

Kitten History: American Bobtail

Some believe that the American Bobtail is a cross from a domestic cat and a bobcat.

Stacy Hackett

Your American Bobtail kitten stalks his toys, a born hunter, in the territory of your living room. With his tufted ears, spotted coat and stubby tail, he looks like he belongs in untamed land. Just where did he get his wild looks?

Some have speculated that the American Bobtail is the result of a chance encounter between a domestic cat and a Bobcat, but genetics so far have disproved this theory. Breed enthusiasts stand firm in their devotion to using only domestic cats in their breeding programs.

Bobtail cats most likely popped up in litters of kittens for many generations, but the breed didn't start its true development until the late 1960s. A brown tabby bobtail kitten was found on an Indian reservation in Southern Arizona, and the young couple who discovered him was smitten with his unique good looks and charming personality. When bred to a long-tail female, the bobtail cat fathered more bobtail kittens and the American Bobtail breed was born.

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