

Interesting Facts 2 - Cat sayings

There are countless phrases and expressions around the cat, that are used in everyday language. Here are just a few, but you may want to look for more.

Cat burglar – someone who sneaks up quietly and nimbly, to steal something.

Cat calls – when you 'boo' someone for bad acting. Going back to Shakespearean times when the noises the audiences used to criticise the actors sounded like cats.

Cat got your tongue – when you don't speak. Going back hundreds of years when a liar was punished by having his tongue cut out and it was fed to the king's pet cat!

Cat nap – having a quick, short sleep like cats are able to do.

Cat's whiskers - where something is supposed to be really good, or outstanding.

Catwalk – a narrow walkway, named because of cats' ability to balance in narrow places.

Copy cat – when someone copies another, like kittens copy their mother's actions.

Curiosity killed the cat – a warning to be careful and that sometimes investigating things, or being too curious, can be dangerous.

Fat cat – someone who is wealthy, or privileged, like a well fed, well cared-for cat.

Grin like a Cheshire cat – when you have a silly grin, taken from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.

Like a cat on a hot tin roof – someone who acts nervously, or jumpy, like a cat would if it were standing on a hot roof.

Letting the cat out of the bag – to tell or pass on a secret, going back to when piglets were sold in a bag. Dishonest sellers would trick buyers by putting a large cat in the bag instead!

When the cat's away the mice will play – meaning when the boss, or person in charge, is not there the rest don't work as hard.