

# Is Your Cat Left- or Right-Pawed?

Are you left-handed, right-handed, or ambidextrous (meaning you use both hands equally well)? According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine, “handedness is a complex trait that appears to be influenced by multiple factors, including genetics, environment, and chance” (<https://bit.ly/2JkrEom>). In other words, you're partly born either left-handed or right-handed. Worldwide, the vast majority of people are right-handed.

But what about your cat? Does your cat have a preferred paw? Here's how to find out which paw your feline friend prefers.

## Supplies

- **A jelly jar** or other container that is small enough that your cat can't fit its head inside or get stuck.
- **Tuna**, or any treat your cat loves.
- **Your cat**. Pick a time when the cat is in the mood to play and is somewhat hungry.

## Instructions

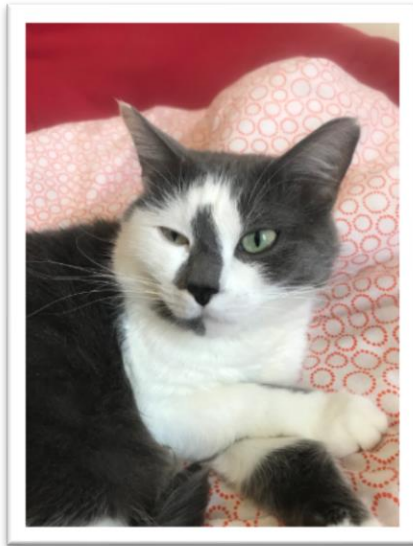
1. Put a bit of tuna all the way in the back of the container. Make sure your cat cannot reach the tuna with its tongue.
2. Put the jar with the tuna on the floor. The test cat, Addison, loves tuna and was very interested right away.
3. Wait and observe. Will your cat use its left or right paw to get that yummy treat?

*Is your cat left-pawed or right-pawed?*

# Is Your Cat Left- or Right-Pawed?

## Our Experiment: Meet Addison

We investigated whether our almost 4-year-old male cat Addison is a righty or a lefty.



Addison was able to pull out the tuna with his left paw. Our cat is clearly a lefty.

## Want to learn more?

There have been research studies on just this topic. Scientists at Queen's University in Belfast have learned that most female felines prefer their right paw, while the males prefer using their left paw (<https://bit.ly/2xu6Msf>). These scientists think that this preference has to do with different brain structures of male and female cats.

This activity was adapted from *Cat Science Unleashed: Fun Activities to do with Your Cat*, by Jodi Wheeler-Toppen.