<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT IS A CAT?</th>
<th>WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?</th>
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| **Predator** | 1. Cats have to eat a meat-based diet and cannot be vegetarian  
2. Cats are highly motivated to chase and catch small things that move, they are not being naughty if they catch a mouse and bring it home  
3. Play can help to satisfy the need to hunt. This can be with toys they can move around themselves or you can play with them by moving a toy on the end of a string  
4. Cats have efficient hunting weapons: sharp teeth and claws!  
5. Cats are often more active at dawn and dusk (and at night) when they would be naturally more likely to catch their prey |
| A cat is a solitary predator, which means that its natural behaviour is to hunt. Even if fed by owners, the instinct to hunt is strong |  |
| **Self-reliant** | 1. Cats’ immediate response to danger is to run away or, if they can’t escape, they hide  
2. Providing hiding places for cats means they can get away from anything that frightens them  
3. Cats like to maintain a sense of control over where they go and what they do  
4. Cats like it when people allow them to decide when to interact  
5. Cats don’t like to be restrained and have to get used to being picked up as they have less control |
| A cat is totally responsible for its own survival, it doesn’t rely on a pack or a herd to keep safe |  |
| **Territorial** | 1. Being away from their familiar home can be stressful for cats, so house moves and trips to the vet clinic can be scary  
2. Introducing other cats into a home may upset a resident cat  
3. Cats may have territorial disputes, not only with cats outside but with cats in the same household!  
4. You need plenty of resources to avoid competition in your home if you have more than one cat |
| A cat stays within a familiar area and actively defends it from other cats it doesn’t know. This area, or territory, contains everything the cat needs to survive (eg food, water, shelter etc*)  
*referred to as ‘resources’ |  |

International Cat Care – What is a cat?
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| ![Scent sensitive](image) | - Cats like to surround themselves with familiar smells as it makes them feel safe  
| A cat’s sense of smell is much more sensitive than ours. A cat gets information about its surroundings via its nose and knows when another cat has been around by the odour it leaves behind | - Changing carpets and curtains can be challenging for cats as it changes the familiar scent of the home  
| ![Socially flexible](image) | - Strong smells such as perfumes, scented candles and room deodorisers can be overpowering for cats  
| A cat is socially flexible, but usually its friendliness towards people, dogs and other cats is influenced by having positive experiences of them when it was a young kitten. Coming from friendly pet cat parents helps too | - Even your outdoor shoes can bring in challenging smells from outside  
| ![Emotional](image) | - The cats that make the best pets are those that have a mother cat which is friendly and relaxed with people and, as young kittens, had positive experiences with a variety of people  
| A cat must feel fear, pleasure and frustration to survive | - Cats and dogs can become good friends!  
| ![Adaptable](image) | - Cats will remember bad experiences, so a painful or frightening trip to the vet may have consequences for future visits  
| A cat can adapt to living in many different kinds of environment, providing their basic needs are met | - Owners should pick up on behaviour changes, such as sleeping more or interacting less, as they can indicate an emotional change as well as be a sign of illness  
|                          | - Give cats a safe place to hide  
|                          | - Give cats multiple resources, eg beds and litter trays  
|                          | - Give cats opportunities to play  
|                          | - Give cats positive, consistent interaction with people  
|                          | - Give cats an environment that respects the importance of their sense of smell |