



BEHAVIOR
SERIES

Understanding Your Talkative Cat

WHILE WE HUMANS MAY NOT YET BE ADEPT at holding conversations in cat-speak, cats nonetheless use their language to communicate with us and other animals. Some cats “talk” more than others, but most cats do make noise some of the time, and they expect us to know what they’re saying.

We’re all familiar with the meaning of hissing and growling, but there are many other sounds your cat is capable of making, and a variety of reasons for vocalizing.

Medical Reasons

If your cat’s behavior changes suddenly, the first thing you should do is take her to your veterinarian for a thorough health examination. Cats often hide symptoms of illness until they’re seriously ill; any change in behavior may be an early indication of a medical problem. A new vocalizing behavior, in particular, may indicate physical discomfort stemming from an urgent need for medical attention. A normally vocal cat who stops talking is also in need of a medical checkup.

Breed Tendency

Asian breeds, such as the Siamese, are known to be very vocal. If your cat has a pointed face and a long, lean body, chances are she has some Asian heritage, so “talking” may be a part of her character. If your cat’s chatter bothers you, then avoid giving her any attention when she is vocal because this will only encourage the vocal behavior. Instead, give her attention when she is quiet.

Attention-Seeking Behavior

Some cats “talk” because they know they’ll get a reaction. People may talk back, put out some food, pick up and soothe the cat, or even pick the animal up and temporarily “lock” her in another room. All of these responses will encourage an attention-seeking cat. To discourage this behavior, simply ignore your cat when she does this, and when she is quiet, pour on the love, feed her, or give her some treats. This will teach your cat which behaviors you would like her to continue.

Your Cat Wants to Go Outside

If your cat was previously an outdoor cat and you plan to keep her safely inside, then good for you! The following are some suggestions to help make the transition easier on both of you:

- **Spay or Neuter Your Cat.** Spaying or neutering will rid your cat of those hormonal urges to go out and seek a mate. This will result in a calmer, friendlier cat.
- **Create a Play Schedule.** Schedule play times during the times your cat would normally be outside. This will distract her from her normal routine and establish another, safer routine.

continued on reverse side

Beartooth Humane Alliance
PO Box 853
Red Lodge, MT 59068
(406)672-6960
info@beartoothhumane.org
www.beartoothhumane.org