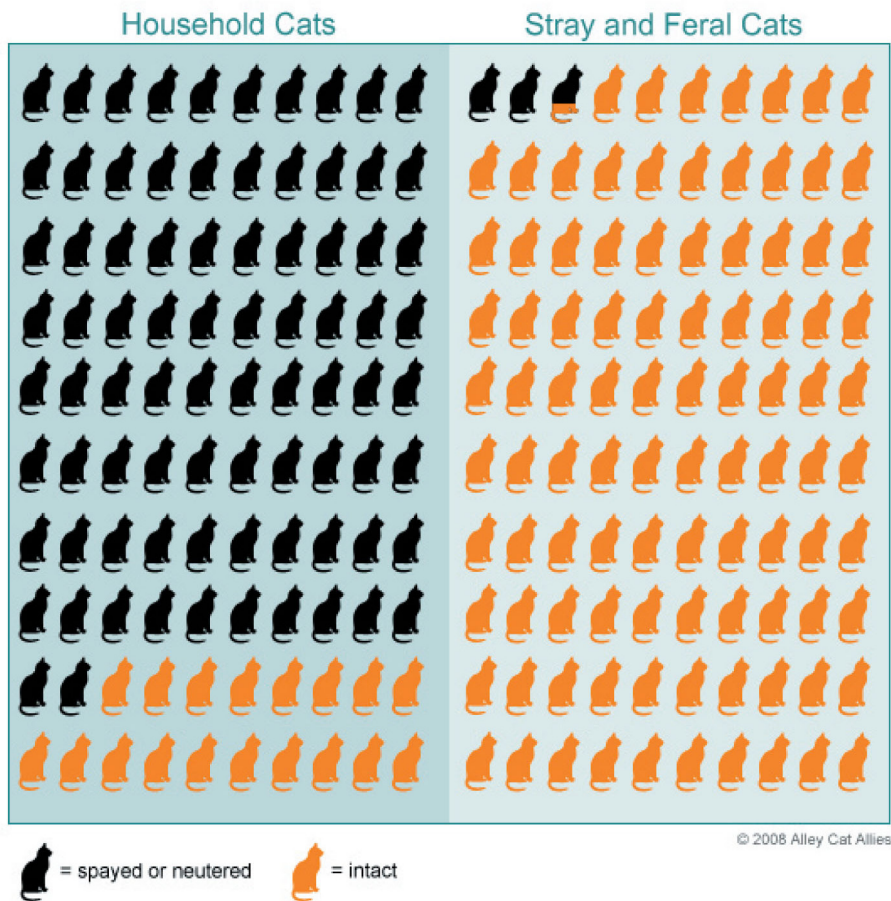


Spay/Neuter Status of U.S. Cat Population

The total U.S. cat population comprises both cats living in households and stray and feral cats living outdoors. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, 82 million cats live in U.S. households. Of those household cats, 77% to 87% are neutered.

Stray and feral cats may account for up to half of the total U.S. cat population. Although no census has directly counted the number of stray and feral cats, scientists estimate that the size of this population rivals that of the household population. Of stray and feral cats, the most comprehensive study to date indicates that less than 3% are neutered. The graph below visually captures the difference in the spay/neuter rate between the two subpopulations of U.S. cats.



Most intact cats are stray and feral cats. This segment of the cat population produces 80% of the kittens born each year and is the greatest source of cat overpopulation. The stray and feral cat crisis was ignored for far too long and their numbers have exploded. The feral cat issue must be addressed more aggressively. Effective policy solutions and funding must align with these facts or they will continue to be a significant source of shelter admissions.