

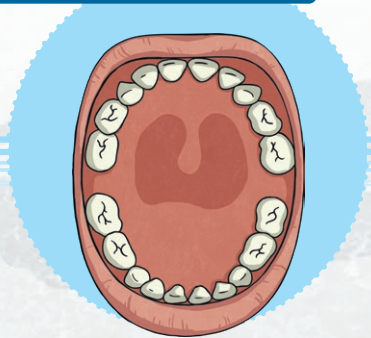
TEETH

Teeth have several important jobs. They allow humans to chew and start **digesting** food, help them speak and help them to form part of their smile and other facial expressions.

Baby and Adult Teeth

Humans have two sets of teeth across their lifetime. The first set are called baby teeth (or milk teeth). These start to develop before birth but the first teeth usually emerge when babies are six to twelve months old. There are 20 baby teeth in a full set and children usually have all of these by the age of three.

baby (milk) teeth



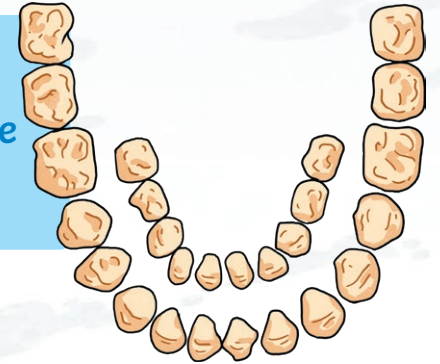
adult teeth



When children reach the age of around five or six, their baby teeth start to fall out. They are replaced by the adult teeth. There are 32 adult teeth in a complete set. Four of these adult teeth are called **wisdom teeth** but not everybody has these.

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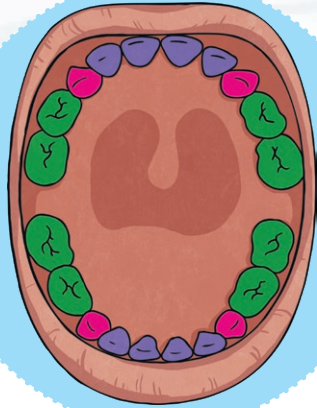
How many more adult teeth are there than baby teeth?



Types of Teeth

Human teeth are classified into four main groups. They work together to break down the food you eat.

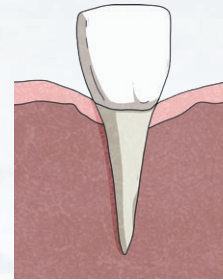
baby (milk) teeth



adult teeth

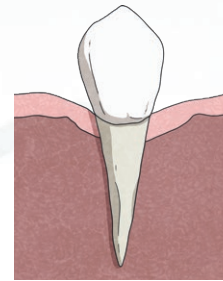


- canines
- molars
- premolars
- incisors
- wisdom teeth



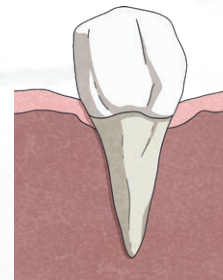
Incisors

In both baby and adult sets, there are eight **incisors**. They are chisel-shaped with a sharp, straight edge to allow them to cut and chop food.



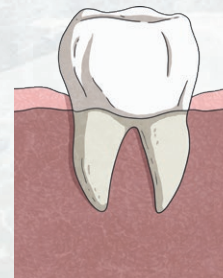
Canines

There are four **canines** in both the baby and adult sets of teeth. They are found next to the **incisors**. Their job is to tear food so they are sharp and pointy to do this.



Premolars (bicuspid teeth)

The **premolars** are only found in the adult set of teeth. There are eight in total next to the **canines**. They are wide teeth with two points called 'cusps'. Their job is to crush and grind food.



Molars

There are eight **molars** in both baby and adult sets of teeth. They are wide and have several cusps to grind food.



Wisdom Teeth (Third Molars)

Some people get **wisdom teeth** right at the back of their mouth, several years after all of their adult teeth have come through. Wisdom teeth are extra molars. In total, there are four of these but not everybody gets them. Sometimes, they need to be removed as there is not enough room for them.

Do you wonder why people have **wisdom teeth**? Prehistoric humans used to eat a different diet to us. They ate rough, tough food which wore away their teeth more, so wisdom teeth were beneficial. It is thought that as modern diets have softer, cooked foods, wisdom teeth are now less essential. Modern jaws are smaller, which is why there is sometimes not enough room for **wisdom teeth**.

Did You Know...
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Inside a Tooth

The part of a tooth not covered by the gum is called the crown. This is the part you can see. The root is hidden by the gum.

