

How A Cat Show Works

In a cat show, cats are judged 12 times throughout the weekend. Each judging is referred to as a “ring” and is independent of the other judgments.

Your cat does not have to perform any tricks or do anything fancy. Just being a sweet, lovable cat is all that is required. There is no trotting around on a leash like a dog show. Cats stay in cages except during judging. The judge handles the cats on a judging table and compares each to the written standard for its breed. For the mixed breed cats, called household pets, the standard is based on health, grooming and purrsonality. For pedigreed cats, the standards go into specific physical characteristics. The judge then has the difficult job of deciding the best cats.

How the judge does it

For judging cats are divided into several categories. Your cat competes only against the other cats in its category. These categories are 1) Pedigreed Kittens, 2) Pedigreed Cats, 3) Pedigreed Alters (Spay/Neuters), 4) Household Pet Kittens, 5) Household Pet Adults and 6) New Breed or Color.

Kittens	Kittens of breeds and colors recognized by TICA for championship status. Kittens must be between 4 months and 7 months old on the day of the show. Kittens may be whole or spayed/neutered.
Championship Cats	Adult cats of breeds and colors recognized by TICA for championship status. Cats must be 8 months of age or older on the day of the show. In this class the cats can not be spayed or neutered.
Alters	Adult spayed or neutered cats of breeds and colors recognized by TICA for championship status. Alters must be 8 months of age or older on the day of the show.
Household Pet Kittens	Non-pedigree kittens or pedigree kittens that can not be shown in kitten class for some reason. Household Pet Kittens (HHP Kittens) must be between 4 months and 7 months old on the day of the show. HHP Kittens may be whole or spayed/neutered.
Household Pets	Non-pedigree cats or pedigree cats that can not be shown in an adult class for some reason. Household Pets (HHPs) must be 8 months old or older on the day of the show and must be spayed or neutered
New Breed & Color	This is a special class for the evaluation of new breeds or new colors in recognized breeds. The intent of New Breed & Color (NBC) class is the eventual recognition of these breeds and/or colors for championship competition.

Within each category the cats are then grouped together according to breed. Then within the breed they are grouped by divisions like tabby, solid and pointed. Each division is grouped by color. You can think of the breakdown as a pyramid with the category at the bottom, then the breed, division and finally color.



Examples of Breeds, Divisions & Color				
Breeds	HHPs	Havana Brown	Maine Coon	Bengals
Divisions	Tabby, Tabby w/ white, Solid, Pointed	Solid	Solid, Tabby, Particolor, Silver	Tabby
Colors	Black, Brown, White, Blue, Red (orange), Cream, Tortie, etc.	Chocolate	Brown, White, Black, Red, Blue, Cream, Tortie, etc.	Brown, Seal

Each cat in the show is assigned a number based on these groupings. That way the cats are called to the ring in the order needed for judging.

Longhair Kittens	1-50
Shorthair Kittens	51-100
Longhair Championship	101-200
Shorthair Championship	201-300
Longhair Alters	301-350
Shorthair Alters	351-400
Longhair Household Pets (Kittens & Adults)	401-450
Shorthair Household Pets (Kittens & Adults)	451-500
New Breed & Color	501-599

There are two types of judgings done; Allbreed and Speciality. An allbreed judging means that shorthairs and longhairs in the same category compete against each other.

In a speciality judging shorthairs compete only against shorthairs and longhairs compete against longhairs within each category. Saturday morning we do an allbreed judging and Saturday afternoon we do a speciality judging. On Sunday allbreed judging is done.

The judge starts with the smallest groupings – color and decides the best, second and so on of each color. The judge then hangs a ribbon on the cage to let everyone know the color placing. Unlike cats in kitten, championship, alter, or NBC class, if a household pet meets the basic requirements of the written standard, it will receive a best of color (or HHP merit) award - even if there is more than one HHP of the same color.

Once that is done the judge looks at all the colors within the division those colors belong to and names the top placings of the division. Again a ribbon is hung on the cage to specify division placing. Cats in the NBC class and household pet kittens are not selected for division awards.

Color Award Ribbon	Place	Division Award Ribbon
Blue	1st	Black
Red	2nd	Purple
Yellow	3rd	Orange
Green	4th	n/a
White	5th	n/a



Once all the divisions have been decided then the judge must determine the best of the breed. Household pets and household pet kittens are not awarded breed placements.

Last the judge must look at all the breeds and determine the top cats. The number of top cats named depends on the number entered in the show category. If you are competing against 20 or fewer cats, the top 5 cats are selected. The awarding of the top cat awards is called finals.

Although not required, our club presents a “Best of the Best” for each category based on the finals won throughout the show. The show ends after the presentation of the “Best of the Best”.