

FREQUENTLY ASKED:

What is bunting or booping and what does it mean?

As guided by Amy

FOUNDER, NOOSA COUNTRY CAT HOTEL

What is Bunting or Booping?

Bunting (headbutting) or booping (a gentle tap with the head or nose) is when a cat touches their head, forehead or nose to you, another cat or an object. It is one of the many ways cats communicate.

References

Horowitz, A. (2002). Inside of a Cat: What Cats See, Smell and Know. Scribner.

It's a Social and Affectionate Signal

When your cat bunts or boops you, they are showing social affection and trust. Cats have scent glands on their forehead, cheeks and chin. By bumping you with their head, they are leaving their scent on you.

This is a way of saying "you are part of my tribe".

References

Pageat, P. (2012). Scent marking in the domestic cat. Applied Animal Behaviour Science, 138(3-4), 299-303.

A Way of Building Bond and Connection

Bunting or booping is often used between cats who get along. It helps maintain positive relationships and reinforces social bonds. You might also see it as a greeting when they meet or reunite.

References

Curtis, T. M. (2009). Social behaviour in cats. Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery, 11(11), 845-861.

You Might See It With Other Things

Cats often bunt or boop objects, toys, scratching posts, cat trees or even favourite spots. This is scent marking and helps them feel more secure and in control of their environment.

References

Bradshaw, J. W. S. (2013). Cat Sense: The Feline Enigma Revealed. ABRAMS.

It's Not Always a Demand

While cats may bunt you before mealtimes, it is not always a request. More often, it is an affectionate greeting or a way of reinforcing your bond. Pay attention to their body language.

References

Overall, K. L. (2013). Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Small Animals. Mosby Elsevier.

How to Respond

The best response is to stay calm and acknowledge your cat. A slow blink, gentle voice or soft stroke (if they enjoy it) can strengthen your relationship. If your cat buns or boops you, it's a compliment!

References

ISFM (2018). Feline Friendly Handling Guidelines. International Society of Feline Medicine.



Bunting or booping is your cat's way of showing affection, trust and belonging. They are sharing their scent and including you in their social world. It's a positive behaviour that builds connection and comfort. When your cat bunts you, take it as the wonderful compliment it is.

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