

# Teeth

National curriculum objectives:

- identify the different types of teeth in humans and their simple functions

# Science in the news today

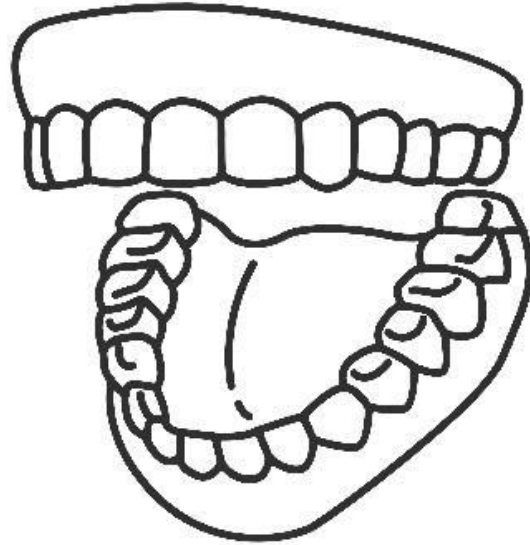
Once you lose your 'baby teeth' the adult teeth you have stay with you for life, you only get the one set, so, teeth are really important to look after!

People have unique layouts of their teeth in their mouth, which can sometimes be used to identify a person - some teeth are wonky, some straight, some slant in or out, some are big some are small, there is a huge variation. Healthy or diseased teeth look very different too.

Even though we only have one set of teeth in our adult lives, the root of the tooth still develops throughout our lives, like the rings on a tree trunk. As a person grows, the roots of their teeth may ever so slightly respond to certain events that happen in their life. This means when we look at their teeth we can see if these events have happened. So, our teeth may in fact hold a lot more information about us and our lifestyles than we thought!

# Here is a picture of a set of adult teeth

Who would have thought so much information about someone lies in our teeth!



# Human teeth



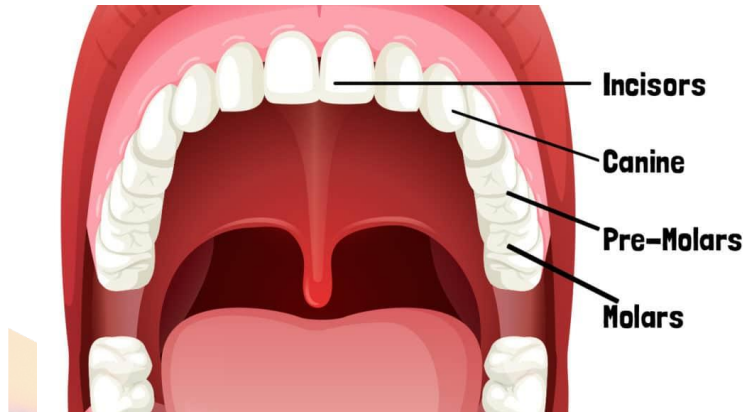
Between 6 and 12 months most **babies** will develop **teeth**. Typically, the first **teeth** to come in are the lower front **teeth**. Most children will usually have all of their **baby teeth** by age 3.

Between the ages of 6 and 12 most children will experience their baby teeth falling out. By the age of 12 to 14, most children have lost all their baby teeth and have their adult teeth.



There are 32 adult teeth in total – 12 more than in the baby set.

# Humans have 4 main types of teeth



# Incisors

Where are they, what do they look like and what are they for?



**Incisors** are narrow with flat ends that are sharp.

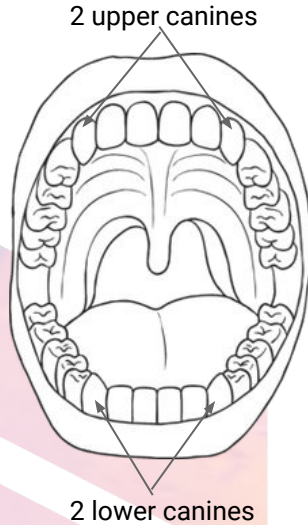


These **teeth** are used for cutting and chopping **food**. They are the first **teeth** to chew most **food** we eat.

The incisors are narrow-edged teeth at the front of the mouth. Humans have 8 incisors in total - 4 on the top row of teeth and 4 on the bottom row.

# Canines

Where are they, what do they look like and what are they for?



The canines are the sharp front teeth either side of the incisors. Humans have 4 canines in total - 2 on the top row of teeth and 2 on the bottom row.



Canines have a sharp, pointy surface.

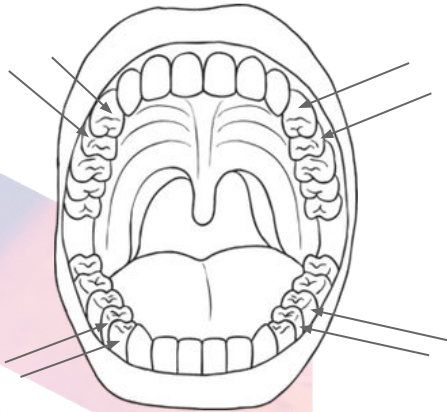


These **teeth** are used for tearing and ripping food.

# Premolars

Where are they, what do they look like and what are they for?

4 upper premolars



4 lower premolars

The premolars are the teeth just behind the canines. Humans have 8 premolars in total - 4 on the top row of teeth and 4 on the bottom row.



Premolars are bigger and stronger than canines, and they contain ridges.



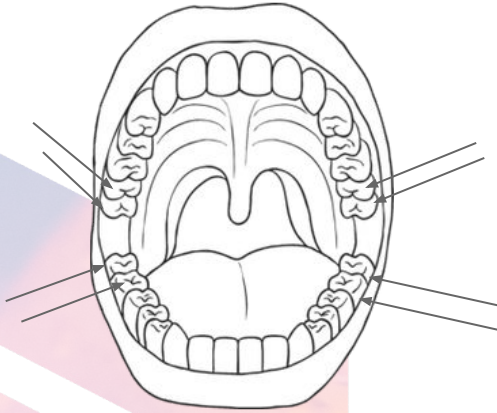
These **teeth** are used for crushing food.



# Molars

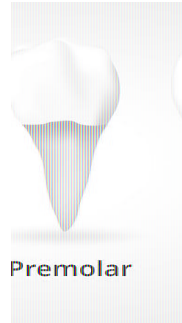
Where are they, what do they look like and what are they for?

4 upper molars



4 lower molars

The molars are the flat teeth at the back of the mouth. Humans have 8 molars in total - 4 on the top row of teeth and 4 on the bottom row.



Premolar

Molars are the widest and strongest of all the teeth. They are flat too, with a lot of ridges.



Molars are perfect for chewing food, and squishing it together before it is swallowed.

# Looking after your teeth

It's important to look after our teeth; they are vital in helping us eat and talk!

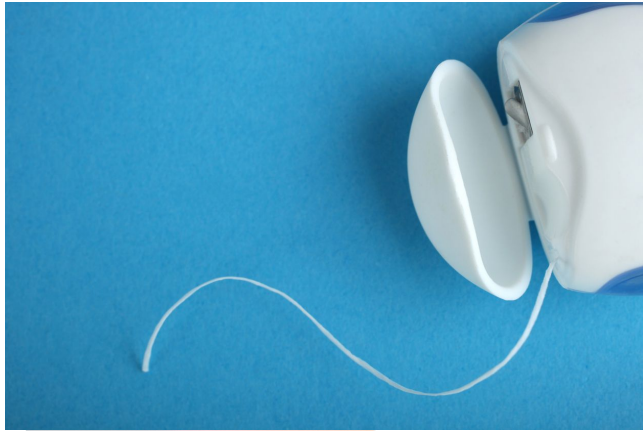
The most important thing you can do to look after your teeth is to brush them.

You should do this for two minutes, twice a day with flouride containing toothpaste. You can brush your teeth in little circles, or up and down, rather than side to side.



# Looking after your teeth

Flossing is also very important when looking after your teeth. When we floss between our teeth, this removes all the bits of food and plaque that get stuck there throughout the day.



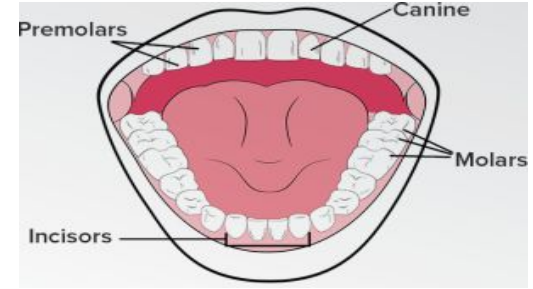
Flossing and brushing your teeth mean that your teeth and gums are less likely to get diseased.

When you visit the dentist they can look at your teeth and see how healthy they are, and will give you advice on keeping them in tip top shape! So, it's important to see the dentist at least once a year.

# Have a snack!

## What do you need?

- A snack such a piece of fruit, a slice of bread or a cracker (check with an adult first)



## Instructions:

1. **First, look at the food you have chosen for your snack. Is it hard, soft, large, small, chewy or juicy. Is it going to be easy for your teeth or difficult?**
2. **Next, bite the food using your incisors at the front to cut a bit off or your canines to tear some off, depending on the food you've chosen.**
3. **After that, feel very careful as your tongue moves your food from the front of your mouth to the back.**
4. **Then, be aware of your premolars and molars crushing down on the food and grinding it to much smaller pieces.**
5. **Finally, feel again as your tongue moves your food to the back of your mouth and then finally pushes in down and you swallow. We bet that is the most you've ever concentrated on your teeth types!**

# Time your tooth brushing!

## What do you need?

- **Toothbrush**
- **Toothpaste**
- **Clock, stopwatch or timer**



## Instructions:

1. First, put some toothpaste on your toothbrush  
Top tip - this should be about the size of a pea
1. Next, either set your timer for 2 minutes or check the time so you know when 2 minutes has passed.
2. Then, begin brushing your teeth. Quite often we brush our teeth whilst thinking about something else or looking out the window but today, you're going to think about each of your different teeth types, why your teeth are so important and how you want to look after them.  
Top tip - try different techniques like moving your brush around in circles, properly brushing the tongue side of your teeth and right at the back of your molars
1. Only stop when your timer goes off. Take a note of how much longer that probably felt than normal (most people only brush their teeth for 45 seconds - that's not even a minute!)