

# THE CAT

STAY HOME, STAY UP TO DATE





### Cat

Thecat (Felis catus) is a domestic species of small carnivorous mammal. [1] [2] It is the only domesticated species in the family Felidaeand is commonly referred to as thedomestic catorhouse catto distinguish it from the wild members of the family. [4] Cats are commonly kept as house pets but can also be farm catsor feral cats; the feral cat ranges freely and avoids human contact. [5] Domestic cats are valued by humans for companionship and their ability to kill rodents. About 60 cat breedsare recognized by various cat registries. [6]

The cat is similar in anatomyto the other felid species: it has a strong flexible body, quick reflexes, sharp teeth, and retractable clawsadapted to killing small prey like mice



and rats. Its night visionand sense of smell are well developed. Cat communicationincludes vocalizationslike meowing, purring, trilling, hissing, growling, and grunting as well as cat-specific body language. Although the cat is a social species, it is a solitary hunter. As a predator, it is crepuscular, i.e. most active at dawn and dusk. It can hear sounds too faint or too high in frequencyfor human ears, such as those made by miceand other small mammals. [7] It also secretes and perceives pheromones. [8]

Female domestic cats can have kittens from spring to late autumn, with litter sizes often ranging from two to five kittens. [9]Domestic cats are bred and shown at events as registered pedigreed cats, a hobby known as cat fancy. Population controlof cats may be achieved by spayingand neutering, but their proliferation and the abandonment of pets has resulted in large numbers of feral cats worldwide, contributing to the extinction of entire bird, mammal, and reptile species. [10]

It was long thought that cat domestication began in ancient Egypt, where cats were venerated from around 3100 BC, [11] [12] but recent advances in archaeology and genetics have shown that their domestication occurred in Western Asiaaround 7500 BC. [13]

As of 2021, there were an estimated 220 million owned and 480 million stray cats in the world. [14] [15] As of 2017, the domestic cat was the second most popular pet in the United States, with 95.6 million cats owned [16] [17] [18] and around 42 million households owning at least one cat. [19] In the United Kingdom, 26% of adults have a cat, with an estimated population of 10.9 million pet cats as of 2020. [20]

## Etymology and naming

The origin of the English wordcat, Old Englishcatt, is thought to be the Late Latinwordcattus, which was first used at the beginning of the 6th century. [21] It was suggested thatcattusis derived from an Egyptianprecursor of Coptic Mau, 'tomcat', or its feminine form suffixed with—t. [22] The Late Latin word may be derived from another Afro—Asiatic [23] or Nilo—Saharanlanguage. The Nubianwordkadd ska'wildcat' and Nobiinkad sare possible sources or cognates. [24] The Nubian word may be a loan from Arabic Malagram word may be a loan from Malagram word may be a loan from

However, it is "equally likely that the forms might derive from an ancient Germanic word, imported into Latin and thence to Greek and to Syriac and Arabic". [25] The word may be derived from Germanic and Northern European languages, and ultimately be borrowed from Uralic, cf. Northern Samig dfi, 'female stoat', and Hungarianh gly, 'lady, female stoat'; from Proto-Uralic\*k gw, 'female (of a furred animal)'. [26]

The English puss, extended aspussyandpussycat, is attested from the 16th century and may have been introduced from Dutchpoesor from Low Germanpuuskatte, related to Swedishkattepus, or Norwegianpus, pusekatt. Similar forms exist in Lithuanianpui and Irishpuis norpuisc n. The etymology of this word is unknown, but it may have arisen from a soundused to attract a cat. [27] [28]

A male cat is called atomortomcat [29] (or agib, [30] if neutered). A female is called aqueen [31] (or amolly, [32] [ user-generated source?] if spayed), especially in a catbreeding context. A juvenile cat is referred to as a kitten. In Early Modern English, the wordkittenwas interchangeable with the nowobsolete wordcatling. [33] A group of cats can be referred to as aclowderor aglaring. [34]

### Taxonomy

The scientific nameFelis catuswas proposed by Carl Linnaeusin 1758 for a domestic cat. [1] [2]Felis catus domesticuswas proposed by Johann Christian Polycarp Erxlebenin 1777. [3]Felis daemonproposed by Konstantin Satuninin 1904 was a black cat from the Transcaucasus, later identified as a domestic cat. [35] [36]

In 2003, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclatureruled that the domestic cat is a distinct species, namelyFelis catus. [37] [38]In 2007, it was considered a subspecies,F. silvestris catus, of the European wildcat (F. silvestris) following results of phylogenetic research. [39] [40]In 2017, the IUCN Cat Classification Taskforce followed the recommendation of the ICZN in regarding the domestic cat as a distinct species,Felis catus. [41]

Evolution

Main article: Cat evolution

Skulls of a wildcat (top left), a housecat (top right), and a hybrid between the two. (bottom center)

The domestic cat is a member of the Felidae, a familythat had a common ancestorabout 10 - 15million years ago. [42] The genusFelis divergedfrom other Felidae around 6 - 7 million years ago. [43] Results of phylogeneticresearch confirm that the wildFelisspecies evolved through sympatricor parapatric speciation, whereas the domestic cat evolved through artificial selection. [44] The domesticated cat and its closest wild ancestor are diploidand both possess 38 chromosomes [45] and roughly 20,000 genes. [46] The leopard cat (Prionailurus bengalensis) was tamedindependently in China around 5500 BC. This line of partially domesticated cats leaves no trace in the domestic cat populations of today. [47]

### Domestication

See also: Domestication of the cat

A cat eating a fish under a chair, a muralin an Egyptian tomb dating to the 15th century BC The earliest known indication for the tamingof an African wildcat (F. lybica) was excavated close by a human Neolithic grave in Shillourokambos, southern Cyprus, dating to about 7500 - 7200 BC. Since there is no evidence of native mammalian faunaon Cyprus, the inhabitants of this Neolithic village most likely brought the cat and other wild mammals to the island from the Middle Easternmainland. [48] Scientists therefore assume that African wildcats were attracted to early human settlements in the Fertile Crescentby rodents.

in particular the house mouse (Mus musculus), and were tamed by Neolithic farmers. This mutualrelationship between early farmers and tamed cats lasted thousands of years. As agricultural practicesspread, so did tame and domesticated cats. [13] [6] Wildcats of Egypt contributed to the maternal gene poolof the domestic cat at a later time. [49]

The earliest known evidence for the occurrence of the domestic cat in Greecedates to around 1200 BC. Greek, Phoenician, Carthaginianand Etruscantraders introduced domestic cats to southern Europe. [50]During the Roman Empirethey were introduced to Corsicaand Sardiniabefore the beginning of the 1st millennium. [51]By the 5th century BC, they were familiar animals around settlements in Magna Graeciaand Etruria. [52]By the end of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century, the Egyptian domestic cat lineage had arrived in a Baltic Seaport in northern Germany. [49]

During domestication, cats have undergone only minor changes in anatomy and behavior, and they are still capable of surviving in the wild. Several natural behaviors and characteristics of wildcats may have preadaptedthem for domestication as pets. These traits include their small size, social nature, obvious body language, love of play, and high intelligence. Captive Leoparduscats may also display affectionate behavior toward humans but were not domesticated. [53] House cats often mate with feral cats. [54] Hybridisation between domestic and other Felinae speciesis also possible, producing hybrids such as the Kellas catin Scotland. [55] [56]

Development of cat breedsstarted in the mid 19th century. [57] An analysis of the domestic cat genomerevealed that the ancestral wildcat genome was significantly altered in the process of domestication, as specific mutationswere selected to develop cat breeds. [58] Most breeds are founded on random—bred domestic cats. Genetic diversity of these breeds varies between regions, and is lowest in purebred populations, which show more than 20 deleterious genetic disorders. [59]

Thecat(Felis catus) is a domestic species of small carnivorous mammal. [1] [2] It is the only domesticated species in the family Felidaeand is commonly referred to as the domestic catorhouse catto distinguish it from the wild members of the family. [4] Cats are commonly kept as house pets but can also be farm catsor feral cats; the feral

cat ranges freely and avoids human contact. [5]Domestic cats are valued by humans for companionship and their ability to kill rodents. About 60 cat breedsare recognized by various cat registries. [6]

The cat is similar in anatomyto the other felid species: it has a strong flexible body, quick reflexes, sharp teeth, and retractable clawsadapted to killing small prey like mice and rats. Its night visionand sense of smell are well developed. Cat communicationincludes vocalizationslike meowing, purring, trilling, hissing, growling, and grunting as well as cat—specific body language. Although the cat is a social species, it is a solitary hunter. As a predator, it is crepuscular, i.e. most active at dawn and dusk. It can hear sounds too faint or too high in frequencyfor human ears, such as those made by miceand other small mammals. [7] It also secretes and perceives pheromones.

Female domestic cats can have kittens from spring to late autumn, with litter sizes often ranging from two to five kittens. [9] Domestic cats are bred and shown at events as registered pedigreed cats, a hobby known as cat fancy. Population controlof cats may be achieved by spayingand neutering, but their proliferation and the abandonment of pets has resulted in large numbers of feral cats worldwide, contributing to the extinction of entire bird, mammal, and reptile species. [10] It was long thought that cat domestication began in ancient Egypt, where cats were veneratedfrom around 3100 BC, [11] [12] but recent advances in archaeology and genetics have shown that their domestication occurred in Western Asiaaround 7500 BC. [13]

As of 2021, there were an estimated 220 million owned and 480million stray cats in the world. [14] [15] As of 2017, the domestic cat was the second most popular pet in the United States, with 95.6 million cats owned [16] [17] [18] and around 42 million households owning at least one cat. [19] In the United Kingdom, 26% of adults have a cat, with an estimated population of 10.9 million pet cats as of 2020. [20]

### Etymology and naming

The origin of the English wordcat, Old Englishcatt, is thought to be the Late Latinwordcattus, which was first used at the beginning of the 6th century. [21] It was suggested that cattusis derived from an Egyptian precursor of Coptic Mau, 'tomcat', or its feminine form suffixed with—t. [22] The Late Latin word may be derived from another Afro—

Asiatic [23] or Nilo-Saharanlanguage. The Nubianwordkadd ska'wildcat' and Nobiinkad sare possible sources or cognates. [24] The Nubian word may be a loan from Arabic Nala qa nala qa

However, it is "equally likely that the forms might derive from an ancient Germanic word, imported into Latin and thence to Greek and to Syriac and Arabic". [25] The word may be derived from Germanic and Northern European languages, and ultimately be borrowed from Uralic, cf. Northern Samig\(\text{\overline{A}}\) \(\vec{d}\) fi, 'female stoat', and Hungarianh\(\text{\overline{A}}\) lgy, 'lady, female stoat'; from Proto-Uralic\*k\(\text{\overline{A}}\) \(\text{\overline{A}}\) w\(\text{\overline{A}}\), 'female (of a furred animal)'. [26]

The English puss, extended aspussyandpussycat, is attested from the 16th century and may have been introduced from Dutchpoesor from Low Germanpuuskatte, related to Swedishkattepus, or Norwegianpus, pusekatt. Similar forms exist in Lithuanianpui and Irishpuis norpuisc. The etymology of this word is unknown, but it may have arisen from a soundused to attract a cat. [27] [28]

A male cat is called atomortomcat [29] (or agib, [30] if neutered). A female is called aqueen [31] (or amolly, [32] [ user-generated source?] if spayed), especially in a catbreeding context. A juvenile cat is referred to as a kitten. In Early Modern English, the wordkittenwas interchangeable with the now-obsolete wordcatling. [33] A group of cats can be referred to as aclowderor aglaring. [34]

#### Taxonomy

The scientific nameFelis catuswas proposed by Carl Linnaeusin 1758 for a domestic cat. [1] [2]Felis catus domesticuswas proposed by Johann Christian Polycarp Erxlebenin 1777. [3]Felis daemonproposed by Konstantin Satuninin 1904 was a black cat from the Transcaucasus, later identified as a domestic cat. [35] [36]

In 2003, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclatureruled that the domestic cat is a distinct species, namelyFelis catus. [37] [38]In 2007, it was considered a subspecies,F. silvestris catus, of the European wildcat (F. silvestris) following results of phylogenetic research. [39] [40]In 2017, the IUCN Cat Classification Taskforce followed the recommendation of the ICZN in regarding the domestic cat as a distinct species,Felis catus. [41]

Evolution

Main article: Cat evolution

Skulls of a wildcat (top left), a housecat (top

right), and a hybrid between the two. (bottom center)

The domestic cat is a member of the Felidae, a family that had a common ancestorabout 10 - 15 million years ago. [42] The genusFelis divergedfrom other Felidae around 6 - 7 million years ago. [43] Results of phylogeneticresearch confirm that the wildFelisspecies evolved through sympatricor parapatric speciation, whereas the domestic cat evolved through artificial selection. [44] The domesticated cat and its closest wild ancestor are diploidand both possess 38 chromosomes [45] and roughly 20,000 genes. [46] The leopard cat (Prionailurus bengalensis) was tamedindependently in China around 5500 BC. This line of partially domesticated cats leaves no trace in the domestic cat populations of today. [47]

Domestication
See also: Domestication of the cat

A cat eating a fish under a chair, a muralin an Egyptian tomb dating to the 15th century BC The earliest known indication for the tamingof an African wildcat (F. lybica) was excavated close by a human Neolithic grave in Shillourokambos, southern Cyprus, dating to about 7500 - 7200 BC. Since there is no evidence of native mammalian faunaon Cyprus, the inhabitants of this Neolithic village most likely brought the cat and other wild mammals to the island from the Middle Easternmainland. [48] Scientists therefore assume that African wildcats were attracted to early human settlements in the Fertile Crescentby rodents. in particular the house mouse (Mus musculus). and were tamed by Neolithic farmers. This mutualrelationship between early farmers and tamed cats lasted thousands of years. As agricultural practicesspread, so did tame and domesticated cats. [13] [6] Wildcats of Egypt contributed to the maternal gene pool of the domestic cat at a later time. [49]

The earliest known evidence for the occurrence of the domestic cat in Greecedates to around 1200 BC. Greek, Phoenician, Carthaginianand Etruscantraders introduced domestic cats to southern Europe. [50] During the Roman Empirethey were introduced to Corsicaand Sardiniabefore the beginning of the 1st millennium. [51] By the 5th century BC, they were familiar animals around settlements in Magna Graeciaand Etruria. [52] By the end of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century, the Egyptian domestic cat lineage had arrived in a Baltic Seaport in northern

Germany. [49]

During domestication, cats have undergone only minor changes in anatomy and behavior. and they are still capable of surviving in the wild.

Several natural behaviors and characteristics of wildcats may have p r e

adaptedthem O domestication as pets. These traits include their small size, social nature, obvious body language, love of play, and

high intelligence. Captive Leoparduscats may also display affectionate behavior toward humans but were not domesticated. [53] House cats often mate with feral cats. [54] Hybridisation between domestic and other Felinae speciesis also possible, producing hybrids such as the Kellas catin Scotland. [55]

Development of cat breedsstarted in the mid 19th century. [57] An analysis of the domestic cat genomerevealed that the ancestral wildcat genome was significantly altered in the process of domestication, as specific mutations were selected to develop cat breeds. [58] Most breeds are founded on randombred domestic cats. Genetic diversity of these breeds varies between regions, and is lowest in purebred populations, which show more than 20 deleterious genetic disorders. [59]

Thecat (Felis catus) is a domestic species of small carnivorous mammal. [1] [2] It is the only domesticated species in the family Felidaeand is commonly referred to as thedomestic catorhouse catto distinguish it

from the wild members of the family. [4] Cats are commonly kept as house pets but can also be farm catsor feral cats: the feral cat ranges freely and avoids human contact. [5]

> Domestic cats are valued by humans for companionship and their ability to kill rodents. About 60 cat breedsare recognized by various cat registries. [6] The cat is similar in

anatomyto the other felid species: it has a strong flexible body, quick reflexes, sharp teeth, and retractable clawsadapted to killing small prey like mice and rats. Its night visionand sense of smell are well developed. Cat

communicationincludes

vocalizationslike

meowing, purring, trilling, hissing, growling, and grunting as well as cat-specific body language. Although the cat is a social species, it is a solitary hunter. As a predator, it is crepuscular, i.e. most active at dawn and dusk. It can hear sounds too faint or too high in frequencyfor human ears, such as those made by miceand other small mammals. [7] It also secretes and perceives pheromones. [8]

Female domestic cats can have kittens from spring to late autumn, with litter sizes often ranging from two to five kittens. [9] Domestic cats are bred and shown at events as registered pedigreed cats, a hobby known as cat fancy. Population controlof cats may be achieved by spaying and neutering, but their proliferation and the abandonment of pets has resulted in large numbers of feral cats worldwide, contributing to the extinction of entire bird, mammal, and reptile species. [10] It was long thought that cat domestication began in ancient Egypt, where cats were veneratedfrom around 3100 BC, [11] [12] but recent advances in archaeology and genetics have shown that their domestication occurred in Western Asiaaround 7500 BC. [13]

As of 2021, there were an estimated 220 million owned and 480million stray cats in the world. [14] [15] As of 2017, the domestic cat was the second most popular pet in the United States, with 95.6million cats owned [16] [17]

[18] and around 42 million households owning at least one cat. [19] In the United Kingdom. 26% of adults have a cat, with an estimated population of 10.9million pet cats as of 2020.

#### Etymology and naming

The origin of the English wordcat, Old Englishcatt, is thought to be the Late Latinwordcattus, which was first used at the beginning of the 6th century. [21] It was suggested that cattusis derived from an Egyptian precursor of Coptic ⊠⊠⊠au, 'tomcat', or its feminine form suffixed with-t. [22] The Late Latin word may be derived from another Afro-Asiatic [23] or Nilo-Saharanlanguage. The Nubianwordkadd\ska'wildcat' and Nobiinkad\(\sigma\) sare possible sources or cognates. [24] The Nubian word may be a loan from  $Arabic \boxtimes \boxtimes \boxtimes \boxtimes \boxtimes ga \boxtimes Z \sim \boxtimes \boxtimes \boxtimes \boxtimes gi \boxtimes \boxtimes$ .

However, it is "equally likely that the forms might derive from an ancient Germanic word, imported into Latin and thence to Greek and to Syriac and Arabic". [25] The word may be derived from Germanic and Northern European languages, and ultimately be borrowed from Uralic, cf. Northern Samig⊠ dfi, 'female stoat', and Hungarianh⊠lgy, 'lady, female stoat'; from Proto-Uralic\*k⊠⊠w⊠, 'female (of a furred animal)'. [26]

The English puss, extended aspussyandpussycat, is attested from the 16th century and may have been introduced from Dutchpoesor from Low Germanpuuskatte, related to Swedishkattepus, or Norwegianpus, pusekatt. Similar forms exist in Lithuanianpui⊠⊠and Irishpuis⊠norpuisc⊠n. The etymology of this word is unknown, but it may have arisen from a soundused to attract a cat. [27] [28]

A male cat is called atomortomicat [29] (or agib, [30] if neutered). A female is called aqueen [31] (or amolly, [32] [user-generated source?lif spayed), especially in a catbreeding context. A juvenile cat is referred to as a kitten. In Early Modern English, the wordkittenwas interchangeable with the nowobsolete wordcatling. [33] A group of cats can be referred to as aclowderor aglaring. [34]

#### Taxonomy

The scientific nameFelis catuswas proposed by Carl Linnaeusin 1758 for a domestic cat. [1] [2]Felis catus domesticuswas proposed by Johann Christian Polycarp Erxlebenin 1777. [3] Felis daemonproposed by Konstantin Satuninin 1904 was a black cat from the Transcaucasus, later identified as a domestic cat. [35] [36]

In 2003, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclatureruled that the domestic cat is a distinct species, namelyFelis catus. [37] [38] In 2007, it was considered a subspecies, F. silvestris catus, of the European wildcat (F. silvestris) following results of phylogeneticresearch. [39] [40]In 2017, the IUCN Cat Classification Taskforce followed the recommendation of the ICZN in regarding the domestic cat as a distinct species, Felis catus. [41] Evolution

Main article: Cat evolution

Skulls of a wildcat (top left), a housecat (top right), and a hybrid between the two. (bottom center)

The domestic cat is a member of the Felidae. a familythat had a common ancestorabout 10 - 15 million years ago. [42] The genusFelis divergedfrom other Felidae around 6 - 7 million years ago. [43] Results of phylogeneticresearch confirm that the wildFelisspecies evolved through sympatricor parapatric speciation, whereas the domestic cat evolved through artificial selection. [44] The domesticated cat and its closest wild ancestor are diploidand both possess 38 chromosomes [45] and roughly 20,000 genes. [46] The leopard cat(Prionailurus bengalensis) was tamedindependently in China around 5500 BC. This line of partially domesticated cats leaves no trace in the domestic cat populations of today. [47]

Domestication See also: Domestication of the cat

Egyptian tomb dating to the 15th century BC The earliest known indication for the tamingof an African wildcat(F. lybica) was excavatedclose by a human Neolithicgrave in Shillourokambos, southern Cyprus, dating to about 7500 - 7200 BC. Since there is no evidence of native mammalian faunaon Cyprus. the inhabitants of this Neolithic village most likely brought the cat and other wild mammals to the island from the Middle Easternmainland. [48] Scientists therefore assume that African wildcats were attracted to early human settlements in the Fertile Crescentby rodents. in particular the house mouse (Mus musculus),

A cat eating a fish under a chair, a muralin an

and were tamed by Neolithic farmers. This mutualrelationship between early farmers and tamed cats lasted thousands of years. As agricultural practices spread, so did tame and domesticated cats. [13] [6] Wildcats of Egypt contributed to the maternal gene pool of the domestic cat at a later time. [49]

The earliest known evidence for the occurrence of the domestic cat in Greecedates to around 1200 BC. Greek, Phoenician, Carthaginianand Etruscantraders introduced domestic cats to southern Europe. [50] During the Roman Empirethey were introduced to Corsicaand

Sardiniabefore the beginning of the 1st millennium. [51] By the 5th century BC, they

were familiar animals around settlements in

Magna Graeciaand Etruria. [52] By the end of

the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century.

the Egyptian domestic cat lineage had arrived

in a Baltic Seaport in northern Germany. [49]

During domestication, cats have undergone

only minor changes in anatomy and behavior,

and they are still capable of surviving in

the wild. Several natural behaviors and

characteristics of wildcats may have pre-

adapted them for domestication as pets. These

traits include their small size, social nature, obvious body language, love of play, and high intelligence. Captive Leoparduscats may also display affectionate behavior toward humans but were not domesticated. [53] House cats often mate with feral cats. [54] Hybridisation between domestic and other Felinae speciesis also possible, producing hybrids such as the Kellas catin Scotland. [55] [56]

Development of cat breedsstarted in the mid 19th century. [57] An analysis of the domestic cat genomerevealed that the ancestral wildcat genome was significantly altered in the process of domestication, as specific mutationswere selected to develop cat breeds. [58] Most breeds are founded on randombred domestic cats. Genetic diversity of these breeds varies between regions, and is lowest in purebred populations, which show more than 20 deleterious genetic disorders. [59]