

JARGON BUSTER

Here is a list of some of the dental terminology that you may come across as part of our courses. If you would like a more extensive list, you could purchase a dental dictionary

Quadrant – One half of each of the upper and lower arches. Upper right, upper left, lower right, lower left, divided and the centre line. (Central incisor – third molar).

Centre line – The middle of the face, where the upper and lower central incisors meet.

Mesial – Working from the centre line of each quadrant within the mouth, this surface of the tooth is the one nearest to the centre line/middle of the face.

Distal - Working from the centre line of each quadrant within the mouth, this surface of the tooth is the one furthest away from the centre line/middle of the face.
REMEMBER DISTANCE – DISTAL!

Occlusal – The chewing or grinding surface of the premolars/molars.

Incisal – The cutting/tearing edge of the incisors/canines.

Palatal – The surface on the inner aspect of all the upper teeth, adjacent to the palate.

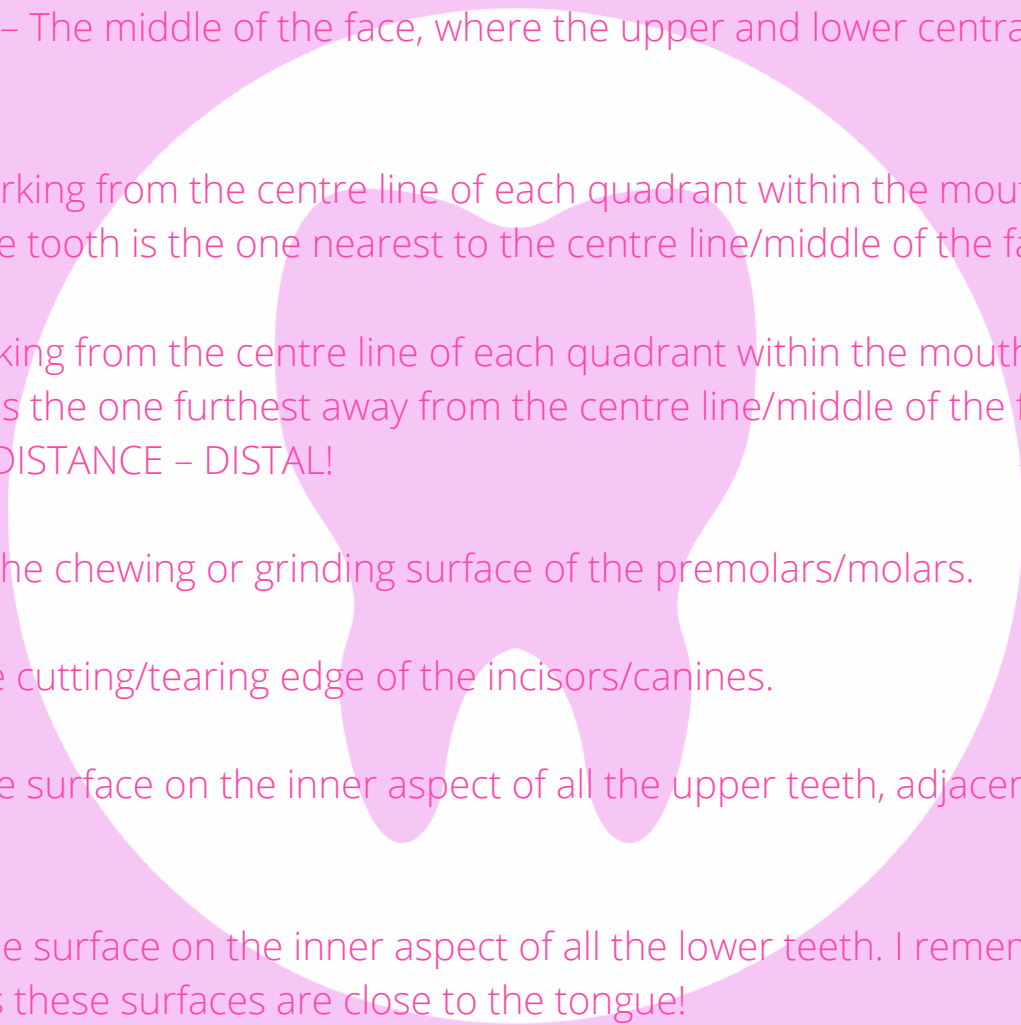
Lingual – The surface on the inner aspect of all the lower teeth. I remember 'licking for lingual' as these surfaces are close to the tongue!

Buccal – This is the outer surface that is found on the upper and lower premolars/molars, so the fronts essentially.

Labial - This is the outer surface that is found on the upper and lower incisors/canines, so the fronts of these teeth.

Dentition – The teeth.

Maxilla – The upper jaw.



Mandible – The lower jaw.

GDC – General Dental Council. There to protect the public, and to ensure maintain confidence in the dental profession.

CPD – Continual professional development. The GDC requires that all registered dental professionals maintain and develop their knowledge throughout their working lives.

CQC – Care Quality Commission. The regulator for all health and social care settings within England.

RoE – Record of Experience. This is the portfolio that is now completed online, that contains questions, scenarios, and log sheets for you to fill in as part of your coursework. These documents go alongside your examinations to enable you to become a qualified dental nurse.

NEBDN – National Examining Board for Dental Nurses.

COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health.

RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations.

Gingiva – The technical word for the gums.

Plaque – A build up of food particles and bacteria, that adhere to the tooth surface, that if left on the surface can harden and form calculus/tartar.

Calculus – Another name for tartar. This is a hardened residue on the teeth caused by the build-up of plaque, that cannot be easily removed by the patient.

Gingivitis – Early gum disease.

Periodontitis – Advanced gum disease.

Enamel – The hard outer surface of all the teeth, that appears in different shades of white/yellow, and acts as the protective layer of the teeth.

Dentine – The softer surface of the tooth, found directly underneath the enamel and above the pulp.

Pulp – The area in the centre of the tooth, which is made of tissue, blood vessels and nerve endings. There are canals in each of the teeth where the pulp also lies, all the way down to the bottom of the roots.

Furcation – The space between the division of roots of the tooth. When a patient suffers with advanced periodontal disease, the area between the roots is often on show.

Abrasion – When the enamel of the tooth surface is worn away by the physical scrubbing action of the patient with their toothbrush.

Attrition – Wear of the tooth surface, often caused by grinding of the teeth or a foreign object, such as a tongue piercing.

Abfraction – Wear around the tops of the teeth, close to the gingiva. Often caused to teeth that are on their own within the mouth, due to the pressure and force on these teeth.

Bruxism – Another term for grinding of the teeth.

Erosion – When the enamel on the tooth surface is worn away by acid produced by eating/drinking/reflux.

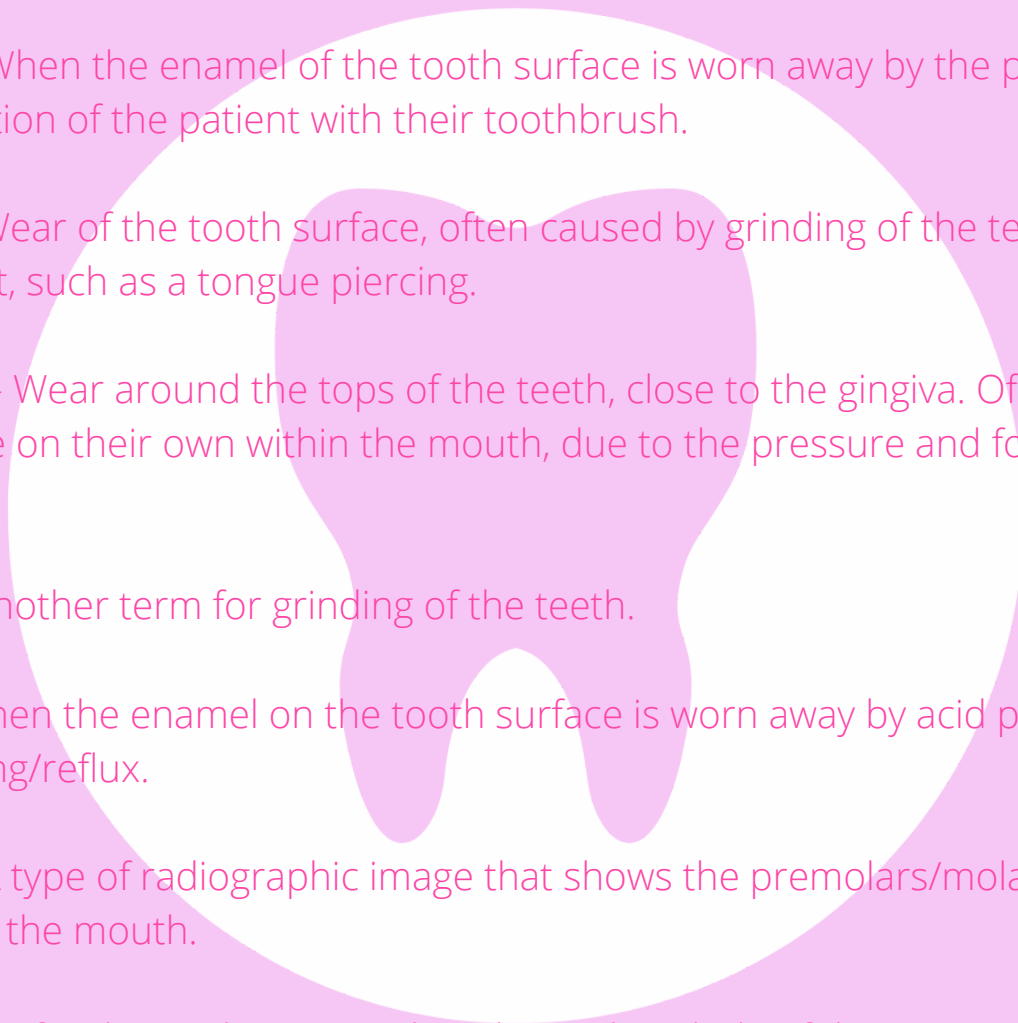
Bitewing – A type of radiographic image that shows the premolars/molars crowns on either side of the mouth.

OPG – A type of radiographic image that shows the whole of the upper and lower jaws, all the teeth and the general anatomy from the cheek bones down to the chin.

PA – Periapical radiograph. A type of radiographic image that shows one or two teeth within the mouth.

Endodontics/RCT – A treatment which involves removal of the nerve within the tooth.

Scaling – A treatment that is carried out by hygienists/therapists and dentists with a tool to clean the surfaces of the teeth.



Filling – A type of treatment that is used to fill holes that have been made within a tooth caused by decay.

Decay – The destruction of the tooth caused by a mix of bacteria and plaque found in the mouth. Decay gradually makes its way through the tooth surface into the dentine and into the pulp if left untreated.

Abscess - An infection that creates a pus-filled lump on the gingiva. This can be caused by either trauma or decay that has been left to progress into the pulp of the tooth.

Composite – A type of filling material that is tooth coloured and comes in a variety of different shades.

Amalgam – A type of filling material that is silver in colour and contains a material known as mercury.

GIC – Glass Ionomer Cement. A type of filling material that is usually white in colour.

Crown – A treatment that involves the creation of a covering by a dental laboratory for the whole surface of the tooth.

Inlay – A type of treatment that involves the creation of a covering by a dental laboratory for the occlusal surface of the tooth but doesn't cover the cusps.

Onlay - A type of treatment that involves the creation of a covering by a dental laboratory for the occlusal surface of the tooth, including the cusps, but doesn't cover the whole of the tooth.

Implant – A replacement for a missing tooth. This usually involves a metal surgical fixture that is fused to the bone, that then supports a prosthetic tooth.

Orthodontics – A type of treatment that involves the use of brackets and wires, or clear plastic aligners, to move the teeth into a new position.

Dentures – A type of treatment that involves the creation of prosthetic teeth onto a base, usually for people with either partially missing or fully missing dentition.

