

Show Time

Your cat doesn't have a pedigree, but you think he would do well at a cat show. Find out how to enter one near you.

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Tiger struts across the room and gracefully lays on his pillow. His green eyes survey his surroundings while his tail ticks to an unknown rhythm. He's not a pedigreed cat, but he exudes beauty and presence. Could Tiger compete in a cat show?

Eligibility

Yes, according to these major purebred cat registries: Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA), American Cat Fanciers Association (ACFA) and The International Cat Association (TICA). Pedigreed cats aren't the only ones allowed to strut their stuff for judges. Household cats, too, can compete for rosettes and titles.

"There are classes for the pedigreed cat, but there are also classes for household pets, or non-registered, non-pedigreed cats," said Allene Tartaglia, director of special projects for the CFA in Manasquan, N.J. "Ninety-five percent of our shows have competitions for household pets."

Other competitive classes vary by organization, but the classes are generally cat, kitten, alter and household. The first three are judged according to particular standards set by the registry, but the last is basically a beauty contest.

Most organizations require adult household cats to be spayed or neutered and not declawed. Pedigreed cats do not need to be spayed or neutered, unless they are competing in the alter class, but they, too, must not be declawed.

Preparation

To prepare Tiger for his first show, his owner must first decide if he has the proper temperament.

"A good show cat loves being in the ring and being handled by a lot of different people," said Connie Vandre, executive director of ACFA in Nixa, Mo. "He doesn't mind being on display, and doesn't show or bear his teeth, so temperament matters."

If you think your cat has the right stuff, begin your search for an upcoming cat show. The Internet is a great place to start. Visit a major pedigreed cat registry's website and look for links to a show calendar. This will list most of that registry's allbreed and single-breed shows in the country throughout the year.