



Types and Functions of Teeth

Incisors

How many?
Humans have 8 incisors altogether; 4 in the upper jaw and 4 in the lower jaw.

Shape
Incisors are shovel-shaped.

Function:
Used for biting and cutting food.

Canines

How many?
Humans have 4 canine teeth, one in each quarter of the mouth, on either side of the incisors.

Shape
Canines are pointy.

Function:
Used for tearing and ripping food.

Premolars

How many?
Humans have 8 premolars, two in each quarter of the mouth. They are between the canine tooth and the molars.

Shape
Small and flat

Function:
Holding and crushing food.

Molars

How many?
Humans have 8 molars, two in each quarter of the mouth. They are at the back of the mouth behind the premolars.

Shape
Large and flat

Function:
Grinding food

Wisdom Teeth

How many?
Humans can have up to 4 wisdom teeth, although not everyone has them. There is 1 in each quarter of the mouth behind the molars.

Shape
Large and flat (they are just a third molar)

Function:
Does not have one now! Some scientists think that human ancestors needed a third molar to help grind down plant tissue from thicker leaves when humans still ate them. Since the diet of humans has changed we don't need them.
As the human diet changed our mouths have become smaller. This is the reason why many people have their wisdom teeth extracted – taken out – as there is no real room for a wisdom tooth so it tends to grow inward and can become a problem.

YOUR TASK: Name and state the function of the teeth.

Name of tooth:

Function:

Name of tooth:

Function:

Name of tooth:

Function:

Name of tooth:

Function:

Name of tooth:

Function:

Name of tooth:

Function:

Key:

- Canines
- Molars
- Premolars
- Incisors
- Wisdom Teeth