

Petting a Cat 101

The best kind of petting is a **conversation**.

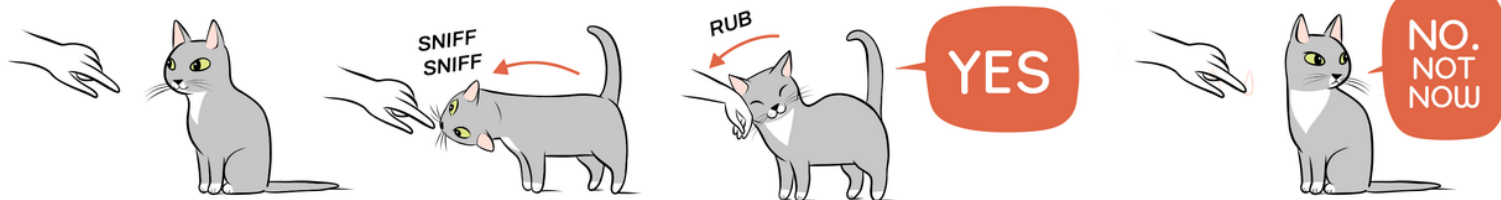
How to initiate? Let them choose

Start when they are calm, not when they are energetic or playing.

Offer your hand, keep it low and still. (For blind cats, rub your fingers together)

If they APPROACH, SNIFF YOU, or RUB ON YOU...

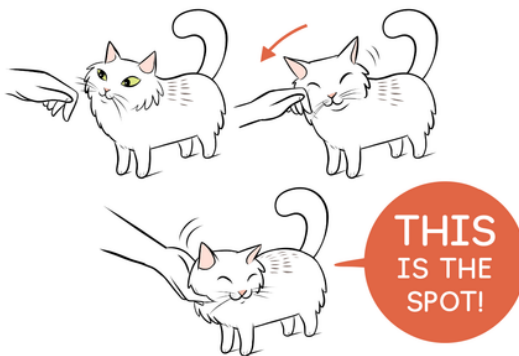
If they IGNORE, FREEZE, or MOVE AWAY...



Where to pet? Let them lead

If they push into your hand or move around, they may be telling you where to pet them.

Many cats prefer pets on **CHEEKS** or **CHINS** first. Avoid petting all over until you know your cat's signs of not liking things.



Do they still want to be petted? Pause and check in

Take breaks frequently or when you aren't sure if your cat is still happy with the pets. Move your hand away and see how they respond.

If they LEAN BACK IN...

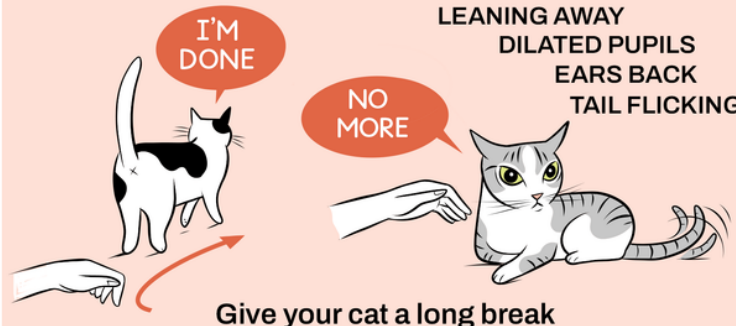
Or SLOW-BLINK and STAY SOFT...



If they MOVE AWAY...

Or if you see any of these:

LEANING AWAY
DILATED PUPILS
EARS BACK
TAIL FLICKING



Learn your cat's individual preferences and communication

As you practice this conversation, you will get to know what your individual cat likes, where and when.

