

Felix or Felicia?

In young kittens, it's not always easy to tell.

How to determine a kitten's sex

Gently lift the tail and take a close look at what's beneath. The first opening under the base of the tail is the anus; below that is either the prepuce (skin around the penis) or vulva (opening to the vagina).



Female

- The anus and the vaginal opening are close together, almost touching.
- The vaginal opening looks more like a vertical slit or a teardrop than a round hole.
- Coat color is another clue: A tricolor cat (such as a calico or tortoiseshell) is nearly always female.

Male

- The spacing between the anus and the penis is relatively wide (about 1/2 inch apart).
- The penis is usually hidden, but the area around it will look more like a circle than a slit.
- Testicles won't be plainly visible until the kitten reaches 6 to 10 weeks of age, but you should see excess fur and tissue between the anus and the penis where the testes will form. Still not sure? Gently palpate the scrotum area (on a suspected male) with your thumb and forefinger. If you feel two small, oval-shaped objects under the skin, you've got a boy.