



Shelter Volunteer Handbook

(Cat Cuddler/Socializer)



Thank you for volunteering with Second Chance Humane Society! We greatly depend on our volunteers to provide additional socialization, training, nurturing, etc, to our homeless pets. This greatly reduces the length of time before they are adopted as it reduces their stress, boosts their immune system, and makes them overall more adoptable.

Second Chance Humane Society relies on its volunteers to be dependable and effective during their volunteer hours. By meeting these commitments, the program operates smoothly and the maximum benefit is derived for the animals.

Please observe these general guidelines for the safety of you and the pets:

1. All volunteers must complete an application and have a signed current liability waiver (within one year) for yourself and any family members that visit the shelter.
2. All shelter volunteers must abide by the policies and guidelines.

When you can be at the shelter:

Volunteers who are interested in working with the cats are welcome at the shelter Monday through Sunday during the hours of 11:00am until 15 minutes prior to closing (hours depend on the time of year). Holidays that the shelter is closed to the general public are also closed to volunteers, unless special arrangements have been made in advance with the Volunteer Coordinator or the Shelter Supervisors. Socializing with the animals after hours when the shelter is closed also must be cleared with either Department in advance.



Parking

Please park in the spaces on the left as you drive in (leaving a few spaces closest to the house open for customer parking). Please do not park on the grass or immediately in front of the trash dumpster.

Personal Belongings

We recommend that during your volunteer time at the shelter that you lock your personal belongings and valuables in your car since we do not have a way to secure them for you. Volunteers can use the wall coat rack and shelves located near the public restroom. Please do not lay your coats/personal items on the retail shelves. Please note we are not responsible for any items that may be lost or stolen.

Volunteer Sign-In/Out

Whenever you visit the shelter to volunteer (even if it is just for a few minutes), please make sure to record your time in and out in the three ring binder labeled “Volunteer Log Book.” You will also want to pick up a volunteer badge. The volunteer badge should be visible and must be worn at all times. At the end of your volunteer shift, please sign out and return the volunteer badge.

Use of the Angel Ridge Ranch Property:

Please live your personal pets at home. The property is to be used for walking shelter dogs and unfamiliar dogs cause stress and distractions to the shelter animals.

Children at the Shelter

Children under 16 years of age will need to have a parent/guardian present while volunteering. **All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age in order to walk a shelter dog.** All children must be at least 10 years of age and old enough/mature enough to be able to maintain proper procedure concerning:

- Cross contamination of cat cages,
- Observation of warning, either verbal or written, regarding any animal that might be un-socialized with children or volunteers in general.
- Maintain appropriate behavior (no yelling, screaming or crying) while in the shelter.

The parent/guardian is responsible for the following:

- The parent will ensure that the child observes all policies outlined in the provided volunteer manuals. It is the parent's responsibility to correct the child if they are not following outlined policies and procedures.
- The parent must supervise the child at all times while in the shelter. The parent must be in the same area of the shelter or within arms reach (for example, a child should not be left alone in the communal cat area while the parent is visiting with a cat in the main adoption area).
- The parent will not leave the child unattended for any reason while volunteering at the shelter.
- The parent must be able to monitor and help the child if needed at all times.
- The parent must make sure that the child does not interact with animals that are showing signs of discomfort or stress. Please note that not all animals are going to interact well with children (in some cases we don't know how an animal may react around children).
- The parent will ensure that the child does not remove or play with items in the retail area.
- The parent will not allow any child less than 18 years of age to walk a shelter dog.

Smoking Areas



Second Chance Humane Society is a smoke free facility. Please do not smoke in or around the buildings (including the parking lot). In addition, no volunteer should smoke while handling/walking any of the animals.

“When in Rome Do as the Romans Do”



It is important to understand that there are many different ways to train, handle or care for animals. Often times you will find many individuals will have different views on how things should be done. The Humane Society has found that the most important thing for our animals and our organization is that we are CONSISTENT in everything that we do (from our policies to the way we handle the animals). With that being said...by agreeing to volunteer at the Second Chance Humane Society you are agreeing to adhere to and abide to our rules and regulations at all times. Don't forget the saying...**“When in Rome Do as the Romans Do!!”**

Second Chance Humane Society reserves the right to terminate a volunteer's status as a result of the following:

- ❖ Failure to comply with organizational policies, rules, and other regulations.
- ❖ Unsatisfactory attitude, work, or appearance.
- ❖ Any other circumstances which, in the judgment of the shelter staff would make my continued service as a volunteer contrary to the best interest of Second Chance Humane Society.

Dress Code at the Shelter:

We suggest you wear jeans or casual pants and non-skid, rubber-soled shoes with a back or heel strap. For reasons of safety, the following items may NOT be worn while volunteering:

- Slip-on or open-toed shoes (flip-flops, clogs, etc.)
- Hoop earrings and long necklaces, as these can be caught by an animal's paw causing damage or injury to you or the cats that you are handling.
- No offensive clothing including abrasive words or images, or clothing that is inappropriately revealing.

Off-limit Areas:

Certain areas of the shelter will be off-limits to volunteers. These are designated off-limits to protect you, the animals, and the shelter. Entry into such areas will be by authorization only should the need arise. These areas include:

- The cat intake and cat isolation rooms located upstairs in the house.
- The kennel/barn area and outdoor runs are closed to volunteers. A staff member will be happy to assist you as needed (see more information under the general guidelines section).
- ***Please do not interact with animals that have just arrived, are in the process of being surrendered to the shelter or are located in the outside kennels (not all of the dogs housed in the kennels are available for adoption).*** Often times these animals are stressed or we may have not had a chance to evaluate the animal's health or temperament. It is important for us to make sure that the animal is not sick and is safe to handle prior to having them interact with volunteers.

Accident Prevention and Reporting

Second Chance Humane Society strives to provide a safe, hazard free workplace. Accidents do happen, but with training, forethought, attention to detail, and personal responsibility for keeping areas hazard free, we can greatly reduce the number of accidents in our shelter.

Accident prevention is everyone's job. If you see a safety hazard (such as urine in the aisle way, spilled kibble, etc...) please address it immediately. If you don't know what to do, or if you are unsure if it is a safety hazard, please talk to a staff member right away.

All volunteer accidents, injuries, illnesses, and near-misses must be reported immediately to the supervisor on duty.

VERY IMPORTANT:

Mishaps and unexpected things occur all the time; while the cat is out you are responsible for the safety and welfare of the customers, as well as that of the cat. You must be alert to what is happening and stay positioned so that you can get your hands on the cat case you need to react quickly.

**STAY WITHIN ARM'S REACH AND KEEP YOUR ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE CAT!
NEVER HAVE MORE THAN ONE CAT OUT AT A TIME!**

Preventing bites is not only important to your health and well-being, but to the animal's as well. Animals that have bitten must be evaluated and may need to be euthanized. Most adopters will not consider an animal with a "bite history" and many rescues will not accept them. Even so, every animal bite must be reported to staff as soon as it occurs; so it is in everyone's best interest to avoid bites altogether. Do not put yourself in a compromising situation! Practice safe animal handling and disease control at all times.



Remember animals are all individuals, and like us they react differently to stimulus, so please use good judgment. Please keep in mind that all animals can be the 'exception' to the rule, so please take your time, use your common sense, and use this outline as a guide to help you 'communicate' with the animals entrusted to our care.

The most important thing to remember is that it does NO ONE any good if you get bitten. **A volunteer should never approach an animal that is displaying signs of fear or aggression.** If an animal displaying these signals needs to be handled (such as to be seen by the veterinarian, etc.), it should be by a Humane Society staff member only, not a volunteer.

Accidents DO happen. **Volunteers should immediately back off if they notice any signs of fear or aggression.** Despite the pain that a bite would cause you, it is also unfair to the animal if he has been pushed into a situation where he felt he had to bite to defend himself. Animals usually need several days to adjust to being in a shelter environment, and even once they do adjust, they might react to things differently in this stressful environment than they would ordinarily. It is much better to back off and let the animal chill out than to force your attentions, elicit a bite, and cause that animal to be quarantined for 10 days.

Second Chance Humane Society cannot be held responsible for any cost associated with the treatment of injuries incurred by our volunteers.

Adopting an Animal

Volunteers may adopt animals from the shelter. Adoption is contingent upon the volunteer meeting Second Chance Humane Society's adoption guidelines and payment of all applicable fees.

While we encourage you to tell your friends and neighbors about the wonderful pets we have available for adoption, we cannot "hold" a pet for anyone. Animals that have just arrived or who are not yet ready for adoption should not be discussed with individuals outside of the organization.

INTERACTING WITH THE PUBLIC

Professional Conduct

When dealing with customers, you must always be polite, courteous, and helpful. We strongly encourage the volunteers to say hello to customers who enter the shelter (especially if a staff member is assisting another customer). ***If you are asked a question to which you do not know the answer, please find a staff member for assistance.***

Confidentiality

Any information pertaining to records and cases to which you may become privileged, including but not limited to names, addresses, phone numbers, details of cruelty cases, is confidential and may not be discussed with others or removed from the shelter. This includes the personal information of adopters. Volunteers are specifically prohibited from discussing any aspect of records with any representative of the media, as this is the sole responsibility of Second Chance staff.

The Front Line

As a "Volunteer", when you are volunteering at the shelter you are considered a member of the staff, and most customers will treat you as such. In order to protect the health and well-being of the cats, as well for everyone's safety, we ask that you monitor the public when they are in the cattery.

At times you may also be confronted with members of the public being abnormally loud and raucous, attempting or directing actual physical or mental abuse. If you feel comfortable stepping in to stop the situation, then do so. Otherwise find a staff member immediately.

What should I do if a customer wants to look at cat?

Please locate a staff member to help them. You may answer general questions if you know the appropriate answer.

UGH! Everyone keeps asking me questions!!

You're going to get asked a lot of questions, so be prepared. Please direct them to either a senior volunteer or to a staff member.

Understanding that behavioral issues are often a reason for owners surrender their cats to an animal shelter, if you are asked a question regarding animal behavior and you are not familiar with the Humane Society's philosophy regarding that problem, please do not give the person advice. Instead, refer them to a staff member for help.

If patrons have medical or behavioral questions (i.e. does this dog like cats, does this cat like other cats, etc.), refer them to a Humane Society staff member. The Humane Society staff members have access to the animals' medical records and can more accurately address questions or concerns a client may have about a specific animal. Please leave communicating medical advice to the Humane Society staff!

Disease and Prevention

Maintaining the health of our animals and helping prevent the spread of disease is of great importance to Second Chance Humane Society.

The kennels are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected once a day (or as needed). The staff provides food and water at least twice a day. However, a lot can happen in between those care-taking sessions. That's why we ask that you let a staff member know if a cat needs to be re-cleaned.

Disease Control:

Occasionally we will have animals at the shelter infected with contagious diseases or infections. We take every precaution to make sure contagious diseases are contained, for the health of our other animals as well as our pets at home. It is important for volunteers to take a serious approach to disease control and prevention. The following steps will insure the Humane Society animals have the best chance of optimum health during their stay.

1. Wash your hands with antibacterial soap and water between handling each animal; please encourage clients to use the hand sanitizer. Speak up and educate individuals who are uninformed cleanliness. There are bottles of instant hand sanitizer available throughout the shelter. It is recommended that you wash your hands when possible, especially after handling any animal and prior to eating or smoking.
2. Wear a scrub top over your shirt. This will not only help keep your clothes clean, but will also help prevent the spread of disease. Cleaned scrub tops are located on the metal shelving near the public restroom. A clean scrub top should be put on between handling each cat. Dirty scrub tops can be thrown in the laundry bin located in the cat adoption area.
3. Obey signs within the shelter marked "Employees Only" as these areas confine sick or diseased animals. The foot traffic in these areas must be minimized to prevent the spread of sickness and/or disease to healthy Humane Society animals.
4. Limit contact between animals. Cats should not be allowed to play together unless told otherwise.
5. Avoid sharing toys and grooming tools between animals without proper cleansing and disinfection.
6. To keep your companion animals safe at home, keep them vaccinated; wash your hands before leaving the shelter and again when you return home. Changing your clothes and shoes is also suggested but not required.

Preventing Illness in Shelter:

The animals that enter our shelter come from all types of situations. Sadly, too many have not been provided with adequate veterinary care. Some animals are sick or "break" with an illness after arriving. We take every precaution to protect our animals, and we need you to be cautious as well. Here are

some ways you can help:

- Reduce stress by providing regular exercise, socialization, and “down time”.
- Avoid playing with the same toys or using the same brush on more than one animal.
- Wash hands thoroughly between handling each animal so as not to pass germs.
- Get in the habit of doing a quick visual scan for illness BEFORE you touch any animal.
- If you hear or observe any unusual behavior or signs of illness do not touch the animal or return the animal to its cage/kennel. Then inform a staff member immediately. Symptoms of illness are listed below:
 - Nasal discharge (mucous colored not clear)
 - Irritated eyes (discharge or redness)
 - Sneezing or Coughing
 - Congestion
 - Lethargy
 - Unusual hair loss
 - Parasites (fleas or ticks)
 - Unusual stool (diarrhea, bloody)
 - Vomiting

KEEP YOURSELF UPDATED!

When there is an outbreak of disease, we change the handling protocols or may close the cattery to volunteers depending on the severity of the outbreak. Please make sure to always check with a staff member for any updates or special instructions.

Reporting Medical Issues:

You can help the animals in our shelter by being an extra pair of eyes and ears. If you see something that might need medical attention (diarrhea, bloody stool, limping, abnormal behavior) or hear something (coughing, sneezing) let us know according to the procedure described below.



Addressing health problems immediately is essential to the overall health of the hundreds of animals in our care. The sooner we can isolate and treat a sick cat the better it is for that cat and the more likely we are to prevent other cats from catching something!

The Humane Society has a protocol in place to respond to the health needs of our animals. Chances are good that we already know about the problem and that steps have been taken to address it, but we would rather hear it twice than not at all. If you notice a problem and are not sure whether or not we are aware of it, let a staff member or supervisor know immediately.

If, after socializing a cat, you discover they are ill, please end your socializing for the day. Think of yourself as being “contaminated” and you don’t want to spread the disease to the other cats.

CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO CAT-GODLINESS!

Always wash your hands in the public restroom BEFORE you start to interact with a cat. If brushing is permitted, and you choose to use one, you must get a new brush for each cat (or use the one that is hanging on the cat’s cage).

Please also remember to gently remind the public to use the hand sanitizers when they are visiting with the cats. The animal shelter environment is very similar to a kindergarten class...one of them gets

a runny nose, they all get a runny nose! We all need to be very conscientious about limiting the spread of disease. Ideally, the public would also wash their hands between cats, however, it is not always feasible to ask them to wash their hands in between so the next best thing is for them to use hand sanitizer.

WASH YOUR HANDS

This is important to control the spread of disease but also cats are very olfactory beings (very tuned in by their sense of smell) and may become upset at the smell of another cat on your hands. If you are wearing gloves, **CHANGE** your gloves before handling a different cat.

When Should You Wash Your Hands?

- Wash hands between handling each cat so as not to pass germs.
- After handling animal waste.
- Before eating, drinking, or smoking.



Correct hand washing techniques using soap and water include:

1. Wet hands and arms (up to the elbow) with warm, running water and apply liquid soap. Lather well.
2. Rub your hands vigorously together for at least 15 seconds.
3. Scrub all surfaces, including the backs of your hands, lower arms, wrists, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
4. Rinse well.
5. Dry your hands with a clean or disposable towel.

THE FLOOR IS NOT FOR CATS OR STORAGE!

Floors are a high risk for disease. As such, every effort should be made to prevent contact between the floor and the cats and other kennel items. If a cat does manage to end up on the floor, pick him up immediately and return him to his kennel. If a washable item such a towel or cat toys falls on the floor, it should be sent to the laundry.

Occasionally we have an outbreak of disease and handling protocols are changed. Please check with a staff member for special instructions when signing the volunteer log book.

Cat Socializing Procedures

HOW DO I PICK WHICH CATS TO SOCIALIZE?

A color system is used by the volunteers to determine which cat is available for socialization. On the back of the animal's kennel card (hanging on the cage) you will see a colored sticker. See the chart below for an explanation of the color codes.

Color:	Handled By:	Reason:
Red	Staff Only	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extremely difficult to handle• Recovering from an illness (may still be contagious)• Kittens that are highly susceptible to illness
Yellow	Yellow Volunteers (not suitable for junior volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May be shy or under socialized• Recently spayed/neutered (still recovering)
Green	Green Volunteers (new volunteers or junior volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• These cats are well socialized and are able for socialization by volunteers and junior volunteers.

Cats are normally socialized within their kennels. On occasion, a willing cat can be taken out and held, but plan on interacting within the cat's kennel (please check with a staff member prior to removing a cat from its cage). This helps minimize the stress placed on the cat as well as the spread of disease. Each cat is first invited to interact with us before opening the cage. The cage is then opened and the cat is petted and brushed (if brushing is allowed).

Some cats in the cattery should not be socialized by volunteers:

- Cats that have recently come out on the adoption floor (they may be stressed initially and need some time to settle in).
- Cats that have just been spayed or neutered.
- Cats that have been brought over from hospital ward or that are being treated for an upper respiratory infection.
- The cat should be at least 6 months old, unless it has been at the shelter for more than three weeks. The reason for this is because kittens are more susceptible to catching colds because their immune systems are still developing.

If, upon going to the cat's cage, you find the cat appears to be sick, do not continue the interaction. If urgent, report it immediately (as described in earlier sections). ***If, after touching or interacting with a cat you notice that the cat is sick, then end socializing for the day so that you do not spread disease.***

STARTING THE INTERACTION

Each cat is first invited to interact with us. We start by standing next to the cage door and softly calling the cat (hello, how are you, want to be petted, etc. ...it doesn't matter what you say as long as your tone of voice is soft and pleasant). Placing your hand on the cage door will also help invite the cat over to us. Sometimes, rubbing your fingers together will also invite the cat over. Wait a moment or two to note the cat's reaction. Even if the cat remains in the back of the cage, we still may be able to invite interaction.



Prepare to open the kennel door by checking that the kennel card insert for information others may have written about the cat, that the cat is calm (and not ill), that the room is not filled with people, and that the door to outside is closed (in case the cat makes a quick escape – there is no where for him to go). Open the cage door. Note if the cat's position and body language remain unchanged, if the cat runs away from you to the back of the cage, or comes forward to you. If the cat remains in the back of the cage, even after you have carefully opened the door (don't let those active ones escape...be ready to close the door just to a squeeze if needed) keep talking and note the cat's body language. Some cats are just sleepy and take a moment to wake up. Some cats are more fearful and unsettled in the stressful shelter environment and take longer to become friends with.

Slowly move your hand towards the cat, noting body language as you do so. Start by just petting the cat lightly on the cheek or under the chin. **Again, you should be constantly noting the body language of the cats throughout the interaction.** If at any time the cat becomes agitated, please stop all interaction and end the session. Note all observations of the cat on its interaction card AND NOTIFY A STAFF MEMBER IMMEDIATELY.

For specific ways to socialize cats/kittens with undesirable behaviors like mouthing or biting, shyness, under-socialization, and scratching, see the Common Cat Problems manual which will be given to you at a later date.

REMOVING A CAT FROM THE KENNEL

Cats can be taken out of their kennel only under certain circumstances:

1. The cattery is not busy and/or full of other people. You will need to return a cat to his or her kennel immediately if the cattery becomes busy or someone brings in a dog.
2. All exit doors are closed.
3. The cat you are working with is mellow and calm about being picked up.
4. The cat's kennel card does not state NOT to do it (such as in disease outbreaks when emergency handling protocols are in place).

Under no circumstances are you to pick up any cat that is hissing or growling while still in its cage or hiding in the back. These types of behaviors indicate that the cat does not want to be interacted with and should be respected! PLEASE REPORT SUCH CATS TO A STAFF MEMBER IMMEDIATELY SO THAT THEY RECEIVE PROPER ATTENTION.

To take the cat from the kennel, start by turning the cat so it is facing away from you. Next slide your arm underneath its body so you have fully supported its trunk. Then, put your other hand on top of the cat to steady it. Gently and slowly lift the cat out of the cage, making note if the cat suddenly tenses and tries to return to the cage. If the cat you are picking up becomes agitated while trying to lift it out of the cage, immediately put it back in the kennel. Hug the cat your chest once lifted out and use your free hand to pet while the other supports the cat's body. *Please see the attached "How to Pick Up a Cat" document.*

When holding a cat, stay close to its open kennel so you can deposit it quickly should it become agitated. Cats often become upset at the sight of other cats, keep your held cat facing away from other cats. If the cat becomes upset, and starts to climb up your body, immediately scruff the cat (grab it by the scruff of the neck to immobilize it) and gently deposit it back in its cage. Make sure you **NOTIFY A STAFF MEMBER.**

In some cases it may be preferable to keep the cat in the kennel, as with a nervous cat, or a cat that clearly does not want to come out. Please check the back of the cat's kennel card to see if it is okay to remove the cat from his/her kennel.

Otherwise, you may take the cat out if you are comfortable doing so and there are not a lot of people in the cattery. If the cat does NOT want to come out, do NOT pull the cat out of cage. In general, the preferred method is to take the cat out tail end first, as described previously, but that depends on the cat and the situation.



If at any time the cat starts trying to get back into the kennel, becomes aggressive or agitated, or begins trying to "escape" return the cat to the kennel immediately. You should also return the cat to the kennel if the cattery becomes crowded or active.

If any cat is showing aggressive or fearful behavior (growling, hissing, scratching, biting even if it does not break the skin), especially towards people, inform a staff member immediately.

HANDLING, BRUSHING AND PLAYING

Each cat should be handled and brushed gently but thoroughly. Handling just means you will try to touch the cat all over; including feet, tail and ears. If the cat seems nervous about the brush, try putting down several cat treats in the cage to distract the cat as you are brushing it. Keep your voice soft and warm as you are working with the cat.

You may also see if the cat would like to play. Please do NOT use any part of your clothing or body to play with the cat as it encourages undesirable behaviors; always use a toy to encourage appropriate play.

Please leave the original and any other toys you used in the cage (ball, mouse, catnip sock, etc.). To prevent the spread of disease, we do not share toys between different kennels. ***Any item that is attached to a string must be tied to the cage door so the cat cannot swallow the string and cause an intestinal blockage.***



Helpful tidbits for handling cats:

- Always move slowly and speak softly while working around the animals.
- Pay attention to the cat as you pet him—they may become over-stimulated and decide it's no longer interested in the interaction.
- Do not put your head into the cat's cage. When your head and shoulders are blocking the only exit, a cat can become overwhelmed and defensive—no matter how well you think you know them.
- Don't be alarmed if a cat hisses when taken out of his cage or when carried past other cats. This is common behavior of a frightened cat or one who is not used to being around other cats.
- Carry cats securely, with one hand supporting their chest, the other their back legs, close to your body and right-side up. They feel more secure and comfortable that way. If the cat doesn't seem to like other cats, hold your hand over his eyes while moving him. Do not carry the cat around the cat room—this can be very over-stimulating for the animal.

FINISHING THE AN INTERACTION

Once you are done interacting, leave any small toys you used with that cat in the kennel (balls, mice, etc.). If you used a brush, please remove the hair from the brush (place in trash) and hang the brush on the cat's cage. Brushes should not be shared between cats as this can spread disease.

Please make sure that ALL kennels are securely closed after handling the cat. We don't want Fluffy strolling onto the street!

Wash your hands with soap and water before going onto the next cage or handling any other items like toys, food bowls, etc.

Behavior- What is the cat saying?

How to “Read” Cats

Cats send signals, many of which are not interpreted as easily as dog body language. Unlike dogs, cats are generally solitary animals. It is not common for cats to go out of their way to attack you. Cats often like to hide in enclosed, dark places.

Features of a Relaxed Cat:

- Walking around
- Smooth hair coat
- Tail up - stationary or still - not flicking
- Pupils moderately dilated to constricted
- Whiskers forward
- Ears up

A friendly and relaxed cat is one who walks to the front of her cage and rubs against it. Cats who are relaxed will often start to eat from their food bowls when you are present. That cat wants your attention and you can pet her.



Punky is an example of an extremely relaxed cat...her ears up, whiskers are forward, her eyes are “soft” and she is wanting to come out of the cage to visit.

Features of a Scared/Stressed Cat:

- Flattened body and ears, may cringe when you come near, stays at back of cage.
- Hissing
- Widely dilated pupils
- Shedding
- “Halloween” posture - back up and arched, tail fluffed out.
- Tail flicking. This is often the first signal a cat displays indicating that he or she is over stimulated.
- Hides in the bed or litter box



Sonya is an example of a scared or stressed cat...her body and ears are flat, she is hiding in her bed.

Cats who hiss or growl or crouch in the back of their cages must be left alone. Do not open their cage or try to pet them. They are frightened and must only be handled by an employee.

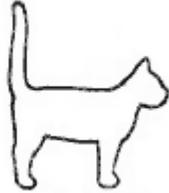
FELINE BODY LANGUAGE

What is a Cat's Tail Telling You?

Want to know what a cat is really thinking? Look at her tail. Each tail movement tells us (and other cats) something about a cat's emotional state.



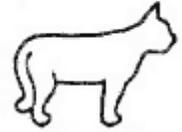
Tail low and fluffed out
I'm afraid



Tail fluffy & erect with tip stiffly vertical
I'm glad to see you



Tail still with tip twitching
I'm irritated



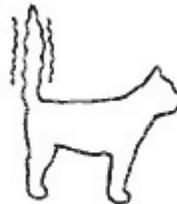
Tail tucked between legs
I'm worried



Tail erect with tip tilted
I'm friendly



Tail raised slightly, softly curved
I'm interested



Tail erect with length quivering
I adore you!



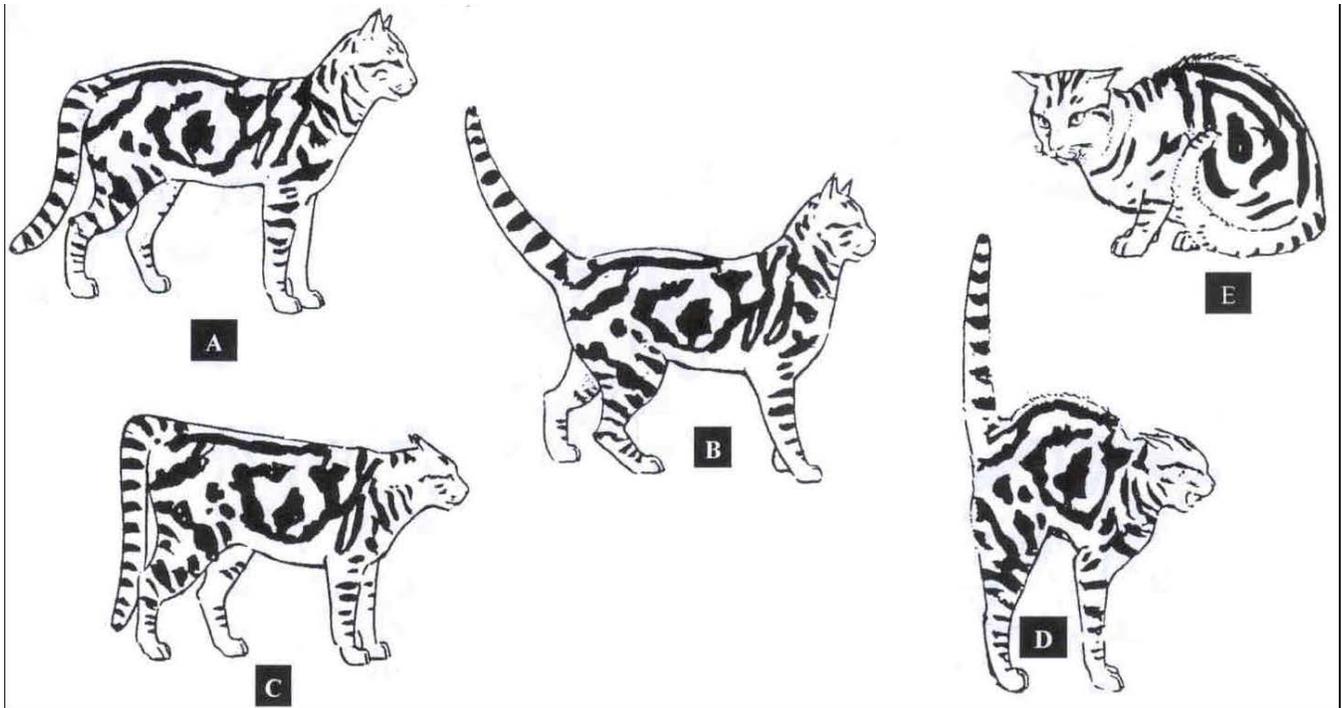
Tail to one side
Amorous



Tail straight and fully bristled
Watch out!

© Dumb Friends Animal League

CAT BODY EXPRESSIONS



A. Is a normal relaxed cat. Note the position of the tail and ears. Note that the coat is laying flat against the cat's body. The pupils of this cat are small. A normal relaxed cat will be doing normal behaviors like grooming, stretching, yawning, playing or sleeping. Even when asleep, the cat's body relaxed and soft to touch (not hard like a block of wood).

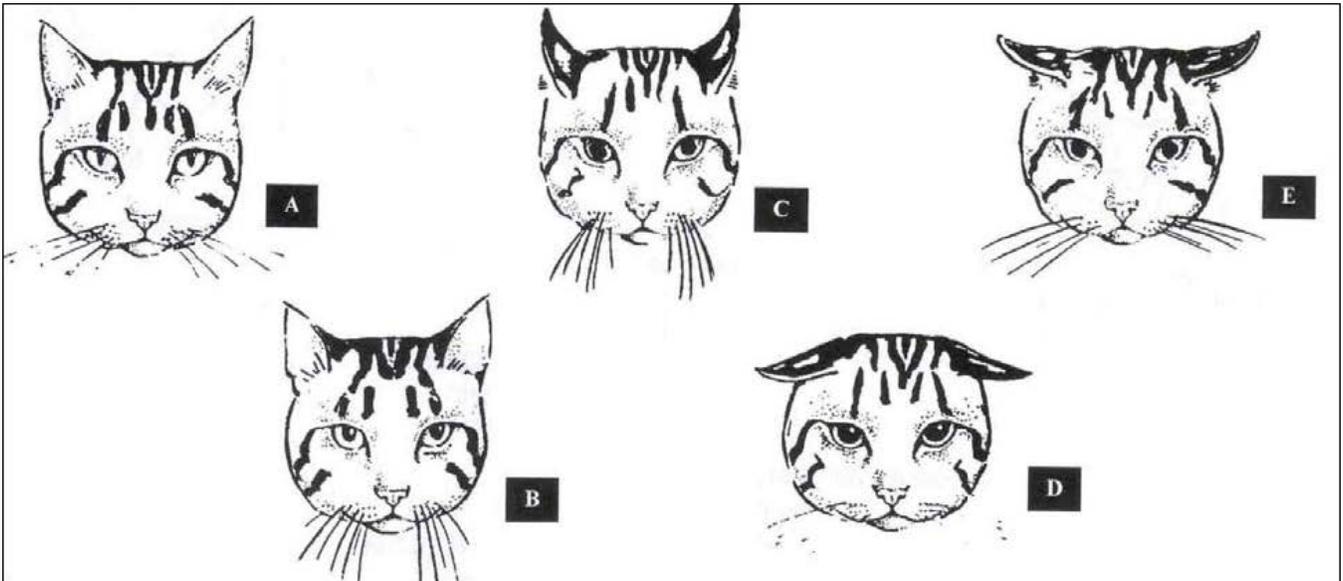
B. Is a greeting gesture. Note the tail up but the coat smooth and ears normal. The cat may be vocalizing (meowing or purring).

C. Is an attack posture. Note the L shape of the tail, ears flattened and the body slightly flattened. This posture is used in hunting and in play aggression. Pupils would be dilated. The cat may be lashing its tail around just before the attack. **DO NOT TOUCH A CAT DISPLAYING THIS KIND OF BODY LANGUAGE.**

D. Is a threat display. Note the puffy coat and tail, arched back, very flattened ears and open mouth. The cat is usually hissing or growling, pupils widely dilated. This posture is often used when the cat is surprised or very highly frightened. This cat is likely to spit and strike at anything close to it. **DO NOT TOUCH A CAT DISPLAYING THIS KIND OF BODY LANGUAGE.**

E. This cat is in conflict. Note the uneven ears, crouched, curled body position, tightly tucked tail. The cat's pupils are widely dilated. ***This cat must be approached slowly and carefully, if at all.***

CAT FACIAL EXPRESSIONS & IDENTIFYING STRESS IN CATS



Cats use body postures and facial expressions to reflex how they are feeling internally. By observing ears, tail, pupil dilation, body position and vocalizations we can determine how to interact with them.

A. Shows a normal relaxed cat face. Note the pupil dilation and how the ears are held. A normal relaxed cat will be doing normal behaviors like grooming, stretching, yawning, playing or sleeping. Even asleep, the cat's body relaxed and soft to touch (not hard like a block of wood).

B. Illustrates a cat that is alert and investigative. Note the wider pupil dilation and how the ear carriage is now taller and more rigid.

C. This face is threatening an attack. This may be a play attack or one more of a serious nature. Note the flattening of the ears and pupil dilation and the angle that the whiskers are protruding from the cat's face. **DO NOT TOUCH A CAT DISPLAYING THIS TYPE OF BODY LANGUAGE.**

D. This is a frightened cat that may very well attack if approached. Note the very flattened ears and extreme pupil dilation. **DO NOT TOUCH A CAT DISPLAYING THIS TYPE OF BODY LANGUAGE.**

E. This cat is in conflict; frightened, he may attack if provoked or cornered. **DO NOT TOUCH A CAT DISPLAYING THIS TYPE OF BODY LANGUAGE.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY PLEDGE

I have received and read a copy of Second Chance Humane Society's Volunteer Handbook for the Cat Cuddler/Socializer. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to ask questions about anything that I do not understand regarding the information presented in the volunteer handbook. If I have not asked any questions, it is because I understand the contents of this volunteer handbook.

I understand that the contents of this volunteer handbook are presented to me for guidance and orientation only. I understand that as a volunteer at-will, I am free to resign at any time, just as Second Chance Humane Society is free to terminate me any time.

I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by all of Second Chance Humane Society's policies set forth in this volunteer handbook. I further understand that the procedures, working conditions, and policies described in the volunteer handbook are subject to change at any time by Second Chance Humane Society.

I agree that I will hold in strict confidence, and not use, divulge, disclose, or communicate to any person or entity any information relating to the identity of Second Chance Humane Society's customers, financial records, euthanasia, health information or inventories (collectively referred to as confidential information) as long as such information is not generally known to others outside Second Chance Humane Society.

I will maintain this confidentiality for the term of my service following separation from Second Chance Humane Society. I understand that this confidentiality pledge will remain in effect after separation and that I will deliver to Second Chance Humane Society any originals and all copies of confidential information described above immediately upon termination, and that I will not take any confidential information without the written consent of the Shelter Manager of Second Chance Humane Society

Volunteer Signature

Date

Name (please print)