

BLACK CAT GENETICS

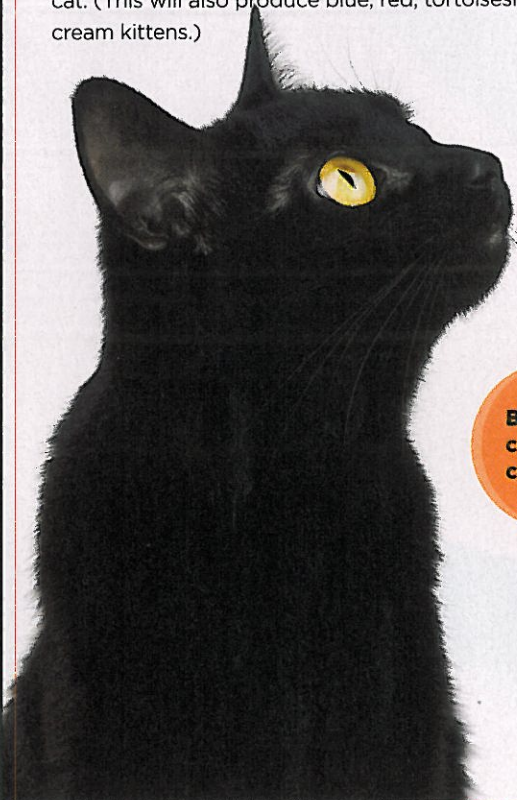
Black cats are among the most common of all cat colors — and with good reason. The gene for black is dominant in cats, meaning that black cats will always pass their color gene along to their offspring. Although the kitten of a black cat might not appear to be black, he carries the black gene.

According to the CFA publication *Understanding the Basic Genetics of Cat Colors*, breeding a black male to a black female results in a 50 percent chance of black kittens and a 50 percent chance of blue kittens. (Blue is a dilute of the black color, and breeding two blue cats results in all blue kittens.)

The male kitten of a black female will always be black or blue, since male kittens inherit their color genes from their mother.

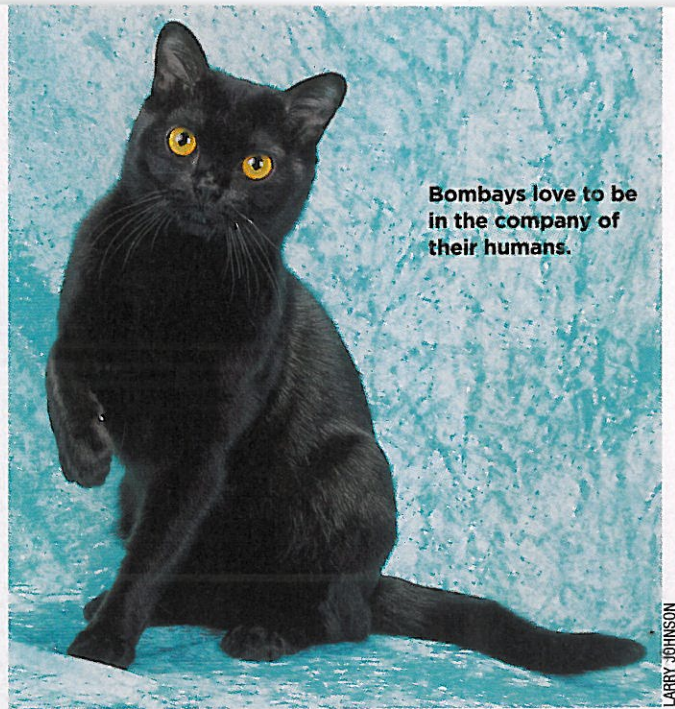
Black is one of the two dominant colors found in cats; the other is red. This means that all cat colors relate to black or red in some way. For instance, when a black cat is bred to either a red- or cream-colored cat, the kittens will be red, cream (the dilute of red), tortoiseshell (the combination of black and red genes) or blue-cream. If a black cat is bred to either a tortoiseshell or a blue-cream, the resulting kittens will be black, blue, red, cream, tortoiseshell or blue-cream.

You can get a black kitten without either parent being black by breeding a blue cat to a tortoiseshell cat. (This will also produce blue, red, tortoiseshell or cream kittens.)



Black is a common coat color.

EKATERINA GARYUK/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Bombays love to be in the company of their humans.

LARRY JOHNSON

Today, black cats are considered good luck in countries like England and Japan, and are well-loved by cat lovers around the world. In fact, in two modern cat breeds, the Bombay and the solid Persian, the black coloration is imperative.

The Sleek Bombay

The Bombay was born from the sable Burmese and the black American Shorthair. Created in 1953 by Nikki Horner, a breeder in Louisville, Ky., the Bombay was developed by crossing these two breeds together. Horner's goal was to produce a copper-eyed, black shorthaired cat with an exotic appearance. She was inspired by the black leopard of India and wanted to create a domestic breed that possessed that same exotic appearance.

The Bombay achieved championship status with the Cat Fanciers' Association in 1976. In 1979, The International Cat Association also granted the Bombay with Championship status. The Bombay is the only CFA- and TICA-recognized breed that comes exclusively in black.

These many years later, the Bombay is still well-known for its shiny black coat and vivid gold eyes. The breed is regarded as an attention-getter because of its sleek "little black panther" look. It's also considered an attention-seeker because these cats bond easily with one person or a full household. "Bombays have the best traits from their two parent breeds," says Iowa breeder Troy Weier. "They are intelligent, athletic, sweet, loyal and cuddly. They do look like mini-panthers, and they enter a room with a swagger and a confidence like no other breed."

The Bombay's high-gloss coat and color make it unique in the cat world. The rich coat has a pitch-black sheen, and is also dense and ultra-plush to the touch. The large eyes range from warm gold to glimmering copper.

Besides being beautiful, the Bombay is an inquisitive and highly social breed that craves attention. "They love being with their people, and if you throw a party, they are right in the middle of it," says Virginia breeder Deborah Curtis. "They are friendly, outgoing and not shy in the least. They bond quickly to their new families and adopt the 'love the one you're with' mentality."