

BENGAL

HEAD	30 Points
Shape	(7)
Chin, Muzzle,	
Nose	(8)
Ears	(6)
Eyes	(5)
Neck	(4)
BODY	30 Points
Torso	(5)
Tail	(5)
Boning	(6)
Musculature	(6)
Legs/Feet	(8)
COAT	5 Points
Texture	(5)
COLOR	10 Points
PATTERN	15 Points
CONTRAST	10 Points

General: The Bengal cat appears to walk from the wild into the show hall. Temperament is dependable, curious, intelligent, interactive and loving. Ancestral models, *felis catus* and *prionailurus bengalensis*, create patterns reminiscent of the wild as well as patterns completely new and unique to both models. The Bengal cat is athletic, muscular; medium to large in size, allowance made for smaller size in females. Characteristics in the appearance of the Bengal cat distinct from those found in other domestic cat breeds given special merit.

Head:

Shape: Broad modified wedge with rounded contours. Longer than wide. Allowance to be made for jowls in adult males. **Size:** Small in proportion to body, but not to be taken to extreme. **Profile:** Gently curving forehead to bridge. Bridge of nose extends above the eyes. The line is a very slight, to nearly straight concave curve. **Special Merit:** Overall look gives a distinct head from the domestic cat. **Chin:** Strong chin aligns with tip of nose in profile. **Muzzle:** Full and broad, with large, prominent whisker pads and high, pronounced cheekbones. **Nose:** has a very slight concave curve. **Nose Leather:** Large and wide, slightly puffed.

Ears:

Size: Overall size medium. **Height:** Short to medium-short, not to exceed the width of the base (allowance to be made for larger appearing ears on kittens up to 12 months). **Tips:** Rounded. **Placement:** Set as much on side as top of head, following the contour of the face in the frontal view, and tipping forward in the profile view. **Furnishings:** Light horizontal furnishings acceptable; but lynx tipping undesirable.

Eyes:

Shape: Oval, almost round. **Size:** Large, but not bugged. **Placement:** Set wide apart, back into face, and on slight bias toward base of ear. **Color:** Eye color independent of coat color except in the lynx points. **Special Merit:** Richness and depth of color.

Neck:

Size: Thick and muscular. **Length:** In proportion to body.

Body:

Torso: Long and substantial, but not oriental or foreign. **Size:** Medium to large. **Boning:** Robust, never delicate. **Musculature:** Very muscular, especially in the males, one of the most distinguishing features. **Consideration:** Smaller size allowed in females.

Legs:

Length: Medium, slightly longer in the back than in the front. **Boning:** Large and substantial. Never delicate. **Musculature:** Very muscular, like the body.

Tail:

Shape: Thick, with rounded tip. **Length:** Medium, in proportion to body.

Feet:

Size: Large. **Shape:** Round. **Knuckles:** prominent. **Boning:** Robust, Never delicate.

Musculature:

Very muscular, especially in the males, one of the most distinguishing features. Allowance to be made for the generally slighter musculature of the females.

Coat:

Length: Short, close-lying. Allowance for slightly longer coat in kittens. **Texture:** Thick, luxurious, and unusually soft to the touch. **Glitter:** Comes from a domestic outcross into the first Bengal cats. It is a simple recessive giving a metallic look to the hair and a softer texture. While unique to the Bengal cat it is not required and should not be a considering factor.

Contrast:

Contrast with ground color must be extreme, giving distinct pattern and sharp edges. The ground color has agouti banding, the uniformity of this banding gives clarity to the ground coloring. Pattern that lies deep on the hair shaft gives more contrast.

Patterns:

Spotted Pattern: Random, horizontal or diagonal. As little as possible like the mackerel or broken classic. **Rosettes:** Showing two or more distinct colors or shades are preferred to single spotting, but not required. **Shape:** Paw print, arrowhead, doughnut, semi circular, clustered, or odd shapes showing pattern distinct from domestic cats. Contrast with ground color should be extreme, giving distinct pattern and sharp edges. Strong, bold chin strap and mascara markings desirable. Necklaces can be broken or unbroken. Blotchy horizontal shoulder streaks desirable. Belly must be spotted. **Whited Tummy:** T-shirt white underside and belly highly desired, as expressed in the Asian Leopard cat and other jungle cat species. **Special Merit** given to unique patterning that strikes the eye as being non-domestic.

Marbled Pattern: Markings, while derived from the classic tabby gene, and the horizontal pull of the non-domestic giving a uniquely different pattern with as little "bulls-eye" similarity as possible. **Pattern** shall, instead, be random giving the impression of marble or the impression of chaining with a horizontal flow when the cat is stretched. Vertical striped mackerel influence is also undesirable. There should be little verticality to the pattern. **Preference** should be given to cats with three or more shades; i.e., ground color, markings, and dark outlining of those markings. **Contrast** must be extreme, with distinct shapes and sharp edges. Strong, bold chin strap and mascara markings desirable. Necklaces can be broken or unbroken. Belly must be patterned. **Whited Tummy:** T-shirt white underside and belly highly desired, as expressed in the Asian Leopard cat and other jungle cat species. **Special Merit** given to unique patterning that strikes the eye as being non-domestic.

Special Note: As the interplay of genes, domestic with non-domestic and the interplay of pattern flow coming from the mackerel, classic and non-domestic unique patterns are being created that will not easily be defined as marble or spotted. As the breeders select for these unique characteristics, it is recognized that further clarification will be necessitated in the standard. Until that time, select for uniqueness and non-domestic attributes.

Colors:

Spotted or Marbled Patterns

Brown Tabby
Silver Tabby

Seal Lynx Point Tabby
Seal Silver Lynx Point Tabby

Seal Sepia Tabby
Seal Sepia Silver Tabby

Seal Mink Tabby
Seal Mink Silver Tabby

Brown Tabby: Ground color maybe cream, yellow buff, tan golden, or orange. **Markings** may be black, brown, tan, or various shades of brown. Light spectacles encircling the eyes and a virtual white ground color on the whisker pads, chin, chest, belly and inner legs [in contrast to the ground color of the flank and back] is desirable. *Rims of eyes, lips, and nose should be outlined with black, and center of nose should be brick red. Paw pads and tail tip *must* be black. Eye color: Gold to Green.

***DO NOT PENALIZE:** Cats with a T shirt white, patterned with markings underside (showing it is not the white spotting factor) if the center of the nose is not brick red and if the paw pads are other than black.

Silver Tabby: The ground color should be cold, light silver, with black markings. Tarnish coloring is undesirable. The rims of the eyes, nose and lips should be outlined in black. The center of the nose leather should be brick red outlined in black. Paw pads black. Tail tip must be black. Belly must be patterned. Eye color the same as the brown tabby, green to gold, green preferred.

In general the seal silver coloring is colder than the non-silver seal coloring.

Seal Lynx Point Tabby: Ground color ivory to cream with pattern clearly visible. Pattern can vary in color from dark seal brown, light brown, tan, or buff, with the light spectacles, whisker pads, and chin. Little difference between color of body markings and point color. Paw pads dark brown with rosy undertones allowed. Tail tip *must* be dark seal brown. Eye color: Blue with richness in color. Allowance should be made for incomplete markings in kittens.

Seal Silver Lynx Point Tabby: Body ranging from ivory to pale warm beige. Tabby pattern to be brown to brownish black, distinctly separate from the ground color. Paw pads and eye color the same as seal lynx point tabby.

Seal Mink Tabby: Ground color ivory, cream, or light tan with pattern clearly visible. Pattern may be various shades of seal mink to a dark seal mink. Ivory cream spectacles encircling the eyes, and ivory cream whisker pads and chin are desirable. Little or no difference between the color of body markings and point color. Paw pads dark brown with rosy undertones allowed. Tail tip *must* be dark seal brown. Eye color: Aqua [blue-green] to Green, the more richness and depth of color the better.

Seal Mink Silver Tabby: Body ranging from ivory to light tan. Tabby pattern light medium brown to brown. Eye color, paw pads and nose leather the same as the seal mink tabby.

Seal Sepia Tabby: Ground color ivory, cream, or light tan with pattern clearly visible. Seal Sepia Tabby Pattern may be various shades of seal sepia to dark seal sepia. Ivory cream spectacles encircling the eyes, and ivory cream whisker pads and chin are desirable. There should be very little or no difference between the color of body markings and point color. Paw pads dark brown with rosy undertones allowed. Tail tip *must* be dark seal brown. Eye color: Gold to Green, the more richness and depth of color the better.

Seal Sepia Silver Tabby: Body ranging from ivory to tan. Tabby pattern brown. Eye color, paw pads and nose leather the same as the seal sepia tabby.

Temperament:

Temperament must be unchallenging. Any sign of definite challenge shall disqualify. Cat may exhibit fear, seek to flee, or generally complain aloud, but may not threaten to harm. Bengals should be confident, alert, curious, and friendly cats.

NOTE: BENGALS MUST BE REGISTERED TO ENTER A SHOW HALL.

PENALIZE:

Spots on body running together vertically, forming a mackerel tabby pattern, circular bulls-eye pattern on marbleds, substantially darker point color [as compared to color of body markings] on Lynx Points, Seal Sepia or Seal Mink. Any distinct locket on the neck, chest, abdomen or any other area not provided for in the standard. Do not penalize for mousey undercoat.

.WITHHOLD:

Belly not patterned. Paw pads not consistent with their color group description, or paw pads not all of the same color. Exception: Cats with a T shirt white, patterned with markings underside (indicating it is white tummy and not the white spotting factor) if the center of the nose is not brick red and if the paw pads are other than black. **Tail fault.**