

# Traditional Start Date of our 4 Seasons

December 21: Winter begins  
(the shortest day of the year)

Each day becomes a little longer. The longer day triggers the process called estrous (heat.) Some queens will exhibit signs of estrous from as early as late January. Certainly by mid-February queens 5 months or older may be ready for a tom.

The clock starts: once bred its:  
2 months gestation = birth  
2 months nursing = weaning  
+3 months = kittens maturing  
5 months of age (August/Sept.)

March 20: spring begins

Birthing begins with a few litters than crescendos with activity. Cats are in heat, pregnant, (with short rest between heat) or nursing. Peak time here is May, June and July: shelter *kitten tsunami*, considering the weaning time is around 8 weeks (2 months) of age.

June 21: Summer begins  
The longest day of the year

At this time of year the days are getting shorter. Estrous is easing with a lot of overlap here. A number of surprised caregivers are now scheduling spays though the damage is already done. The “oops” (unplanned) litters are often now a problem. What is to become of all those kittens. Moms should be spayed 2 to 3 weeks after weaning (or when the breasts have receded.)

September 23: Fall begins

The days are now short enough that estrous (heat) is pretty much on seasonal hold. Peace generally prevails and by mid-October estrous is down to zero. This year’s kittens are on the edge and not likely to be signaled into estrous. Even female kittens in February will probably not go into estrous this year, but all females this year will do so this upcoming breeding season. Spay by 5 months before winter solsus.

Note: Best holiday gift for your cat is a trip to the local veterinarian for its neutering (whether male or female.)