

Feline Temperament Profile

The cat should be taken from its cage or carrier and placed in an average-sized room for several minutes. The tester should wear ordinary clothes and enter the room in a calm manner.

Test 1: Squat down, about 5-6 feet away, and call the cat several times. Extend one hand.

Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Makes eye contact
- Vocalizes
- Approaches slowly
- Looks at you and rolls over
- Approaches and sniffs hand

Questionable:

- Avoids eye contact
- Retreats or assumes defensive position
- Watches you but does not approach

Other observations: _____

Test 2: If the cat does not approach, move closer to the cat (3 feet away) and call again. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Makes eye contact
- Vocalizes
- Approaches slowly
- Comes and sniffs hand
- Looks at you and rolls over

Questionable:

- Avoids eye contact
- Retreats or assumes defensive position
- Watches you but does not approach
- Arches back and/or hisses

Other observations: _____

Test 3: After approaching the cat or getting it to approach, extend hand to cat (squat so that hand is at lower level than cat's head). Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Sniffs hand
- Licks or rubs body against hand
- Rubs head against hand
- Rolls submissively
- Vocalizes
- Questionable
- Retreats or assumes defensive position
- Strikes hand, with paw or claws
- Threatens to strike hand
- Bites or attempts to bite hand

Other observations: _____

If the cat has been approached and has shown no aggressive or defensive postures, proceed. Otherwise, try the approach procedure patiently and slowly again. It may be necessary to stay in the room and wait until the cat initiates interaction. In any case, if interaction cannot be initiated within 10 to 15 minutes, the cat is probably too shy, fearful, or unhealthy to be successfully placed in a facility.

Test 4: While talking to the cat, begin to stroke the cat along the head, back, and sides. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Rubs against your legs or hand
- Begins to purr, meow or chirp
- Bumps head against you
- Circles around you attentively
- Shows initial fear but quickly relaxes

Questionable:

- Assumes a threatening or defensive position
- Attempts to strike or strikes with paw
- Attempts to bite or bites
- Withdraws

Other observations: _____

Test 5: Move away from cat and drag a piece of string along the floor slowly to initiate play (or toss a "ball" consisting of a crumpled piece of paper). Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Returns for more stroking
- Watches the string or ball of paper intently
- Chases the string or ball of paper

Questionable:

- Ignores the string or ball of paper
- Attends something else in the room and avoids eye contact

Other observations: _____

Test 6: Call the cat again until it approaches, or approach it slowly yourself. Begin to stroke again and if the cat is calm, pick it up gently and cradle it against your chest. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Relaxes
- Makes eye contact
- Extends its paw affectionately to your neck and shoulder

Questionable:

- Struggles to escape
- Attempts to strike or strikes with paw
- Attempts to bite or bites

Other observations: _____

Test 7: Sit down and place cat on your lap, facing you. Stroke the cat. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Purrs or rubs against hand
- Makes eye contact
- Rolls over
- Stands up to smell your face or to place paw on your neck

Questionable:

- Sits tensely on lap
- Jumps off
- Threatens or becomes aggressive (bites or scratches)

Other observations: _____

Test 8: Place cat on floor next to chair. Call and beckon with hands. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Jumps up
- Makes eye contact but remains on the floor
- Gets up on hind legs and makes contact

Questionable:

- Ignores calls, ignores you
- Moves away

Other observations: _____

Test 9: Place cat on floor. Grab tail firmly and pull with a steady pressure. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Tries to escape or struggle
- Rolls submissively
- Shows no reaction

Questionable:

- Attempts to strike hand
- Growls or hisses

Other observations: _____

Test 10: Place cat on floor (in a non-carpeted room). Drop a metal box or other object on floor behind cat when cat is not looking. If in a carpeted room, make a loud vocal noise or bang together two objects such as pots. Check off the cat's response(s):

Acceptable:

- Startles but quickly relaxes
- Ignores the noise

Questionable:

- Does not appear to hear the noise (ask vet to check hearing)
- Startles, then runs to hide
- Startles, then adopts a defensive or aggressive posture

Other observations: _____