

Scary Superstitions About Black Cats Debunked

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In Western culture, we have some superstitions about black cats that have persisted through the generations. You've probably heard them all: Black cats are bad luck. Black cats caused the black plague, etc. Of course, these claims are false, just myths like so many other spooky legends handed down in the scary stories of the campfire tradition. But, these are unfortunately, not merely harmless tales. They lead to real harm to helpless cats. Naturally, we want the best for our kitties, so below are some black cat myths we can all help dispel.

How Did Black Cats Get a Bad Reputation?

There are numerous terrible consequences of black cat myths that seriously impact helpless animals. Black cat superstitions originated in ancient Greece in a tale about someone being turned into a black cat as a punishment by one of the gods. Then, the cat became involved with a different god, one who focused on magic and spells, etc. Since that time, throughout much of the western world, the witchy stigma has stuck with black cats.

Harm Caused to Black Cats By Scary Myths

Because the fearsome myths about black cats are so widespread, these precious little animals continue to be subjected to very serious negative effects of false beliefs:

- Black kittens and adult cats are often ignored and passed over for adoption in shelters.
- Pet black cats are often abused in neighborhoods when they wander from their homes.

- Lost or abandoned black cats are often shunned instead of rescued.

Black Cat Myths Debunked

Here are a few harmful false beliefs about black cats that persist today throughout much of the western hemisphere:

FALSE BELIEF: Seeing a black cat causes bad luck.

We've probably all heard the myth that it's bad luck to have a black cat walk across your path. Where or how this myth originated is unclear. But, some have speculated that because of the generally stealthy way cats move, a black cat may appear even more sneaky, especially when it moves through shadowy spaces.

How this black cat myth is disproven:

Intuitively, it's recognizable that virtually every person in the western hemisphere has seen a black cat at some point. So, clearly enough, it doesn't make sense statistically to accept the notion that everyone who has ever seen a black cat will live a life of bad luck. That would mean that nearly *everyone* is a doomed victim of black-cat-related bad luck. Ironically, black cats are believed to be *good* luck in Scotland, Great Britain, Japan, Russia, and other countries.

FALSE BELIEF: Black cats are actually transformed witches.

It has long been a myth in U.S. American culture that witches can transform themselves into black cats. This allows them to sneak around undetected and cast spells, etc. Many even believed that a witch could do this, turning into a black cat, nine times. Some have speculated that this may be the origin of another cat myth — the one about cats having nine lives.

How this black cat myth is disproven:

This myth is an easy one to disprove. Simply let a black cat hug you and you'll quickly realize that he/she is much too cute, sweet, cuddly, and adorable to be a witch. The worst thing your pet black cat is likely ever to do is accidentally kick some cat litter out of the litter box now and then or maybe bring in a bird or small rodent.

FALSE BELIEF: You should not have a black cat in your house.

Very sadly, black cats have one of the lowest rates of adoption in shelters and one of the highest rates of euthanasia in the country. Part of the problem is that black cats fade into the shadows in the backs of their kennels at the shelters, and consequently, people cannot see the features of their sweet little hopeful faces, so they're less attractive to prospective adopters. Black cats also don't photograph as clearly as lighter-colored animals.

Problems with adoptions range from wrong impressions people have that black cats (and dogs) are not as friendly as pet animals with lighter fur. During October, some shelters temporarily stop adoptions of black cats due to concerns that they will be used as Halloween amusements or living decorative holiday novelties.

How this black cat myth is disproven:

When met with the correct, simple reasoning, most people can overcome their black cat superstition. So, spreading the word to help educate people can go a long way to help turn around this sad situation for black cats in our society. To offset some of the damage to these dear little animals, hopefully, more people will choose black cats from shelters to give these unfairly treated pet animals a chance to live with a loving family.

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