



Body Language and Vocalization, What is my Maine Coon Telling me?

Cats are very social creatures and Maine Coons love to communicate. While cats do vocalize, the majority of communication is done through body language. Once you learn to interpret the basics, you and your cat will have better communication and greater understanding.

Understanding Body Language

The position of your Maine Coon's ears, tail or posture is giving information. Once you know how to read the signs, you will have an increased awareness for their moods, needs and other social interactions.

Cats use their ears not only for listening, but for communication.

If your cat's ears are sideways or flat, this is indicative of anxiety or defensiveness. Allowing them some space to settle down is probably the best idea to alleviate stress. Often times

other signs such as, dilated pupils or tail twitching may pair with anxiousness.

When your cat pins its' ears backwards this normally means they are fearful or being aggressive. An unknown visitor, another animal or a loud noise could trigger this behavior. Remember your cat is looking to you for information, so remain calm and do not escalate unwanted behaviors. [Socializing your Maine Coon kitten](#) early in life will help in minimizing aggression while building confidence to the variety of situations they may experience throughout life.

The eyes don't lie. The eyes are a very important communication tool for cats. A cat's eyes can relay important information about their intentions or current mood. Half-closed eyes normally mean your cat is comfortable and at ease. Often referred to as a "cat kiss," slow blinking eyes is a sign of affection and trust. If you notice your cat has dilated pupils this can mean a variety of things from excitement, aggression to even fear. Always be aware of the whole picture and what's going on in their environment as you read into their body language.

The tail will tell. Cats tend to have busy tails and Maine Coons are no exception. Tails are perhaps the most expressive way our cats communicate. If you notice your cat having a puffed up tail, this usually indicates aggression, fear, or territorial behavior. When the tail is tucked underneath their body they may be anxious or scared. Allowing them to have some space is a good idea if they are exhibiting fear or aggressive behavior. You may have noticed them running up to you with their tail high and erect when you walk in from a day at work. Holding their tail up and straight signals confidence and is also a sign of contentment. When they run up to you holding their tail up they are telling you that they are happy.

Posture is another important way to communicate body language. Whether your cat is napping, relaxing in a sunny spot, lying down or sitting they will have a comfortable and loose posture if they are feeling relaxed.

Big cats can be big talkers! Not only are Maine Coons known for their huge size, they have even bigger personalities. Many Maine Coons can be big talkers, they love to vocalize through chirps and trilling. They often enjoy socializing with their human and non-human companions in this way. A high-pitched, repetitive trill is a way to communicate positive emotions. Trilling is their way of saying, "I am happy!"

Purring is perhaps the most common vocalization when we think about cats. While it is most associated with contentment, purring is also a self-soothing behavior. Purring can also indicate stress or be a sign of injury.

A cat's meow is often a way to get our attention. If you listen closely you will notice different vocalization tones when your cat wants certain things, so the tone for affection will be slightly different than that for a favorite treat or toy. Chirping and trilling are ways your Maine Coon may communicate with you. Maine Coons are known to be chirpy cats. Chirps usually indicate happiness or excitement. Chirping is their way to get your attention. Maine Coon cats use chirps or trills instead of meowing like other cat breeds.

Hissing is a way of telling you to back off and give them their space. Hissing normally means they are feeling threatened, upset or may be territorial.

If you notice your cat stops vocalizing this can be a sign that something is wrong. As Maine Coon cats tend to be quite chatty, a health related issue could be looming if your cat suddenly stops expressing itself through vocalization. Always consult with your veterinarian if something seems amiss.