

Looks Like a Bobcat but Acts Like a Dog and Begs You to Call Her Adorable

She loves water, lives to take walks on a leash or fetch toys like a dog, responds to commands, and might even feign a growl at times. Plus, she's adaptable to all kinds of living situations. Despite her 50% possibility of this one oddball trait, she truly hopes you'll call her yours.

Reviewed by Dr. Becker

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- Pixiebobs are medium to large domestic cats with short, long, or shaggy coats, a slightly wild appearance, and an intriguing name that reflects their cute yet fierce look
- Two defining traits distinguish pixiebobs — naturally bobbed tails and frequent polydactylism, with up to seven toes per paw, giving them remarkable dexterity and hand-like movements
- Their brown-spotted tabby coloring, water-repellent double coat, pear-shaped head, facial markings, and occasional primordial pouch create a striking resemblance to wild cats like bobcats
- Known for dog-like behavior, pixiebobs enjoy water, leash walks, fetching toys, and greeting owners, while communicating through chirps and chatter rather than typical meowing
- Bred in Washington during the 1980s, pixiebobs are healthy, affectionate, intelligent, family-friendly cats that bond strongly with people and thrive with minimal grooming and care

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There are many **adorable cat breeds** in the world, but this one may have the best name; not the most noble, perhaps, but certainly intriguing, especially if you're into cute and cuddly, which the pixiebob is. Pixiebobs have a little bit of "fierce" in their look. In some respects, they look like many other domestic cats, sometimes medium-sized and often large, with a coat that can be long, short or known as "shaggy."

There are two defining details, however, to the pixiebob breed. Their tails, as the name implies, is naturally bobbed, and their breed standard notes **polydactylism**. Simply explained, the average cat has five toes in front and four in back, while a pixiebob may have seven toes on each foot. That's a total of 28 toes!

This occurs in pixiebobs about 50% of the time, Animal Planet reports, and they often use their front paws not like feet, but like hands, grasping with a surprisingly firm and dexterous hold. The pixiebob's head, said to be one of his most important characteristics, is described by breeders as pear-shaped.

This kitty's coloring is typically a brown-spotted tabby pattern, with a spotted belly and thick, luxurious fur that is practically water-repellant. Sometimes they exhibit facial fur resembling muttonchop sideburns and eyes that look like they're wearing a mask, with a narrow band curving from the outer corner of the eyes to their lower jaw line.

One more feature the pixiebob has is a love for water, which some believe is a throwback to their wild nature. Others maintain the pixiebob is like a dog in a cat suit! You may find that they enjoy being leashed for a stroll, fetch toys as well as any canine and may even greet you at the front door when you come home. While some surmise the pixiebob is the natural offspring of a bobcat and a domestic shorthair, other experts believe this unique feline is the result of a genetic mutation.

Historical Elements May Explain the Mysterious Pixiebob

In 1985, a cat breeder in Washington state, Carol Ann Brewer, purchased a large "barn cat" with all the characteristics we know today to be possessed by the pixiebob. Vet Street relates the rest of the story:

*"The following year, she adopted another male cat with a short tail, and with the help of a neighbor's female cat, he produced a litter of kittens. One, a female, had a muted spotted pattern, and Brewer kept her, naming her Pixie. Brewer wanted more cats like Pixie, and soon, a breed was born."*¹

To be considered one of this breed, cats' owners need to be able to trace their lineage back to Brewer's Stoneland Pixie. Pet Guide relates more information about the basis for this intriguing breed:

*"Brewer used 23 cats from the area around the Cascade Mountains, all of whom were said to be bobcat hybrids. The cats she produced were registered and were accepted in the TICA 'Exhibition' Category in 1993, winning 'New Breed and Color' status in 1996, and Championship status in 1998. It is classified as a 'Newer Natural/Regional Breed.'"*²

When you take a good look at the average North American bobcat, you'll notice a few more similarities to the gentle, domestic pixiebob. Both have tails that measure anywhere from 1 to 6 inches in length. Their fur isn't just thick but is actually a "double" coat ranging between tawny and ruddy brown. DNA testing found no relation in gene markers between the pixiebob and the bobcat, but Animal Planet says:

*"Here's where it gets really interesting: Pixiebobs carry a primordial pouch that's lighter in color from the rest of the cat. This feature is normally seen in wild cats, and allows flexibility in the stomach to store food after a large kill."*³

Pixiebob — Personality Plus

Pixiebobs are good conversationalists, often making chirping, chattering noises that prove they're interested in learning your language and teaching you theirs. They often respond to human phrases and commands, but rarely meow. Occasionally you may hear a mock attempt at a growl.

Very much like an intelligent, lively child, pixiebobs generally have outgoing personalities, with a calm, laid-back persona that makes them a great pet for households members of any age, including children. Like many dogs, this breed likes activity and even exercise, so your kids will have a fun playmate. Owners of pixiebobs often say they developed an unusually strong bond with their cat. Boat rides, picnics, at home on the couch or in the yard playing, pixiebobs seem to want nothing more than to be part of a loving family.

They love being present and accounted for wherever people gather and receiving lots of affection. In fact, families with other pets also find the pixiebob to be companionable but so do singles with pets. There's virtually no situation where, when given enough love, affection, entertainment and play, these cats won't thrive.

Overall, Pixiebobs Are Healthy, Affectionate, and Get Along Well with Others

One of the bests things you can say about any pet is that he or she has very few health issues and tends to live a long, happy life. Most people also say "loyal" and "loving" are the attributes they want most in a pet. While these qualities are not always associated with cats, they're all true of the pixiebob. Perhaps it's not surprising, given this kitty's wild roots, but you need to keep an eye on all those toes, as they'll need the nails trimmed every week or at least every few weeks.

Brushing their fur once a week should suffice, and generally, they consider it petting rather than grooming when you're gentle with this task. On Vet Street's scale gauging how pets do in social settings, health prospects or how easy they are to take care of, pixiebobs get star rating. In adaptability, affection level, dog friendliness and intelligence, they rate five out of five. In energy level and in friendliness to both children and strangers they rate four out of five.

The low marks come with shedding, grooming and health issues, because these kitties require practically no care, and that may be one of the most positive pet ratings of all. If you're inclined to add a pixiebob to your family, consult your local purebred cat rescue organization.

Sources and References

¹ [Vetstreet, Pixiebob](#)

² [Pet Guide 2013](#)

³ [Animal Planet Pixie-Bob](#)
