

feline-ality™ assessment



about the cat

shelter

evaluator

date of arrival to shelter

date of assessment

time a.m.
 p.m.

M MX F FX

sex

cat's name

age

ID #

breed

color

Y N

declawed

facility requirement checklist

The Novel Room must be free of hiding areas (such as under counters, desks, behind items, etc.)
The room should ideally be 10' x 10', but can be slightly bigger or smaller if necessary. It is important that the area is quiet and free of distractions.

clean hands chair cat toys stopwatches (2) clipboard



All cats to be assessed should have been housed for at least 18 hours post-intake.
Cats should be assessed before spay/neuter surgery.

item #1: body posture

Items # 1 and 2 are to be conducted simultaneously. Be sure to read about how to conduct both items.

Quietly approach the cat's cage door and while standing in front of the cat's cage, take a quick mental snapshot of the cat's body posture.

Choose one of the following responses:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Soft and relaxed	add 1 pt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tense body with twitching tail	add 1 pt
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flattened body with dilated pupils	subtract 1 pt

total points for item #1

other observations:

item #2: greeting approach

Immediately after taking a mental snapshot of the cat's body posture during item #1, begin to speak to the cat in a soft, normal tone of voice. Observe the cat's response to your presence through the closed cage door.

Choose one of the following responses:

	At front of the cage, soliciting attention by rubbing, chirping, etc.	add 3 pts	
	Comes to front of cage after you encourage	add 2 pts	
	Does not approach but meows, chirps or blinks (circle all that apply)	add 1 pt	
	Does not approach	0 pts	
	Attempts to hide	subtract 1 pt	
	Hisses or growls	subtract 2 pts	
	Charges	subtract 3 pts	
			total points for item #2

other observations:

item #3: cage condition

While quietly standing in front of the cat's cage, observe and note its condition.

Choose one of the following:

	Bedding/cage paper moved, cat hiding under	subtract 1 pt	
	Cage rearranged, cat on top or not hiding	add 1 pt	
	No change	no points	
	Other, please describe	no points	
			total points for item #3

other observations:

item #4: social response when door is opened

After completing items 1 through 3, calmly and slowly open the cage door while watching the cat. This should be done without talking. Observe the cat at the moment the door is initially opened.

Choose one of the following responses:

	Remains relaxed and soft, approaches me	add 1 pt	
	Remains relaxed and soft, does not approach	no points	
	Becomes stiff with tight tail flicks and standing	add 1 pt	
	Crouches, body stiff	subtract 1 pt	
			total points for item #4

other observations:

item #5a-b: introduction to novel room

Take the cat out of the cage and place him into a plastic crate (cleaned and allowed to air) for transport to the Novel Room. Ideally the cat should be loaded into the crate from above (turn crate so door is facing the ceiling). Throughout this item, you will be recording the amount of time the cat is either interacting or not interacting with you. In order to obtain an accurate assessment of time spent in each activity, use two stopwatches — one to keep the total time (start when you open crate door, end at five minutes), and the second to keep track of time interacting with you. Click on the second stopwatch whenever an interaction begins and click it off once the interaction ends.

IMPORTANT: OTHER THAN EYE CONTACT, DO NOT INITIATE, ENGAGE WITH OR RESPOND TO THE CAT. INTERACTION INCLUDES EYE CONTACT OR OTHER BEHAVIOR EVEN WHEN THE CAT IS IN THE CARRIER.

Interactive behaviors include meows, chirps, looks, blinks, rubbing against you, touching you, and being in your lap. Be sure to include those behaviors made while inside the carrier after the door has been opened.

Choose one:

	Exits carrier in 25 seconds or less with tall body posture	add 1 pt	
	Exits the carrier in 25 seconds or less with crouched body posture	add ½ pt	
	Exits carrier within 25 seconds and quickly scoots to hiding place, keeping body low to the ground	subtract ½ pt	
	Does not exit the carrier (choose one): ___ within 25 seconds, or ___ at all	0 pts	

Choose one (if applicable):

	Investigates room while standing tall	add 1 pt	
	Investigates room in a low body posture	add ½ pt	
	Races out of carrier to one spot in the room and stays there	subtract ½ pt	

total points for item #5a

Fill in information:

	Time spent interacting with the evaluator (as determined by second stop watch)		
	Time not spent interacting with the evaluator		

Choose one:

	Interacts for more than 60 seconds	add 1½ pts	
	Interacts for 30-60 seconds	add 1 pt	
	Interacts for less than 30 seconds	0 pts	

total points for item #5b

other observations:



If at the end of item #5 the cat is in the carrier, gently and slowly tip the carrier until the cat exits. Close the carrier door so the cat cannot reenter the carrier, then proceed to item #6.

item #6: call and approach

Crouch down on the opposite side of the room from the cat and about five to six feet away, start the stopwatch, and call the cat several times. Extend one hand, closed in a fist, toward him. Stop the stopwatch when the cat approaches and makes contact with your hand or body. Allow the cat up to 30 seconds to approach. Be sure to talk softly and encourage forward with voice. **Check all behaviors that occur.**

Makes eye contact	add 1 pt	
Does not make eye contact	subtract 1 pt	
Approaches	add 3 pts	
Sniffs or head butts	add 3 pts	
Rolls on back or rolls over	add 2 pts	
Meows, purrs and/or chirps (circle all that apply)	add 1 pt	
Watches with no approach	add 0 pts	
Retreats	subtract 1 pt	
Hisses and/or growls	subtract 2 pts	
total points for item #6		
other observations:		

item #7: open hand

While still crouching, extend an open hand to the cat. Your hand should be lower than the cat's head. If the cat did not approach you in item #6, walk toward and crouch next to the cat. **Check all behaviors that occur.**

Sniffs or head butts	add 3 pts	
Licks or rubs on hand	add 3 pts	
Rolls on back or rolls over	add 2 pts	
Meows, purrs and/or chirps (circle all that apply)	add 2 pts	
Retreats/defensive position	subtract 1 pt	
Hisses and/or growls	subtract 2 pts	
Swats/attempts to swat hand	subtract 2 pts	
Bites/attempts to bite hand	subtract 3 pts	
total points for item #7		
other observations:		



If the cat has been approached and shown no aggressive behavior, proceed. Stop the evaluation if cat displays aggressive behavior.

item #8: stroking

While talking to the cat, use your open hand, slightly cupped, to stroke the cat in long strokes along the head, back and sides. Continue for 4-5 long slow strokes if possible. **Check all behaviors that occur.**

	Rubs against legs or hand	add 3 pts	
	Head butts	add 3 pts	
	Circles you attentively	add 2 pts	
	Meows, purrs and/or chirps (circle all that apply)	add 2 pts	
	Rolls onto back or rolls over	add 2 pts	
	Shows initial fear but then relaxes	0 pts	
	Retreats/defensive position	subtract 1 pt	
	Hisses and/or growls	subtract 2 pts	
	Swats or attempts to swat hand	subtract 2 pts	
	Bites or attempts to bite hand	subtract 3 pts	
total points for item #8			
other observations:			

item #9: play

Beginning a couple of feet away from the cat, slowly move a piece of string/yarn along the floor to initiate play. Observe the cat's reaction. Then try to engage the cat in play with two other toys from the following list (for a total of three different toys): Ball, Toy Mouse, Cat Charmer, and Feather Wand. **Do not use catnip toys during the Feline-ality™ Assessment.**

Check all behaviors that occur. Circle the toy preferences on the score sheet so the adopter will know which toys the cat prefers, if any.

	Watches toy intently	add 3 pts	
	Chases toy	add 3 pts	
	Comes back for stroking	add 2 pts	
	Ignores toys	0 pts	
	Attends to something else	subtract 1 pt	
	Avoids eye contact	subtract 1 pt	
total points for item #9			
other observations:			
toy preference:			
BALL TOY MOUSE CAT CHARMER FEATHER WAND NONE NO PREFERENCE LIKES ALL OTHER			

item #10: hug

Call the cat again until he approaches, or approach him slowly yourself. Begin to stroke the cat again and if he is calm, gently pick him up and cradle him against your chest, his body sideways to your chest for a full two seconds.

Check all behaviors that occur.

	Is relaxed	add 3 pts	
	Extends paw to evaluator's neck or shoulder in an affiliative manner	add 3 pts	
	Meows, purrs and/or chirps (circle all that apply)	add 2 pts	
	Accepts hold but remains a bit tense	add 2 pts	
	Struggles to escape	subtract 1 pt	
	Hisses/growls	subtract 2 pts	
	Stiffens and extends claws	subtract 2 pts	
	Swats/attempts to swat	subtract 3 pts	
	Bites/attempts to bite	subtract 3 pts	
total points for item #10			
other observations:			

item #11: sensitivity

Sit on the ground and allow the cat to approach if he chooses. Wait at least 60 seconds before you stroke the cat along his back and gently grasp the cat's tail firmly at the base and pull up with a steady pressure just enough to almost, but not quite, move his back feet off the floor. Hold for 1 second. **Check all behaviors that occur.**

	Rolls onto back or rolls over	add 3 pts	
	Shows no reaction	add 3 pts	
	Meows, purrs and/or chirps (circle all that apply)	add 1 pt	
	Struggles/tries to escape	0 pts	
	Hisses/growls	subtract 1 pt	
	Swats/attempts to swat	subtract 2 pts	
	Bites/attempts to bite	subtract 3 pts	
total points for item #11			
other observations:			



Allow the cat to settle before returning to the cage.

scoring



If the cat scores two or fewer points on the independent-gregarious scale, refer to the section in your guide regarding decreasing stress, and reassess in 48 hours.

overall score		
item #1		
item #2		
item #3		
item #4		
item #5a		
item #5b		
item #6		
item #7		
item #8		
item #9		
item #10		
item #11		
	independent-gregarious	valiance
total score		

determining the feline-ality™

Circle the cat's independent-gregarious score and valiance score. Where the two scores intersect determines the cat's Feline-ality™.

