

# ALL ABOUT CATS

Cats are one of the most popular animals to have as a pet. There are many different types of cat but there are some things that they all have in common. This fact sheet will tell you everything you need to know.

## Appearance

The cats we keep as pets are called domestic cats and they have soft fur, long tails to help them balance and short noses. They have five toes on their front paws but only four on their back ones. Cats' tongues are as rough as sandpaper and they use them to keep their fur clean and smooth. They have long, pointy whiskers on the side of their faces. These help them to feel objects as they move around or to help them find their way in the dark. To help them hunt they also have sharp teeth and claws.



## Food

Cats are natural hunters and their paws help them move silently and almost invisibly because they don't want to scare their prey away. They hunt alone at night catching smaller mammals like shrews, rats and mice or they might catch smaller birds like sparrows, robins and wrens. Cats are sometimes given milk but many are actually allergic to cows' milk so this is not a good idea. A lot of cats like to eat grass and need to chew on it to help them digest their food properly. This helps to keep them healthy.

## Habits

Cats are loving animals and good company but they are also independent and can be easily looked after. They are very lazy and can happily sleep for 16-18 hours a day. When they are awake they like to be outdoors and can become unhappy if they are indoors for too long. They are athletic creatures and can powerfully jump almost 7 times their height. If they were to fall from a tree they would have a good chance of surviving. Cats say hello to each other in a friendly way by touching their noses together. This is a bit like people giving each other a handshake.