

CAT CARE



BY STAFF OF ACS DISTANCE EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO CAT CARE

The association between humans and cats—dates back about 5000 years —although this is not long in the history of human life. The exact origin of cat domestication is often debated by historians. It is known that Egyptian populations held cats in high esteem. In fact, cats were an object of worship. Some figures of cats exist in gold and bronze and numerous paintings depict the importance of cats in Egyptian life. The Romans later recognised the useful nature of cats for pest control in grain stores or in military bases for example. It is thought the distribution of cats throughout Europe can be attributed the Roman Empire’s original use of cats.

Cats as pets now outdo their canine equivalents today across the globe, and it is estimated there may be around 90 million cats as pets living in homes in the USA. Cats may be considered a better choice of pet than dogs for people living busier lives or who live in relatively confined spaces (e.g. flats or townhouses), as they require less exercise than dogs, and tend to their

own needs and are generally more independent. The explosion of pet cats over the recent decades has led to the emergence of many cat care industries. There are specialists across veterinary health, rehoming and adoption facilities, pet boarding properties, grooming, breeding and reproductive health and the behaviour and training industry.



LONG HAISED BREEDS

PERSIAN



Persian Cat

Physical Characteristics

The Persian is a large to medium-sized cat with an average weight range of 7 to 12 pounds (3 to 5.5 kg). It has a large, round head, small ears and a comparatively short tail which gives the impression of strength and poise. The breed was originally recognised as having a short nose, but over time this feature has become exaggerated by purpose breeding.

It is famous for its long, silky coat and elegant characteristics. Solid silver is the most popular colour for the Persian currently, however there are more than 80 colours available today, including black, blue, cream, and smoke.

Common Potential Health Problems

Persians are susceptible to a number of health problems.

- Difficulty in breathing - as they have accentuated squashed-in faces, this causes constricted nostrils allowing problems with their breathing. Their squashed in muzzles commonly accumulate dust and debris in their nose, making breathing even more difficult.
- Overactive tear glands.
- Dental malocclusions.
- Polycystic kidney disease—genetic tests are available in some countries.

SEMI-LONG HAISED BREEDS

BALINESE

The Balinese can make a great pet if someone in the household suffers allergic reactions to animals, as they are considered to be hypoallergenic cats, unlike its close relative, the Siamese.



Balinese

Physical Characteristics

The Balinese is like its close relative, the Siamese, but with a longer, silkier single coat. It typically has a long, tapering, slender body. It has soft lines and is both elegant and muscular. Having a wedge shaped head with slanted, bright blue eyes and a linear profile.

Colours are in line with the Siamese: seal point, blue point, lilac point, and chocolate point.

Balinese are medium sized cats typically weighing around 5 to 10 pounds (2.2 to 4.5 kg).

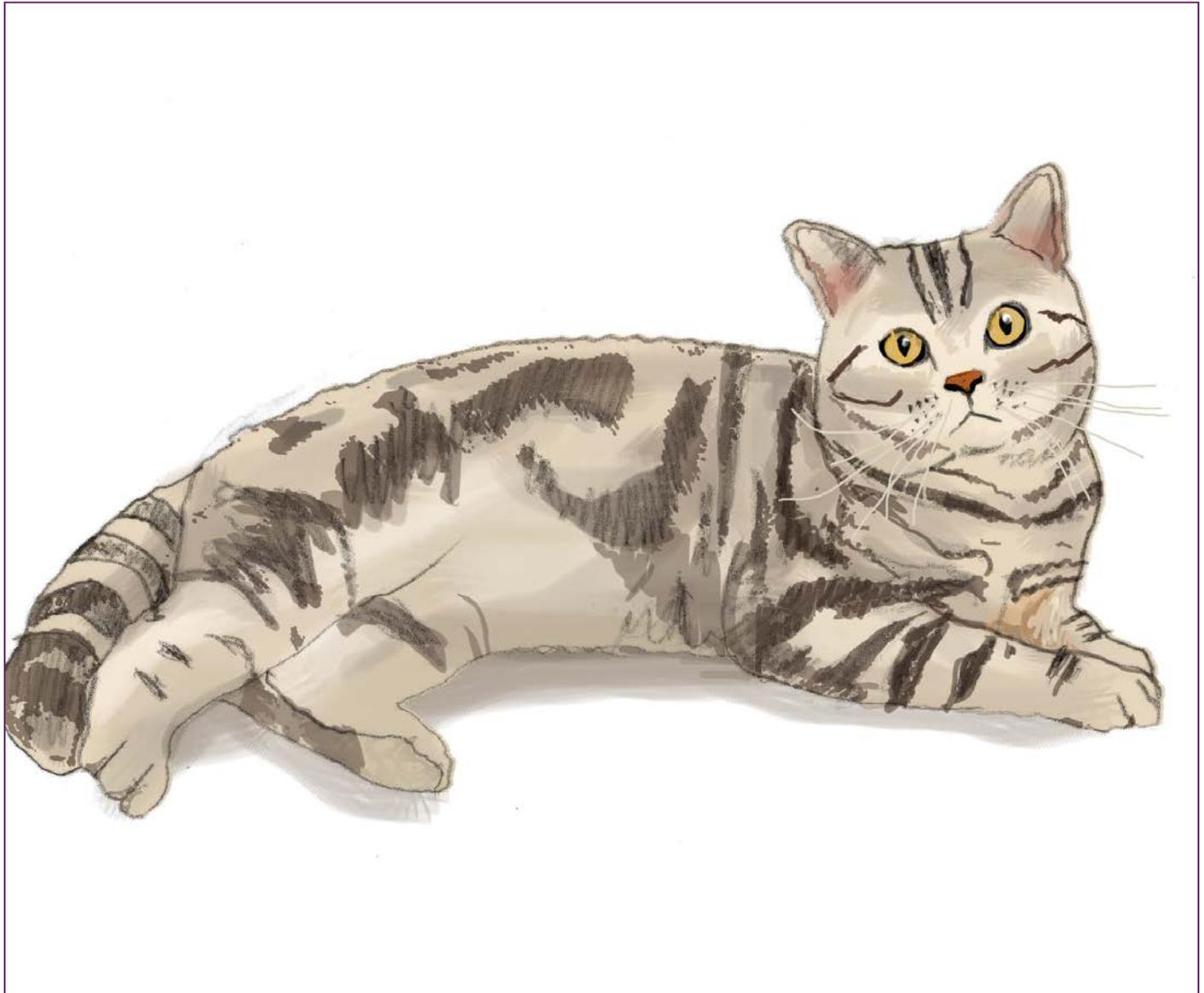
Common Potential Health Problems

The Balinese are generally healthy and can live around 18 to 22 years. It is important to keep a Balinese at a healthy weight range as obesity can be a problem. They can suffer from a number of issues as with most pedigrees.

- Feline acromelanism
- Lysosomal storage disease
- Amyloidosis
- Crossed-eyes
- Lymphoma

SHORT HAISED CATS

AMERICAN SHORTHAIR



American Shorthair

Physical Characteristics

The American Shorthair is a medium to large cat which is heavy set, muscular and smart. The female cats are usually smaller weighing an average of 6 to 12 pounds (2.7 to 5.5 kg). Males weigh on average 11 to 15 pounds (5 to 6.8 kg).

The most prominent colour for the American Shorthair's coat is a silver

coat with black markings, but there are upwards of 60 colours available for the Shorthair.

Common Potential Health Problems

The average life span for the American shorthair is between 15 to 20 years. It is genetically robust and a generally healthy cat, although it can be affected by Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy which

Common body language used in communication

BODY LANGUAGE	WHAT THE CAT IS REALLY SAYING
Increases overall size of body	Through stretching and standing tall, the cat will be trying to intimidate its rivals or perceived threat.
Arching its back	The cat can be showing its feelings of fear or aggression.
Lying exposing chest and stomach	The cat feels safe and relaxed, so there is trust and comfort.
Lying on side	Could be relaxed but ready to play or defend itself with all fours claws.
Slow blinking	Only associated with complete relaxation.
Flattened ears	Feeling threatened and may attack.
Pricked ears	Feeling alert and interested in the environment, possible sign of dominance over other cats (this would often be accompanied with a raised head).
Open mouth (no visible teeth)	Feelings of playfulness.
Touching noses of another cat	A sign of affection or greeting with other cats they are fond of. Other parts of the body may also be rubbed with the head, nose and ears. At times this may be a territorial marking behaviour – a scent of released from glands in the cheeks as they rub.