



EQUICENTER
AT THE WILLIAM & MILDRED LEVINE RANCH

Horse Teeth

Level 3

Don't look a gift horse in the mouth...

What does this mean?

Well, it means if someone gives you a horse you don't need to ask how old it is... You can tell a horse's age by looking at his or her teeth... If you know what to look for...



Foal teeth or baby teeth are the first set of teeth a horse has. They are small and meet in a very upright manner.



Another way to tell the general age of a horse is by the color of their teeth. The milk teeth (first set of teeth) are white. The primary teeth are cream yellow and the teeth of an older horse(20+)are light brown.



Here you see how the teeth change over the years. Baby teeth are gone by age 5. When very young, the teeth meet in a very upright way, as they age the way they meet shows more of an angle.



1 year old



2 year old



6 year old



6 yr. old with 7 yr. hook forming



8 yr. old with defined 7 yr. hook



15 year old

Galvaynes Groove...is one way to tell how old a horse is. This is only an approximation of age. The groove starts at the gumline at about age 10 and as the chart shows the groove extends further down the tooth each year.



Galvayne's Groove



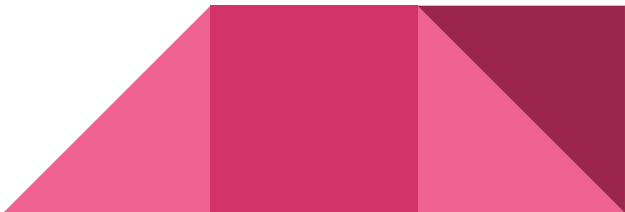
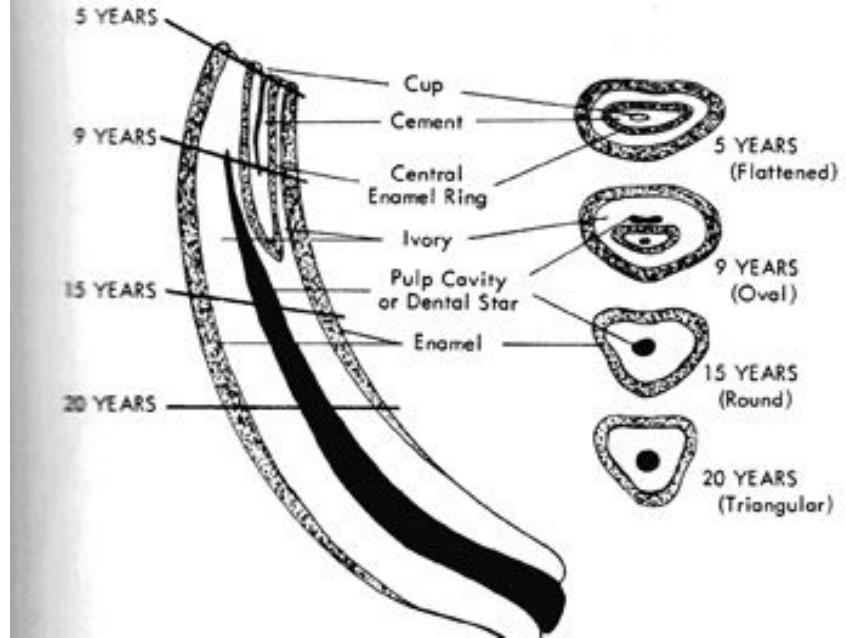
At age 7 and 11 a hook appears on the upper left incisor. At age 8 this hook disappears and returns at 11 years old (shown below). You can also check out the caps of the bottom incisors (shown to the right).

- 7 year notch
- Disappears at 8 years, returns at 11

Length with age



“long in the tooth”





1 YEAR

All deciduous incisors (baby teeth) are visible. Centrals and intermediates are in contact. Chewing surface of the centrals show wear. Upper and lower corner incisors are not in contact. The dental star in the centrals and intermediates is a dark line on labial (lip) side of cup.



2½ YEARS

Permanent central incisors have erupted but are not in contact. Lower incisors are not yet free of the gum over much of their surface. Chewing surface of the intermediates is worn to smooth. Corners show definite wear.



5 YEARS

Permanent dentition is complete. All teeth are in wear. Canine teeth have erupted completely. The centrals and intermediates show wear on the chewing surface, but cups are still visible and are completely encircled by enamel. Corners are beginning to wear.



10 YEARS

Angle of jaw and teeth is increasingly oblique. Chewing surface of the lower centrals and intermediates are rounded; corners oval to round. The dental star is more distinct and near the center of the teeth. Upper intermediates are nearly smooth; cups disappearing. Galvayne's groove appears on the upper corner incisor.



15 YEARS

Lower incisors may appear shorter than the uppers when viewed from in front. Galvayne's groove extends halfway down the outer (lip) side of the upper corner incisor. The lower centrals and intermediates appear triangular on the chewing surface. All incisors show a distinct dark round dental star in their centers.



20 YEARS

Angulation of the jaw is distinctly oblique. Galvayne's groove extends the entire length of the outer surface of the upper corner incisor. Incisors are all triangular. Each dental star is round near the center. There is considerable spacing between teeth. Lower incisors may be worn almost to the gum.




Horse Tooth Care

Annual Floating starts when the horse begins to shed their baby teeth at 2-2 1/2 years old.

If the horse is dropping weight they may need their teeth examined. If a horse can not chew their food properly they will not get the important nutrients from their food. Whole grain in manure is a sign they are not chewing properly.

Small wads of hay that have been pre-chewed and spit out are a sign your horse's teeth are too smooth. Switching to a soaked hay cube is a good option for this horse. This is common with older horses.



Riding issues may be caused by tooth issues...

Issues taking the bridle on and off...

The horse flipping their head when being ridden...

Problems related to bit reactions...

Difficulty stopping the horse or turning...



Annual Dentals

Sedate, prepare and rinse



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLSHPBWqCY0>

Examination



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQGpUskbpII>

Floating aka Filing



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ik9u13xMRoA>

