

Cats can recognise their own names, say scientists

Notes & Cues:	<p>Article:</p> <p>For the first time, research appears to suggest domestic cats could pick out their name in a string of words. Dr Atsuko Saito, first author of the research from Sophia University in Japan, said: "There are so many studies about dog ability to communicate with humans. We think it is important to show cats' ability."</p> <p>The team chose not to attempt to test cats' abilities by asking them to retrieve named objects they had previously been shown—as is often used in experiments with dogs. Instead they took a different approach, playing a voice saying four words followed by the name of the cat—all in the same intonation—and noting the animal's responses and movements through video recordings made in the cat's normal surroundings.</p> <p>The results showed that cats rarely did more than twitch an ear or move their heads in response to the voices, with very few so much as moving their tail, let alone meowing. Nonetheless the team said the results, based on a four-point scale of how much each cat responded, showed cats could tell their name apart from other words.</p> <p>Saito said it was not clear the cats realised their name was a name. "There is no evidence that cats have the ability to recognise themselves. So I think they just associated words—here, names—with rewards or punishment, " she said.</p>
Summary:	