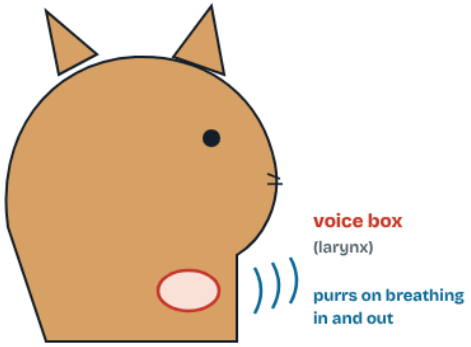
That is why

Why do cats purr?

A purr is a low hum of about 25 to 150 vibrations a second, made when cats are content, stressed or hurt.

A How a purr is made



The old view

Muscles in the voice box and diaphragm twitch in a steady rhythm.

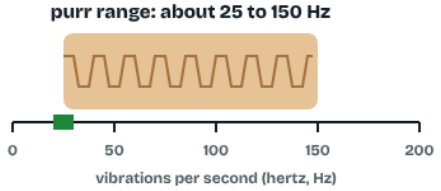
A 2023 finding

A cat's voice box can make purring sounds on its own, with no repeated muscle twitches, thanks to a soft pad in the vocal folds. It is a lot like the "creaky voice" people can make.

Herbst and colleagues, Current Biology, 2023

B A very low hum

A steady, very low sound.
Green mark: 20 to 30 Hz, the hum of the voice boxes in the 2023 study.



The healing idea

Some researchers report that sound in this range can improve bone density and help healing. It is a hypothesis, not a proven fact for cats.

C Not just happiness

1. **Content**
   Being petted, fed, or nursing kittens.
2. **Stressed**
   At the vet, or in other scary moments.
3. **Hurt**
   While recovering from an injury.

So a purr is not only a smile.
It may be a way to communicate and, possibly, to self-heal.

A purr is a low hum for comfort, for stress and maybe for healing.

Free for learning thatiswhy.com

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Diagram: https://thatiswhy.com/diagrams/why-cats-purr/ · Full guide: https://thatiswhy.com/why-cats-purr/