

FREQUENTLY ASKED:

What do my cat's noises mean?

As guided by Amy

FOUNDER, NOOSA COUNTRY CAT HOTEL

Meows Are for Humans, Not Other Cats

Adult cats rarely meow to other cats. They meow to communicate with people and have learned that different meows get different responses from us.

McComb, K., et al. (2009). *Biology Letters*, 5(1), 159–161.

A Short Meow Can Mean Hello

A short, simple meow is often a friendly greeting or check-in. It's your cat saying "hello, I see you" or "thanks for noticing me".

Bradshaw, J. W. S. (2016). *The Behaviour of the Domestic Cat*. 2nd Ed.

Longer Meows May Mean More

Prolonged or repeated meows can indicate a request, such as wanting food, attention, or access to something. Context and body language help reveal the meaning.

Schötz, S., et al. (2014). *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*, 156, 1–10.

Chirps and Trills Show Excitement

Chirps, trills and chatters are signs of positive arousal. Cats often make these sounds when watching birds, during play or when they are happy to see you.

Miyazaki, T. (2015). *Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Applications and Research*, 10(2), 88–94.

Hisses and Growls Mean Back Off

Hissing, growling and spitting are warning signals. Your cat feels threatened, uncomfortable or needs more space. Respecting these signals helps keep everyone safe.

American Association of Feline Practitioners (2018). *Feline-Friendly Handling Guidelines*.

Yowls Can Signal Distress or Discomfort

Loud, drawn-out yowls can indicate pain, illness, distress or extreme frustration. If this is new or unusual behaviour, it is important to seek veterinary advice.

Sparkes, A. H. (2015). *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*, 17(3), 217–228.



Cats use a variety of sounds to communicate their needs, emotions and intentions. By listening to the sound, looking at their body language and considering the context, you can better understand what your cat is trying to tell you.

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