



# All About the **Birman**

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# The Birman Cat

## About the Birman

Birmans (also known as “Sacred Cats” or “Sacred Cats of Burma”) are people-oriented cats with a regal bearing. Soft-spoken and friendly, they make terrific pets. Birmans are mostly white, with points in colors ranging from chocolate and seal to lilac and even red. The breed standard calls for white feet. Their heads are full rather than pointed, and their eyes are blue – the darker the blue, the better! Their eyes can point up at the outside corners a tiny bit, but nothing like some other Eastern breeds of cat, including Burmese, Siamese, or Himalayans.



Average Weight	7-12 Lbs	Temperament	Gentle, sweet, gregarious.
Average Height	Medium-sized house cat	Good with Children?	Yes! Excellent with children.
Coat	Silky, single-layer coat, does not mat.	Health Concerns	Virtually none.

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## Birman Characteristics

Birman cats tend toward a stocky build with a fluffy, well-set tail. Their wide-set, alert eyes miss very little. Their round heads have ears set midway between the top and sides of their heads. They are intelligent and intuitive. They bond closely to their people, and will frequently adjust their schedule to yours.

Birmans are relatively rare cats, which is part of why they are frequently mistaken for other breeds. Recognized as a separate breed in France in 1925, they gained popularity in England and the U.S. in the late 1960's. Unlike some of the more standoffish breeds, Birmans really enjoy busy households and frequent companionship of humans and other animals. They are easy to groom; while they are long-coated cats, they have just a single coat that will not mat. Happily, they do not tend towards obesity, as some other breeds do.

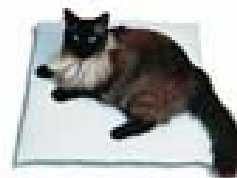


## Selecting Your Birman Kitten

Making the decision to either adopt or purchase your kitten from a breeder is a matter of personal choice. Both options are discussed here, along with some positives and negatives for both.

### A Few Words About Adoption

Every year, thousands of animals are either captured or turned in by their owners to be adopted. These pets can make wonderful companions and desire a loving home to call their own. When considering adoption, you should choose an animal shelter or rescue in your nearby community that you trust and one that has a long-standing reputation for providing exceptional care to the animals. Shelters that have an on-site vet clinic are a plus. Many facilities will require the pet to be spayed or neutered before the adoption is complete. This fee will be included in the adoption costs.



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## A Few Words About Breeders

Some people will prefer that their Birman come from a reputable breeder. This can be the best choice for owners wishing to show their cat or become breeders themselves. Breeders can provide you with a wealth of knowledge around Birmans, including health issues, family history, and the various breed characteristics. You can find cat breeders by looking in the newspaper, searching on the internet, or checking with your local vet. You should have a list of questions ready to ask the breeder when you visit or call. It is good to inquire about the length of time the breeder has been in business, if the parents will be available for you to see, and what kind of health guarantees and records will be provided. Expect a good breeder to have several questions for you as well, such as the environment in which the cat will reside, and how much time you will be able to spend with the cat.

Purchasing your Birman from a breeder or adopting are both good choices. You need to be sure to do your research first and to avoid making a quick decision based on immediate availability. Sometimes it is better to build a relationship first with a chosen breeder and plan for an upcoming litter

## How to Choose your Birman

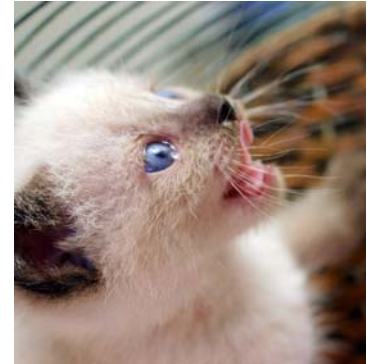
Choosing a new kitten can be one of the most exciting events in your family. It is important that you have done your homework upfront and know what kind of cat you are looking for. Some things to look for when selecting your new cat are:

- No major skin conditions; clean, healthy coat
- Clean and clear eyes
- Coughing or difficult breathing (signs of respiratory infections)
- Paw pads soft and no deep cracking or infections
- Limping, little or no movement (signs of injury or birth defects)
- Proper weight/size

## Bringing Your Birman Home

Kittens are explorers, and everything for them is a potential adventure. Be sure to provide a safe and secure environment for your new friend. In an effort to prepare for the care of your new best friend, you should create a checklist and learn about the special needs of your pet. Make sure that your floors are free of clutter. This includes shoes and electric cords, as kittens like to explore and can sometimes chew. Use the rule "out of sight, out of mind" when introducing your kitten to his new environment. If you have other pets already, you should be sure that their food is in a safe place, at least in the beginning until everyone adjusts.

It's also a good idea to pick up a book on your kitten, so that you can further understand the breed and what sort of things to expect as they grow. Once your kitten comes home, you will want to make an appointment with your vet, if you have one already, or chose one based on a recommendation or by locale. If you have purchased your kitten from a breeder or animal shelter, they have most likely had their first set of shots. Regular visits to the vet will ensure your pet a happy and healthy life. Your vet will also be able to address any concerns, behavior issues, or other questions that you might have.



You'll need these basics before your Birman comes home. Click the items below to go to CheapPetStore.com to find the best prices for online pet supplies.

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## The Birman Kitten

Each stage of your pet's life is characterized by special needs. Kittens' lives are full of learning experiences. Enjoy the time you spend with your Birman kitten. Early socialization normally prohibits anxious behaviors from surfacing. Good habits, as well as poor ones, are established at this early age. Use consistent training methods and show your kitten your expectations in a positive way and you will not be disappointed.

## The Birman Adult

As your cat begins to age, his needs begin to change. Keep surprises to a minimum by being prepared. Your cat should be active and healthy. A listless American Shorthair is unlikely, so watch out for any behavioral changes.

As your cat ages, his nails, paw pads, coat, skin, eyes and ears need ongoing attention. Make grooming a happy time for your cat. Since this breed does not mat its coat, grooming is easy. Also keep claws trimmed as needed and keep teeth tartar under control.

## The Birman Senior

Older cats have different needs. Dietary changes are the most prevalent at this lifestage. As your cat ages, so does his digestive system. Make sure your senior Birman maintains a proper diet and receives proper nutrients by starting him on daily vitamins. Keep abreast of the latest trends in dental products. There are many tartar control products on the market today. You may want to provide a more appropriate sleeping and lounging area for your pet. You can help him manage his health with the proper pet healthcare aids, knowledge, and care.

Most cats are considered geriatric at age 10 and older. Most cats live until about 15 years. Senior pets have many changes in disposition and could easily be stressed by active young children. They may show signs of irritability when being handled. Birmans are genuinely loving animals and are not known to cause harm, but grumpy seniors have a way of making sure that you are aware when they are unhappy. It is important to know that senior animals tend to do things their own way and in their own time. Care for your senior in a loving, gentle manner mixed with a little patience and understanding.

## Medical Considerations

Remarkably, American Shorthairs are not prone to many cat ills. Of course, be sure to have your cat examined by a veterinarian regularly, but there are few general medical concerns with American Shorthairs.



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