

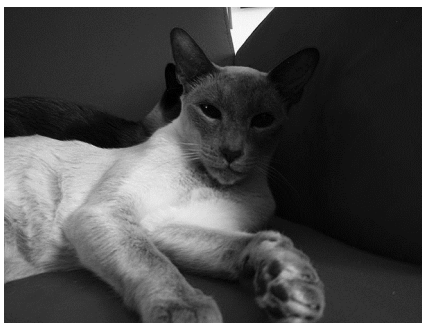
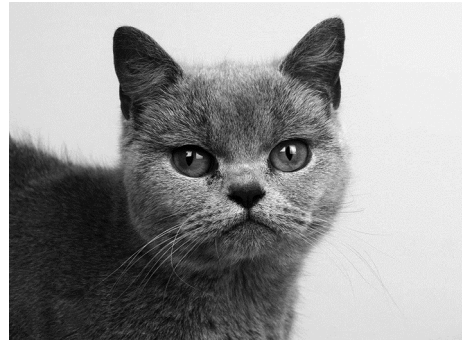
### Find the perfect pet

Up until the late 1800s, most cats in Britain were domestic shorthairs and longhairs. They were not of recognised breed and known affectionately as a moggy, with looks being less important than an ability to earn their keep by catching vermin. Around this time, people were returning from the British colonies with pure-breed cats they had adopted there. These cats had never been seen in Britain before but they sparked the interest of many cat lovers. The Governing Council of the Cat Fancy ([gccfcats.org](http://gccfcats.org)) was founded in 1910 to look after their welfare and keep a register of pure breeds.



Today, with 40 different recognised pedigrees in Britain – and countless moggies – there is much variation in the physical appearance, temperament and care requirements. **Domestic shorthairs** include the popular striped tabby and tuxedo (black cats with white ‘bibs’) kinds, and are expected to live until 14-16 years of age, but some can reach 20.

Among the most popular pedigrees, **the Burmese** has existed in Burma and Thailand for centuries, but the type we know in Britain today is descended from a single cat, Wong Mau, who was taken to the United States from Burma in the 1930s. The Burmese is often described as dog-like because it likes to form strong bonds with one particular member of a household, plus its enjoyment of fetch and tag games.



Because of its demanding wail-like cry, which it often uses to attract its owner’s attention, **the Siamese** cat is commonly described as an extrovert. It is also intelligent and highly sociable, with an elegant, slim build and a wedge-shaped head and tall ears that form a triangle with the tip of the nose.

A French astronomer imported **the Persian** cat into Europe for the first time during the 17th century, bringing four pairs of grey long-haired felines back from his travels. Characterised by its solid build, broad head, flat face and long coat, this pedigree has a serene disposition: it is less active and more placid than other pure breeds.



Whatever breed of cat you have, find out how to look after it by visiting the Feline Advisory Bureau website, [fabcats.org](http://fabcats.org), which includes factsheets on a range of topics from training to vaccinations.

*Country Living, 2012*