

Dog Dental Facts

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

- Puppies have 28 temporary teeth, 14 in the upper jaw and 14 in the lower jaw. These deciduous teeth erupt at about three to four weeks of age.
- Dogs have 42 permanent teeth, 20 on the top, and 22 on the bottom. These begin to emerge at about four months of age.
- Dogs have 6 permanent teeth that have 3 roots each, and 14 teeth that each have 2 roots.
- Puppies should lose a puppy tooth before the corresponding adult tooth emerges. If a puppy tooth is still in place when an adult tooth begins to show it is called a retained deciduous teeth. If this occurs, see your veterinarian so the dog's occlusion is not affected.
- Studies show that by age three, 80 percent of dogs exhibit signs of gum disease. Symptoms include yellow and brown buildup of tartar along the gumline, red inflamed gums and persistent bad breath.
- Facial swelling below the eye is usually due to an infection of the 4th premolar (carnassial) tooth.
- Sneezing and nasal discharge may be due to an infection of the upper canine tooth. The infection may lead to an opening between the mouth and the nasal cavity. This is called an oronasal fistula.
- Small dog breeds are more likely to develop periodontal disease than large dogs because the teeth of small dogs are often too large for their mouths, according to veterinary dentistry experts.
- A broken tooth is a common problem, especially among outdoor dogs. The canine teeth of working dogs are essential to allowing the dogs to carry prey and other objects. If these teeth become broken, a canine dentist can prepare a metal crown.

See our article, [Cat Dental Facts](#), for more interesting information.