

## Burmese - Information Sheet



**ORIGIN** - The cat deemed to have been the founder of the Burmese breed was a small brown cat called 'Wong Mau' who was taken from Burma to America in 1930. An investigation into the genetic make up of 'Wong Mau' showed that she was hybrid of Siamese and a new dark coated breed that was named Burmese because of the origin. Through selective breeding it was possible to isolate the new dark coated breed and this became the Burmese we know today. The Burmese was first recognised by the American cat registration bodies and later by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy in Britain. A selective breeding plan was embarked upon and as the genetic make up of the Burmese became known a whole spectrum of colours became possible leading to the ten colours we have now.

**DESCRIPTION** - The Burmese is a medium sized cat, with an elegant yet well-muscled body. They are not as large and sturdy as the British Shorthair nor as slender and dainty as the Siamese. They are surprisingly heavy for their size when lifted and this is due to their solid muscular physique. The head is carried on a medium neck and is in proportion to the body. In profile the head is deep from the top of a domed skull to the lower jaw. The brow is rounded. The nose will show a distinct break and the tip of the nose will be level with the chin. The chin is deep and firm. Viewed from the front the face resembles a short blunt wedge with wide cheekbones tapering to the muzzle. The ears are set well apart with a rounded dome between and are broad at the based with a rounded tip and are tilted slightly forward. The outer line of the ears continues smoothly into the line of the face although in mature males who have developed jowls this may not be so apparent. The eyes are set well apart with the top line slanting towards the nose and the bottom being rounded. The eyes are large and lustrous and may be any shade of yellow but a golden yellow is preferred. However the eye colour of Burmese is very sensitive to variations in light quality and under certain light sources the eyes may appear quite a different colour. The legs are slender and the paws are neat and oval in shape. The tail is straight with no kinks or bumps and ends in a rounded paintbrush tip. If the tail is the correct length it will reach to the shoulder when brought round the side of the body.

**COLOUR** - The short glossy coat is a distinctive feature of the Burmese. The coat is fine and lies close to the body. The Burmese cat comes in ten colours but in all colours the underparts will be lighter than the back and the shading will be gradual. There is no notable masking as in the Siamese. The coat is free from bars and spotting although the presence of a few white hairs is permissible. The coat colour will gradually pale towards the roots. Kittens will not show their true colour until they are adult. A summary of coat colours follows: - 'Brown' - A rich, warm, seal brown shading very slightly on the underparts, the paw pads and nose leather will be dark brown. 'Blue' - A soft, silvery blue grey with a distinct silver sheen on rounded areas, variations in shade of blue are allowed. The paw pads will be pinkish grey and the nose leather dark grey. 'Chocolate' - A warm milk chocolate with as even a colour as possible. Masking should be minimal and degrees of shading are allowed from the milkiest coffee to almost Bourneville but the coat should never be as dark as the brown. Paw pads will be brick red to chocolate and the nose leather warm chocolate brown. 'Lilac' - A pale delicate dove grey with a pinkish hue. Paw pads and nose leather a pinkish grey. 'Red' - Varying shades of tangerine with paler shading on the underparts, some very slight

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tabby markings are allowed on the face. Paw pads and nose leather will be pink. 'Cream' - A coat colour like clotted cream with a powdered finish. Again some slight tabby markings are allowed. Paw pads and nose leather pink. 'Torties' - Torties can be brown, blue, lilac, or chocolate hair mixed with red or cream hairs. The paw pads and nose leather will reflect the main colour. The colours should be well mingled but blazes of solid colour and solid legs and or tails are allowed.

#### **COAT LENGTH – Short**

**AGE EXPECTANCY** - The Burmese cat is quite long lived and ages of eighteen to twenty years are quite common. Even elderly Burmese will behave like kittens once in a while and have a mad moment charging around the house like a thing possessed. Once the Burmese reaches the age of about eight it is perhaps wise to have your vet. check the cat over once a year. Your vet. may recommend teeth cleaning to help prevent gum disease and a blood test to check liver and kidney function but it must also be remembered that cats do not always react well to general anaesthetics and these should be kept to a minimum for routine work.

#### **WEIGHT / HEIGHT RANGE – 4 - 8kgs**

**AILMENTS** - Burmese cats are quite robust healthwise and are not really susceptible to any particular problems. Like any breed of cat they do need to be vaccinated regularly against cat flu and feline enteritis. They should also be wormed regularly against roundworm and tapeworm especially if they are allowed out to hunt. If your cat is allowed outside, external parasites such as fleas, lice, ticks and mites can be a problem but they are easily dealt with by using the modern preparatory treatments.

**PERSONALITY** - The Burmese cat is an extremely friendly and affectionate creature and needs attention from human beings to be happy when kept in a domestic environment. They are extremely playful and can be taught to fetch pieces of paper in much the same way as a dog with a stick and are good with children and so make wonderful family pets. They are also very sensitive to their owner's feelings. If the owner is likely to be out all day it is often a good idea to have two Burmese, as they can become bored very quickly with no one to play with. They are very demanding and will follow you around the house crying for attention and if you stop will climb up your leg begging to be picked up and cuddled. Burmese are very vocal cats and will often greet you when you return home or speak to you when they want something. The curiosity and friendliness of the Burmese can sometimes lead them to stray into visitor's cars or delivery vans and they can disappear. This also makes them a prime target for theft. For these reasons many Burmese are confined to the house and they really do not mind this as they love warmth and comfort and they will soon find plenty to do indoors especially if they have company. Burmese cats are extremely loyal to their owners and with their ability to retrieve are sometimes known as the 'dog cat'. They do not like to be left out of family life and will often insist on being part of what's going on. They are very intelligent and can work out problems such as opening doors and they are the complete escape artist. They are very good with children but if the children do become too rough the Burmese will simply turn around with a contemptuous glare and stalk off until the children settle down. Burmese make excellent companions and seem to understand every word that is said and are very sensitive to their owner's feelings and moods. They do not object to the hub-bub of a noisy household and will usually join in.

**ENERGY – High**

**NOISE – High**

**CHILD SUITABILITY – High**

**COMPATABILITY WITH CATS – High**

**OTHER ANIMAL COMPATIBILITY - High**

#### **FEEDING & GROOMING**

**FEEDING –** An active, adult Burmese cat requires 80 Kcals per kg body weight per day. This will be met by the Metabolizable Energy content of the food, i.e. the proportion of the food, which can be used by the body. Therefore the quantity given must be in excess of this, as some will be wasted in the digestive process. However, Burmese cats rarely overeat and in practice it will become obvious how much your cat requires each day. Many Burmese are fed dry food ad lib.

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**UPKEEP** - Burmese cats do not require excessive grooming as they take care of this themselves but they will enjoy the attention that comes with brushing.

**SHEDDING** - Little