

Beyond Therapy

Discover other jobs for cats, such as taste testing and acting.

Katie Matola

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In addition to serving as our affectionate companions, many cats have jobs. Some cats act as greeters in bookstores and veterinary clinics, endearing customers with their presence. Historically, farm cats helped control the rodent population. Cats can perform many other jobs as well. 1. Cats as taste-testers. Pet-food manufacturers often hire cats and dogs as taste testers for the palatability of their foods. When a food has been tested in a feeding trial it is usually stated on the label, giving consumers the assurance that cats have actually eaten and liked the food they are purchasing. Learn more now.

2. Cats can be blood donors for other cats in need of blood transfusions. Contact your local veterinary college or veterinarian for information on blood-donation programs. You can check the American Veterinary Medical Association's website for information on veterinary colleges in your area.

3. Cats can be actors. Animal Actors of Hollywood owns and trains animals for use in motion pictures, television and commercials. Cheryl Shawver, an animal trainer and owner of Animal Actors, said that cats learn a variety of commands, such as sit and stay, lie down and stay, come, go to a mark, move from point A to point B slowly and quickly, retrieve, jump, sit on a lap or table, stare and follow an eye line.

4. Cats can be athletes. Following in the paw prints of the popular and highly competitive dog activity, cat agility is a sport in which a handler directs or lures a cat through an obstacle course as quickly as possible. For an agile, fit and attentive cat, agility is a feline playground. International Cat Agility Tournaments (ICAT) organizes agility contests and awards titles throughout the world with the goal of encouraging playful cat-and-human interaction.

5. Cats as models. Some cats just have what it takes to win beauty contests also known as cat shows. Pedigreed cats that are registered with one of the many cat breed registries may compete against other cats to earn ribbons and titles, such as Best in Show or Grand Champion. For more information on showing your cat, contact the Cat Fanciers' Association or The International Cat Association.

So, the next time your cat is lounging on the couch while you clean the house, do the laundry and cook dinner, perhaps it's time to get him a job!