Tooth Numbering Systems

The three tooth designation systems in general use are the Universal, adopted by the American Dental Association; the F.D.I. (or International), adopted by the Fédération Dentaire Internationale; and the Palmer.

Universal or ADA System

**Permanent Teeth**

- Start with the right maxillary third molar (number 1) and follow around the arch to the left maxillary third molar (16); descend to the left mandibular third molar (17); and follow around to the right mandibular third molar (32).

**Primary or Deciduous Teeth**

Use continuous upper case letters A through T in the same sequence as for permanent teeth: right maxillary second molar (A) around to the left maxillary second molar (J); descend to the left mandibular second molar (K); and around to the right mandibular second molar (T).

International or F.D.I. System
## Permanent Teeth

Each tooth is numbered by the quadrant (1 to 4) and by the tooth within the quadrant (1 to 8).

**Quadrant Numbers**
- 1 = Maxillary right
- 2 = Maxillary left
- 3 = Mandibular left
- 4 = Mandibular right

**Tooth Numbers Within Each Quadrant.**

Start with number 1 at the midline (central incisor) to number 8, third molar.

**Designation.** The digits are pronounced separately. For example, “two-five” (25) is the maxillary left second premolar, and “four-two” (42) is the mandibular right lateral incisor.

### Palmer System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maxillary right</th>
<th>Maxillary left</th>
<th>Primary Teeth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Permanent Teeth

With number 1 for each central incisor, the teeth in each quadrant are numbered to 8, the third molar. To identify individual teeth, horizontal and vertical lines are drawn to indicate the quadrant. For example, the left maxillary first premolar is \[4\], the right mandibular first and second molars are \[76\]. An entire quadrant may be represented by the use of the letter Q, for example, the maxillary right quadrant is \[Q\].

## Primary or Deciduous Teeth

Each tooth is numbered by quadrant (5 to 8) to continue with the permanent quadrant numbers. The teeth are numbered within each quadrant (1 to 5).

**Quadrant Numbers**
- 5 = Maxillary right
- 6 = Maxillary left
- 7 = Mandibular left
- 8 = Mandibular right

**Tooth Numbers Within Each Quadrant.**

Number 1 is the central incisor, and number 5 is the second primary molar.

**Designation.** The digits are pronounced separately. For example, “eight-three” (83) is the mandibular right primary canine, and “six-five” (65) is the maxillary left second primary molar.

### Palmer System

#### Primary Teeth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maxillary right</th>
<th>Maxillary left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Permanent Teeth

With number 1 for each central incisor, the teeth in each quadrant are numbered to 8, the third molar. To identify individual teeth, horizontal and vertical lines are drawn to indicate the quadrant. For example, the left maxillary first premolar is \[4\], the right mandibular first and second molars are \[76\]. An entire quadrant may be represented by the use of the letter Q, for example, the maxillary right quadrant is \[Q\].

Adapted from Wilkins EM. *Clinical Practice of the Dental Hygienist*, 9th ed. Baltimore: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005.