pokémon Black 2 and White 2, Pokémon X and Y, Pokémon Omega Ruby and Alpha Sapphire, Pokémon Sun and Moon, Pokémon Ultra Sun and Ultra Moon, Pokémon: Let's Go, Pikachu! and Let's Go, Eevee! and Pokémon Sword and Shield. Meowth is one of the playable characters in the Pokémon Mystery Dungeon games. Meowth also appears in the Nintendo 64 game Pokémon Snap, the Nintendo GameCube game Pokémon Channel, and many others.^{[17][18]} Meowth has appeared in every Super Smash Bros. game (including Melee, in which Team Rocket's Meowth appears as a trophy^[17]) as a Pokémon summoned via a Poké Ball item and uses its signature move, Pay Day, to throw a barrage of coins. In Pokémon Sun and Moon, Meowth has a unique Alolan Form, which is a Dark-type. Alolan Meowth were owned by Alolan royalty in the past, resulting in them having selfish and prideful attitudes, which caused their form to change.^[19] Pokémon Sword and Shield introduces another form of Meowth, including a new regional evolution. The original Kantonian Meowth has a unique Gigantamax form and its cry is Meowth's Japanese voice from the anime. The species' third form is its Galar form, which is Steel-type and has an exclusive evolved form instead of Persian, known as **Perrserker**, in Japan as ニヤキング (*Nyaiking*). In the Generation VIII games, the Galar Meowth's evolution line are described to be wildly savage and feral, and has a black forehead coin that is distinct from the other Meowth forms' evolution lines.^{[20][21]} It also appeared in Pokémon Go^[22] and New Pokémon Snap.^[23]



Artwork for the noticeably different Alolan Meowth, introduced to the series in *Sun and Moon*

In the anime

A specific male Meowth has made an appearance in almost every episode in the anime as the constant companion of Team Rocket agents Jessie and James, the show's bungling main antagonists. In the English version, he speaks with a Brooklyn accent. He originally lived in the Kantonian city of Hollywood (based on Hollywood, California), and tried to impress a female Meowth named Meowzie by learning to walk on two legs and speak human language. Instead of being impressed, she regarded him as a freak, so Meowth joined Team Rocket.^[24] Meowth was cloned in Pokémon: The First Movie, but his clone could not talk or walk on two legs, likely because Meowth needed to learn how to perform these actions.^[25] The Meowth clone is encountered again in Pokémon: Mewtwo Returns.^[26] In the episode "Meowth's Scrafty Tactics!" Meowth temporarily joined the protagonists Ash, Iris, and Cilan, stating that he was fired from Team Rocket for his part in a failed mission, but in reality he was lying in order to gain their trust as part of an elaborate attempt to steal Pokémon from the Nimbasa City Pokémon Center.^[27] Despite his frequent appearances, Meowth is a wild Pokémon, which makes him eligible for capture.^[17] Iris, Ash's travel companion, and Cliff, a forest ranger, attempted to capture him because they desired the convenience of a Pokémon that could translate to human language.^{[28][29]} However, since he does not wish to be owned by anyone,^[28] he refutes these attempts at capture.^{[28][29]}

Because Meowth exerted so much effort into being able to talk, he doesn't know how to perform Pay Day (his species' trademark move), and is permanently unable to do so.^[30] Pokémon Journeys: The Series revealed that he is capable of Gigantamaxing, which allows him to use his signature G-Max Move, G-Max Gold Rush.

A trainer named Tyson owns a Meowth, which beat Ash's Pikachu in the Ever Grande Conference.^[31] This Meowth was dressed up like Puss in Boots.^[32]

In other media

Team Rocket's Meowth appears in *The Electric Tale of Pikachu* manga series along with his teammates Jessie and James. He first appears in the chapter *Pikachu's Excellent Adventure*. In *Days of Gloom and Glory*, an unnamed Meowth based on Meowzie appears. Like in the anime, Meowzie finds Meowth's ability to speak human language "creepy". In the manga, she has at least one kitten, which she captures into a stolen Poké Ball to protect it from an impending flood. In the *Pokémon Adventures* manga, Meowth's first appearance is a cameo in the first chapter as one of the Pokémon that escapes from Professor Oak's Laboratory.^[33]

Meowth has appeared in the *Pokémon Trading Card Game* first in the Jungle series. A special Meowth card was available with purchase of *Pokémon Trading Card Game*, a video game for the Game Boy Advance. In an open forum interview with ABC News, Pokémon anime director Masakazu Kubo noted Meowth as his favorite Pokémon, citing that while not a major presence in the games, he was in the anime.^[34] Meowth's voice actress at the time, Maddie Blaustein, provided her vocals for the character's appearance in *Pokémon Live!*^[17]

Critical reception

Meowth ranked fourth on *Game Daily*'s top 10 list of Nintendo characters that deserve their own games, describing him (presumably Meowth of the Team Rocket trio, rather than the species as a whole) as "adorable" and explaining that his intelligence and ability to speak gave him more depth than other Pokémon.^[5] *IGN* stated that without the anime, the species would not have been as famous, further describing the character of Team Rocket's Meowth as "probably the funniest part of the show".^[35] *San Francisco Gate* editor Jesse Hamlin stated that the trio's Meowth provided a few laughs in *Pokémon The Movie 2000*.^[36] However, another editor stated it was popular amongst people who have never seen the anime due to being a feline.^[37] Author Harry Schlesinger wrote that Meowth was popular among girls.^[38] Dale Bishir of *IGN* described Meowth as the most important Pokémon that impacted the franchise's history, and further stated that the mascot of Team Rocket, Meowth has endured as the comic-relief of the trio and being one of the few Pokémon that can speak like humans.^[39] Steven Bogos of *The Escapist* listed Meowth as ninth of their favorite Pokémon, describing it as the most charismatic Pokémon of all time.^[40]

IGN said that Meowth of Team Rocket would make a good choice as a playable character in *Super Smash Bros. Brawl*: "if Brawl's developers really wanted much more representation for Pokémon as a franchise" also stating "it would be fun to face him in battle as a real fighter, just to be able to send him 'blasting off again.'"^[41] *GamesRadar* described Meowth as "not all that useful", and questioned if the species would have stood out if it were not for its portrayal in the anime.^[6]

GamesRadar editor Carolyn Gudmundson described Meowth as being "no slouch" compared to *Snorlax*, who she described as the greatest Pokémon ever.^[42] Fellow *GamesRadar* editor Justin Towell listed Meowth as one of video games' eight greatest cats, describing it as one of the most memorable species in the series.^[43] Authors Tracey West and Katherine Noll called Meowth the number one Normal type Pokémon and the tenth best Pokémon overall. They called its anime representation the "heart and soul of Team Rocket", and praised him as "funny and clever".^[44] *WhatCulture* included Meowth on 10 best gen 1 Pokémon.^[45] Meowth was among eleven Pokémon chosen as Japan's mascots in the *2014 FIFA World Cup*.^[46]

A variety of merchandise depicting Meowth have been produced such as Funko Pops,^[47] Galarian Meowth plush toy,^[48] Plush toys,^[49] Build a bear workshop,^[50] Balloon^[51] and a five-foot-tall plush.^[52]

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