



Evaluating the Quality of Bengal Kittens. A lot more than meets the eye!



Lots of photos, be patient to learn ...

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Can you pick out the show/ breeding quality patterns? The pet quality patterns?

Pattern and color are of high importance to all Bengal lovers. Big bold spots, rosettes, horizontal alignment, contrast, clarity all come into play when evaluation kittens.



above and left are some kittens



Kittens on far right and left have more of a fuzzy looking baby coat. Part of this is the angle kitten in the photo.

above and left are same kittens, different angle and lighting.

Pattern is icing on the cake when looking for a show / breeding Bengal. You must do a hands on evaluation for skeletal structure; spine, tail, legs, ribs. Turn the head to evaluate size and profile and ear size and placement.

Holding and stretching the kitten will help evaluate length and depth of body, as well as pattern development.

FUZZIES

This is what we call the dull camouflage coat that develops on most Bengal kittens when they are starting to walk and explore their environment.



before they are 4 weeks old, for reference of what they will look like in the coming months...

Do not confuse a healthy fuzzy coat with the sick kitten who's coat looks greasy or wet and messy.

We believe it is carried over from the wild ancestors who have a very dense dull fuzzy baby coat, to help hide and protect them from potential predators. Look at the longer hair and the light colored hair shown on these kittens. You can see the intense black markings underneath. It will come back again. It is advisable to take photos of Bengal kittens



**Fuzzy Coat
appx 6 to 12
weeks old**

this is 2 photos of the same kitten



3 weeks old, pattern / contrast looks vivid



7 weeks old, starting his fuzzy camouflage coat

Pattern

When kitten takes a step, or is stretched his pattern changes from a blob or elongated bar into spots or rosetting. Unfortunately young kittens do not understand how to pose.

The stretch may look uncomfortable, but it does not hurt, To see the future, you need to see how a blob of color will look as he gets larger, you must see the flow of his body pattern.



Horizontal pattern flow, lean body type, heavy bone, seen on these kittens. Also clear background color, no black or white ticked shading along the kittens back. See how this kitten developed below



Extreme type and horizontal flow.



6 months

Distinct circular bulls eye pattern



1 week old

Look at the pattern on this kitten.

This is not desirable but there are many other things to consider. The shape of his spots indicate that they will develop into rosettes. The coat is short, clear color, conformation is good.



Bulls eye rosettes
6 weeks old

same Kitten, 5 Months old old below



this circular pattern is not even considered in evaluating what this kitten has to offer. Clear coat, vivid contrast, thick tail, long head, small round ears, very large overall size and so easy going....

Judging quality is not always easy, even for the seasoned breeder...



no circular pattern on the other side...



Faces

Markings on the face and head, like stripes on a zebra, or fingerprints, are unique for each kitten.

Bold contrasting lines going over the head are desirable to a Tabby M pattern. White Spectacles around the eyes, wide, white whisker pads and white on the cheeks between the mascara lines are traits that add to the

_____ wild expression.



Left is an SBT Bengal, proper profile with mild dip between forehead and nose.

Right is an F2 Female, lots of white on her face and puffy whisker pads. this face has not been achieved no most SBT Bengals. Both cats have rounded ears.

Mood and expressions change face shape and ear set. You must have a critical eye to judge head shape.



Eye Color

Babies usually open there eyes at about 7 to 10 days old

When first opened they look black, turning light blue, at about 9 to 10 weeks old starting to turn the adult color. Black eye liner also develops with age.

Most Bengals have green or gold eyes, varying in intensity. Large, Rounded, Deeper colors and dark eye liner are preferred for showing.

Only the Lynx and Mink Snow colors have aqua or blue eyes.





Ear Size and Placement

Ears should be well rounded and small,
set as much on top as on the sides of the head.



set to wide



set to high, medium, well rounded



to large, very rounded, set to high



set is good but to large and pointed



ears with good set and good size,
but very pointed. Excellent facial
markings and nice wide muzzle

Baby blue eyes



these kittens have small
rounded ears with good set



Sometimes you have a Bad Ear Day.. Pose and Expression have a lot to do with the way ear size looks in photos. The parents of these kittens are Champion and Double Grand CH.



This is only a hint of what goes into evaluating a kitten for you.

[Learn More about colors and patterns on my colors page](#)

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