

## Reading Cat Body Language

Learning to read body language is important for you to know the emotional state of the cat at any given moment.

Cats are a prey species and as such have a heightened flight-or-fight response. This means that if they cannot get away from the scary thing, they will do what they need to do to get the scary thing to get away from them. This fight response leads to aggressive behavior.

### Body Language

#### Ears:

Flattened back = fear

Rotated sideways = angry

#### Whiskers:

Pointed forward and fanned out = alert

Flattened against face = fear

#### Eyes:

Dilated pupils = fear

Constricted pupils = anger

#### Tail:

High flagged tail = friendly greeting

Between legs = fear

Hair puffed = fear or anger

End of tail moving/twitching = interest

Entire tail swishing = irritated

Entire tail violently swishing = anger

#### Vocalizations

Meow - request

Purr - content, anxious, or sick

Chattering - predatory arousal

Growl, hiss, or spit - annoyed, frightened, angry

Howl or yowl - females in heat, males fighting, distress