

Cat Quotes — 3 (2004)

(page checked April 2026)

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I don't speak from any position of authority, but it seems to me cats could well be the animals that have been most written about. There must be many thousands of books written about them; and so, too, there are large numbers of quotations. No list could hope to be comprehensive, and I have merely selected some that I've come across over the years that have appealed to me; some are very well-known, others less so. They're arranged very roughly in sections, such that quotes about similar aspects of cats appear together.

The photos are our own originals of cats we've either lived with or encountered: sadly none of them are still with us. A number of the pictures are from 'chance encounters', and these are referred to as 'anonymous', giving the year. Unless stated otherwise, photos were taken in the UK.

Remember: 'The smallest feline is a masterpiece.' —*Leonardo da Vinci*



Intelligence

A cat is more intelligent than people believe, and can be taught any crime. – *Mark Twain (1835–1910)*

You can keep a dog, but it is the cat who keeps people, because cats find humans to be useful domestic animals. – *George Mikes (1912–1987)*

As anyone well knows who has ever been around a cat for any length of time, cats have enormous patience with the limitations of the human mind. – *Cleveland Amory (1917–1998)*

One reason we admire cats is for their proficiency in one-upmanship. They always seem to come out on top, no matter what they are doing — or they pretend they do. – *Barbara Webster*



Midge, 2008



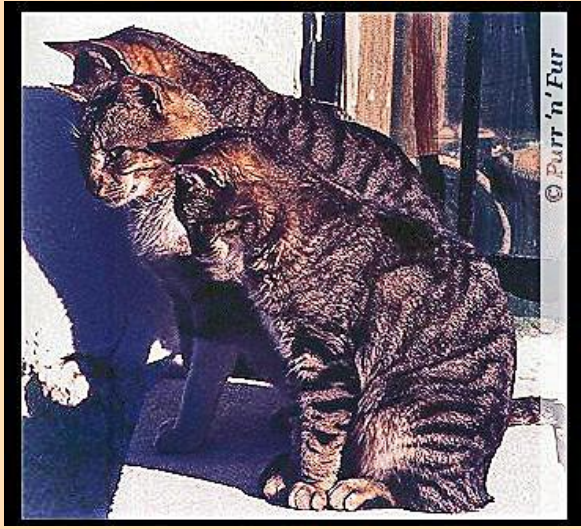
Minette (Canada), 1978

I have studied many philosophers and many cats. The wisdom of the cats is infinitely superior.
– Hippolyte Taine (1828 –93; French critic and historian)

Kittens learn early to listen intently when someone calls them – and do absolutely nothing,
–Pam Brown (b. 1948): Australian poet

Of all God's creatures, there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash. That one is the cat. If Man could be crossed with the cat, it would improve Man and deteriorate the cat. – Mark Twain

In the beginning, God created Man; but seeing him so feeble, he gave him the cat.
–Warren Eckstein (b.1949: American pet trainer and animal behaviourist)



Guadalest, Spain, 1986



Tyburn, 2009

Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get eight cats to pull a sled through the snow.
– Jeff Valdez (b. 1956: American producer and studio executive)

After scolding one's cat, one looks into its face and is seized by the ugly suspicion that it has understood every word. And has filed it for future reference. – Charlotte Gray (historian and biographer)

The cat seldom interferes with other people's rights. His intelligence keeps him from doing many of the foolish things that complicate life. –Carl van Vechten

Kind old ladies often assure us that cats are the best judges of character. A cat will always go to a good man, they say. – Virginia Woolf (1882–1941): English writer

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Cat Communication

'Meow' is like 'Aloha' — it can mean anything. – Hank Ketcham (1920–2001): American cartoonist

Purring would seem to be, in her case, an automatic safety device for dealing with happiness overflow.
– Monica Edwards (b. 1912)

'That got me a look so intense I was unable to interpret it — like the way cats sometimes fix on you. What they mean by the look is completely beyond understanding; but it's meant for you, you alone.'
–'Walking the Shadow': Donald James (1931–2008): English writer

Cats make one of the most satisfying sounds in the world: they purr . . . a purring cat is a form of high praise, like a gold star on a test paper. It is reinforcement for something we would all like to believe about ourselves — that we are nice. – Roger A. Caras (1928–2001): American writer and conservationist

A cat can purr its way out of anything. – Donna McCrohan (author)

If cats could talk, they would lie to you. – *Bob Kopack*

When I meow it means . . .

I am hungry . . . I want food in my bowl . . . I want food in my bowl right now . . . I want to go out . . . I want to come in . . . Brush me . . . Get my toy out from under the sofa . . . It's time to change the litter . . . I just put a mouse in the bureau drawer . . . I did not break that vase . . . Get me down from this tree . . . Please kill that dog next door . . . Hello . . . Goodbye. – *Henry Beard (b.1`945): American humorist*



Pushkin, 2002



anonymous, 1994

It is a very inconvenient habit of kittens (Alice had once said) that, whatever you say to them, they always purr. – *Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)*

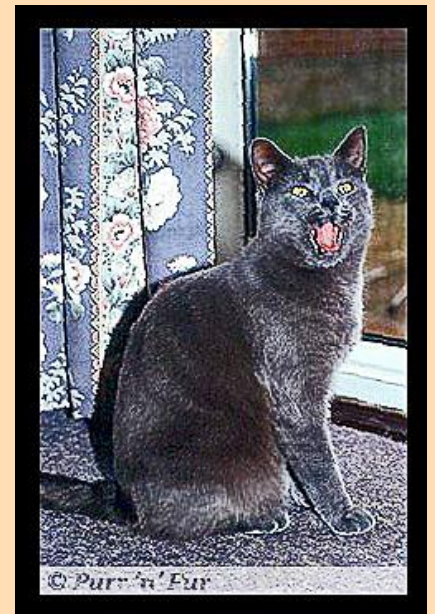
If cats could talk — they wouldn't. – *Dan Porter*

Even if you've just destroyed a Ming vase – purr. Usually all will be forgiven. – *Lenny Rubenstein*

'There is no snooze button on a cat who wants his breakfast.' – *Unknown*



Jasper, 1990



anonymous, 1994

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NOTE: There are probably hundreds of quotes about cats that aren't included here. Very many more can be found at these links.

[Cat quotes](#) | [Sand Tracker](#) | [The Great Cat](#) and these [archived](#) pages: [Scoopcat](#) | [Shadow Warrior](#)

Proverbs & Sayings

Beware of people who like cats. – *Irish saying*

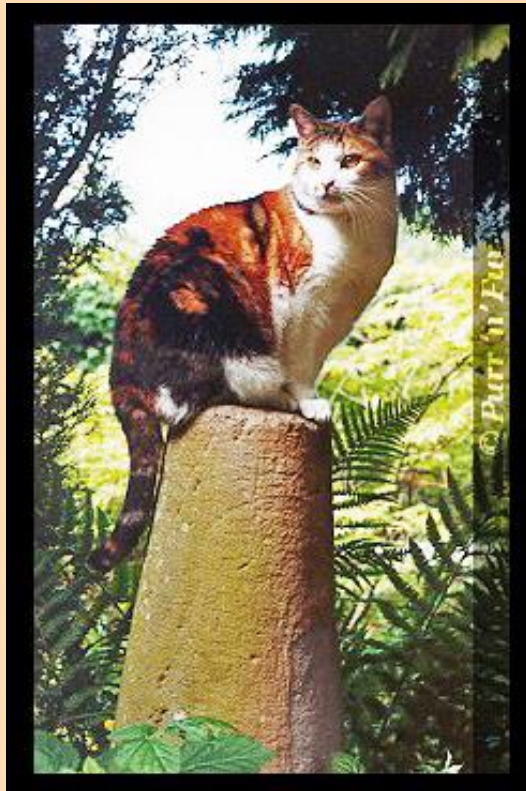
When rats infest the palace, a lame cat is better than the swiftest horse. – *Chinese proverb*

You will always be lucky if you know how to make friends with strange cats. – *Colonial American proverb*

In a cat's eye, all things belong to cats.– *English proverb*

Cats are at home everywhere where one feeds them. – *German proverb*

Happy is the home with at least one cat. – *Italian proverb*



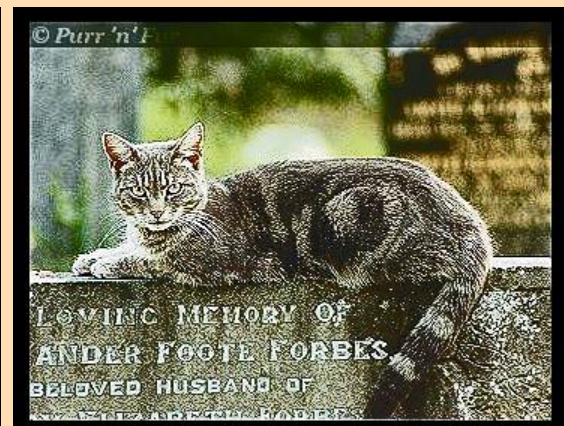
Poppy, 2001



Socks, 1994



Pushkin, 2002



anonymous, 2002

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Sleeping Cats

The real measure of a day's heat is the length of a sleeping cat. – *Charles J. Brady*

A little drowsing cat is an image of perfect beatitude. – *Champfleury (Jules Fleury-Husson: 1821–1889)*

Cats are rather delicate creatures and they are subject to a good many ailments — but I never heard of one that suffered from insomnia. – *Joseph Wood Krutch (1893–1970): American writer and naturalist*



Blackie, 1967



Maggie, 2003

A cat allows you to sleep on the bed. On the edge. – *Jenny de Vries*

The trouble with sharing one's bed with cats is that they'd rather sleep on you than beside you. – *Pam Brown (b. 1948): Australian poet*

To assume a cat is asleep is a grave mistake. He can close his eyes and keep both ears awake. – *Aileen Fisher (1906–2002): American writer*

'You can't look at a sleeping cat and be tense.' – *Jane Pauley (b. 1950, US TV anchor and journalist)*



Polly, 2001



Ginger, 2009



Thomas, 2000

Eating

At dinner time he would sit in a corner, concentrating; and suddenly they would say, 'Time to feed the cat,' as if it were their idea. – *Lilian Jackson Braun (1913–2011): American writer*

A cat isn't fussy — just as long as you remember he likes his milk in the shallow, rose-patterned saucer and his fish on the blue plate. From which he will take it, and eat it off the floor. – *Arthur Bridges*



Opus 2 (Switzerland), 1987



Whiskers, 2004

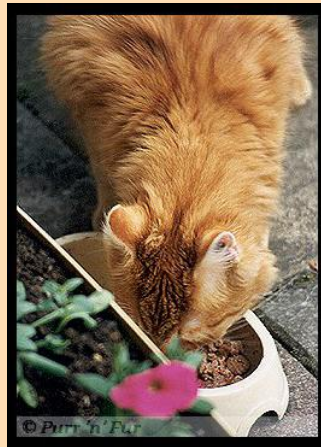
Perhaps the silliest thing that is said about the cat is that it will, given the opportunity, instinctively choose a balanced and sensible diet. It won't. – *William H. A. Carr (b. 1924)*

When the tea is brought at five o'clock
And all the net curtains are drawn with care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

- 'Milk for the Cat': *Harold Monro (1879-1932): English poet*



Midge, 2004



Tommy, 2004



Whiskers, 2004

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