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PERSIAN CATS

One of the most popular pedigreed cats in North America and perhaps the world, the Persian is famous for its long, silky coat and sweet temperament. But beauty comes at a cost — regular brushing and potential health issues mean this purebred needs a lot of maintenance.

Blue
calico
Persian
show
cat



Cream
Persian
kitten



Think twice

Before you decide a Persian is the cat for you, it's important to understand that this breed requires daily grooming — it's a lot of work. Their fur must be gently but thoroughly combed and brushed every day. And to keep that coat looking its best, a good bath at least once a month is recommended.

Health issues

The exaggerated features of the Persian has led to a variety of health issues:

- Breathing difficulty
- Dental malocclusions — teeth don't mesh well together
- Excessive tearing and other eye conditions such as cherry eye and entropion
- Polycystic kidney disease
- Predisposition to ringworm, a fungal infection
- Seborrhea oleosa, a skin condition that causes itchiness, redness and hair loss

Did you know?

Persians come in as many colors and patterns as short-haired domestic cats.

The average Persian cat lives for around 12 years.

In 1871, Persians were showcased in the world's first organized cat show, at the Crystal Palace in London.

In 1906, the **Cat Fanciers' Association** was formed in America. The Persian was one of the first cats registered.

Florence Nightingale had a large Persian named Mr. Bismarck.

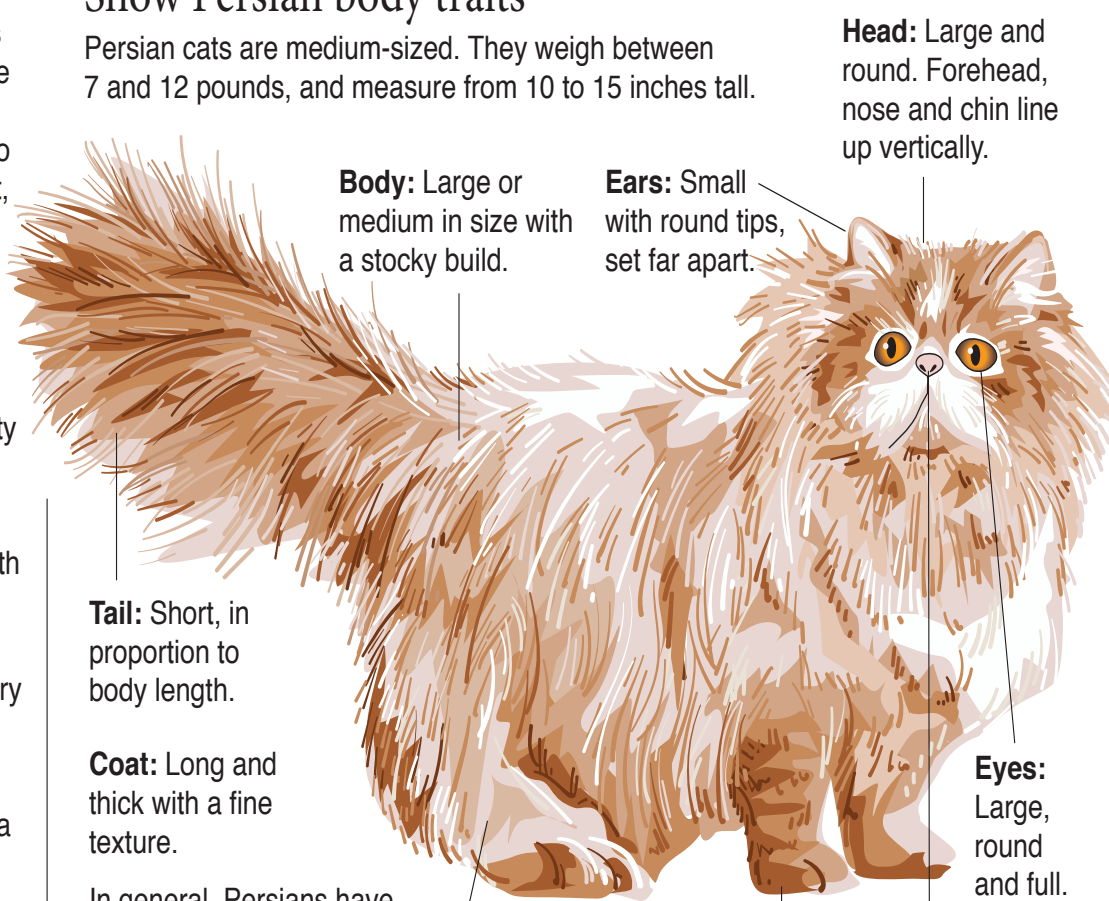
In 1950, the Siamese was crossed with the Persian to create the **Himalayan**.

The James Bond villain Ernst Stavro Blofeld has a Persian cat, as does Dr. Evil of the "Austin Powers" films.

SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://www.britannica.com>; <https://cattime.com>; <http://www.vetstreet.com>; <https://www.mentalfloss.com>; <https://www.animalfacts.us>

Show Persian body traits

Persian cats are medium-sized. They weigh between 7 and 12 pounds, and measure from 10 to 15 inches tall.



Body: Large or medium in size with a stocky build.

Ears: Small with round tips, set far apart.

Head: Large and round. Forehead, nose and chin line up vertically.

Tail: Short, in proportion to body length.

Coat: Long and thick with a fine texture.

In general, Persians have a sweet expression, soft round lines and heavy bone structure.

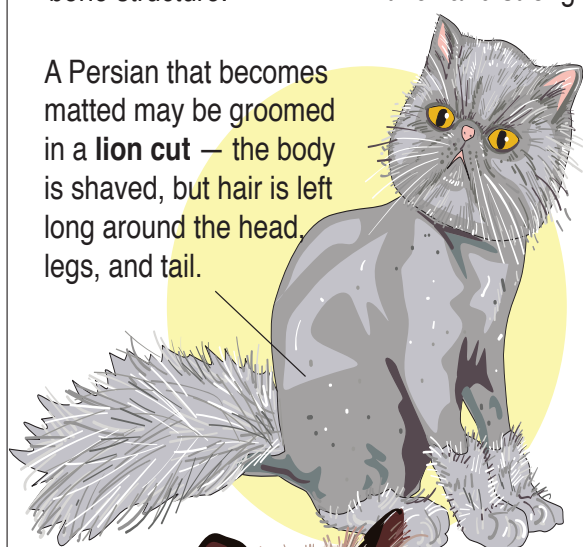
Legs: Short, thick and strong.

Paws: Large, round and firm.

Nose: Short, snub and broad.

Eyes: Large, round and full.

A Persian that becomes matted may be groomed in a **lion cut** — the body is shaved, but hair is left long around the head, legs, and tail.



Traditional
doll face
nose

Flat face with
snub nose of a
show Persian



Seal Point
Himalayan

Way back when

The Persian is an old breed that can trace its ancestors to Persia (Iran), Italy and Turkey.

Persians have been bred for hundreds of years to have a round head, short face, snub nose, chubby cheeks and a short, stocky body. Over time those features have become exaggerated.

They were popular with Queen Victoria and made their way to North America in the late 19th century.

Personality

Like all cats, each Persian has its own unique personality, but in general they share some endearing traits. Persians tend to be very laid-back and easy-going. They thrive in a loving, quiet environment with regular meals, playtime and grooming routines. These cats tend to be ground dwellers and not great jumpers, they are unlikely to climb onto counters or other high spots (although some do).

An indoor pet

Persians are indoor-only cats. They are ill-equipped to handle the dangers of cars and outdoor animals. They also run the risk of being stolen by someone who wants a purebred cat without paying for it.

Doll face vs. flat face

The Persian comes in two types: show and traditional.

Both have long, glamorous coats and gentle dispositions, but the **show Persian** has the classic round head and flat nose. Animals with flat faces and short noses are termed **brachycephalic**. **Flat-faced** Persians are prone to health issues due to their exaggerated flat faces.

The **traditional Persian**, also known as the **doll face**, does not have the extreme features of the show Persian, and its nose is a normal length.