



The Birman Cat Club

Members of the Birman Cat Club are expected to look after their pet Birmans, breeding queens or studs in accordance with the Club's General Guidelines and Code of Ethics, which is based on the code of ethics of the Governing Council of the Cat fancy (GCCF) and the guidelines of the other registering bodies.

General Guidelines and Code of Ethics for Breeders & Owners

1. Members should think carefully and take advice before getting a Birman and should ensure that a Birman is a breed of cat that is suited to their lifestyle. They should keep only as many cats as they can afford to adequately care for.
2. Cats must be provided with warm and comfortable housing, with plenty of opportunity for exercise and play. Cats should be kept indoors at night for their own safety. Drinking water must be available at all times and cats must be fed regularly and adequately.
3. All cats need some grooming to keep the coat in good condition and to check for parasites, e.g. fleas. The coat of a Birman cat generally requires less attention than that of long haired cats but nevertheless will require some grooming.
4. Veterinary attention must be sought whenever a cat is showing signs of illness. No kitten that is showing any signs of illness should be offered for sale until it has completed a course of treatment prescribed by the vet and is healthy and fit for sale.
5. Cats that are bought as pets, not for breeding, should be neutered or spayed at the age recommended by your veterinary surgeon. If cats are registered on the Non-Active register, this means that under no circumstances should the cats be bred from. No progeny from these cats will be registered by the GCCF.
6. Breeders agree to sell cats only to people in safe locations and only where there is a reasonable expectation of a happy and healthy life. An offer should be made at the time of sale to help with the rehoming if, at any time, circumstances require the cat to be found a new home.
7. Kittens must be allowed to socialise with people and other animals and should be encouraged to be an active part of the family environment before they go to their new homes. Do not keep them caged and segregated – this will only result in timid or nervous kittens.
8. Breeders should not sell any cat to commercial cat wholesalers, retail pet dealers or directly or indirectly allow cats to be given as a prize or donation in a competition of any kind. The Birman Cat Club recommends that kittens are not advertised for sale in local newspapers, newsagents etc. and suggests that kittens are advertised in reputable cat magazines and websites or that members use the services of The Birman Cat Club Kitten Register.
9. Breeders must not knowingly misrepresent the characteristics of the Birman breed nor falsely advertise cats nor mislead any person regarding the health or quality of the cat and must draw the attention of purchasers to the implications of the Non-Active register when selling pet kittens.
10. Breeders selling a kitten on the Active register should offer advice and support to the new owners. Breeders should not breed cats in a way that is detrimental to the health of the cat or the breed.
11. No member should take on the responsibility of a stud cat unless they are able to provide the stud cat with spacious, warm accommodation and an enclosed area for exercise, play and human interaction. The stud should not be shut away in a shed at the bottom of the garden and seen only when fed or when his litter tray is emptied – he will be bored. His accommodation should, if possible, be in an area of the garden where he can see other cats and other people.
12. It is not advisable to have an entire male cat in the house as he will spray, so you will need outside accommodation. Stud cats can be extremely noisy and your neighbours may adversely react to this. You will also need a reasonable expectation of being able to provide a number of female cats for mating. One or two of your own queens is not sufficient to keep a stud cat happy. Unless your cat is known from

- the show circuit it is unlikely that you will be able to provide sufficient visiting queens. Unless you can provide the above then do not have a stud cat.
13. All owners of female Birmans looking for a stud for their cats are urged to visit the stud owner's premises to make certain for themselves that the cat is healthy and is living in conditions suitable for their queen to visit. Check that the stud quarters are warm in winter and that your female is able to get away from the stud if she is feeling nervous. Check if the stud owner conducts supervised matings or if the females are left to run with the stud. All reasonable stud owners will permit you to visit and if they won't then be extremely cautious and maybe go elsewhere.
 14. Anyone planning to send a female to visit the stud is advised to check the pedigrees of the two cats and to avoid close matings. Check if the stud is blood group A or blood group B and find out if this is compatible with that of the queen. The stud owner, or the breeder of the queen, should be able to give advice on this.
 15. The Birman Cat Club strongly recommends that no stud owner should administer any medication or homeopathic remedy to calm or subdue a visiting female without the express permission of the queen's owner.
 16. Owners should consider carefully the best means of identifying their cat in case it should become lost. This can be done by means of a microchip which can be painlessly inserted under the cat's skin by your veterinary surgeon. Remember that the microchip number must be registered with the registering body and the microchip company. Failure to do so will mean that the number cannot be traced should the cat go missing. The alternative is for the cat to wear some form of identification on a collar. However, there are dangers for cats wearing collars as the cat may become hooked up and caught by the collar or more likely the collar will break or come off over the cat's head, so preventing easy identification.
 17. At the time that kittens go to their new home the breeder should provide a sales contract to be signed by both breeder and buyer giving the name and registration details of the kitten and the terms under which it is being sold. This contract should state clearly whether the kitten is on the Active or Non-Active register and if it is being sold as a pet or for showing or for breeding. The breeder should also provide the buyer with a diet sheet detailing what the kitten is currently eating and what it should be eating as it gets older, and give guidance concerning responsible ownership.
 18. The Birman Cat Club agrees with the GCCF guideline and strongly recommends that no kitten should be permitted to go to a new home before 13 weeks of age. At least seven days prior to this, the kitten should have completed a full course of vaccinations, including a health check, given by a Veterinary Surgeon or by a listed Veterinary Nurse under the direction of a Veterinary Surgeon. The breeder should ensure that kittens are house-trained, inoculated and in good general health.
 19. All kittens born should be registered with the GCCF (or an alternative registration body) and should be placed on either the Active register or the Non-Active register. The Birman Cat Club recommends that kittens are not 'declared' as this does not provide them, or the breeder, with sufficient safeguards to stop them being registered (with GCCF prefix) by the new owner and then bred from.
 20. Breeders/owners must ensure that all relevant registration documents are given to the new owner when selling or transferring a cat. These include the pedigree showing a minimum of three generations and listing all the breed and registration numbers, the transfer slip from the GCCF (or other registration body), the vaccination certificate and insurance certificate (if the kitten has been insured) and the microchip registration documents if this has been arranged.

Breeding from a Birman, or any breed of cat, should not be looked upon as an easy way of making money – it seldom is and, on the contrary, can often be a very costly business. You must be available to assist with the kitting on the dates that the kittens are due, which can be over a four to five day period. Cats seldom have their kittens at times convenient to you so you must be prepared to call the vet out should kitting go wrong in the middle of the night. If the worst happens and the mother rejects the kittens you may have to hand feed them every two hours or so day and night for four to five weeks. Unless you are able make this commitment and be with your cat when the kittens are born then breeding is not for you.