

On average, cats spend 2/3 of every day sleeping. That means a nine-year-old cat has been awake for only three years of its life.

Unlike dogs, cats do not have a sweet tooth. Scientists believe this is due to a mutation in a key taste receptor.

When a cat chases its prey, it keeps its head level. Dogs and humans bob their heads up and down.

The technical term for a cat's hairball is a "bezoar."

A group of cats is called a "clowder."

Female cats tend to be right pawed, while male cats are more often left pawed. Interestingly, while 90% of humans are right handed, the remaining 10% of lefties also tend to be male.

A cat can't climb head first down a tree because every claw on a cat's paw points the same way. To get down from a tree, a cat must back down.

Cats make about 100 different sounds. Dogs make only about 10.

A cat's brain is biologically more similar to a human brain than it is to a dog's. Both humans and cats have identical regions in their brains that are responsible for emotions.

There are more than 500 million domestic cats in the world, with approximately 40 recognized breeds.

While it is commonly thought that the ancient Egyptians were the first to domesticate cats, the oldest known pet cat was recently found in a 9,500-year-old grave on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus. This grave predates early Egyptian art depicting cats by 4,000 years or more.

During the time of the Spanish Inquisition, Pope Innocent VIII condemned cats as evil and thousands of cats were burned. Unfortunately, the widespread killing of cats led to an explosion of the rat population, which exacerbated the effects of the Black Death.

During the Middle Ages, cats were associated with witchcraft, and on St. John's Day, people all over Europe would stuff them into sacks and toss the cats into bonfires. On holy days, people celebrated by tossing cats from church towers.

Cats are North America's most popular pets: there are 73 million cats compared to 63 million dogs. Researchers believe the word "tabby" comes from Attabiyah, a neighborhood in Baghdad, Iraq. Tabbies got their name because their striped coats resembled the famous wavy patterns in the silk produced in this city.

Cats hate the water because their fur does not insulate well when it's wet. The Turkish Van, however, is one cat that likes swimming. Bred in central Asia, its coat has a unique texture that makes it water resistant.

The Egyptian Mau is probably the oldest breed of cat. In fact, the breed is so ancient that its name is the Egyptian word for "cat."

The costliest cat ever is named Little Nicky, who cost his owner \$50,000. He is a clone of an older cat.

A cat usually has about 12 whiskers on each side of its face.

A cat's eyesight is both better and worse than humans. It is better because cats can see in much dimmer light and they have a wider peripheral view. It's worse because they don't see color as well as humans do. Scientists believe grass appears red to cats.

Spanish-Jewish folklore recounts that Adam's first wife, Lilith, became a black vampire cat, sucking the blood from sleeping babies. This may be the root of the superstition that a cat will smother a sleeping baby or suck out the child's breath.