

Anatomy

Horses evolved as grazing animals and their teeth are perfectly adapted for that purpose.

The front teeth, called incisors, function to shear off grass. The cheek teeth have wide, flat grveled surfaces that grind the feed to a mash before swallowing.

Like humans, horses get 2 sets of teeth in their lifetime. The first baby teeth may erupt before a foal is born. The last baby teeth erupt at around 8 months of age. The baby teeth begin to be replaced by adult teeth at around 2.5 years.

By age 5, most horses have all of their permanent teeth. An adult male horse has 40 permanent teeth. A mare may have between 36-40 teeth because mares are less likely to have canines.

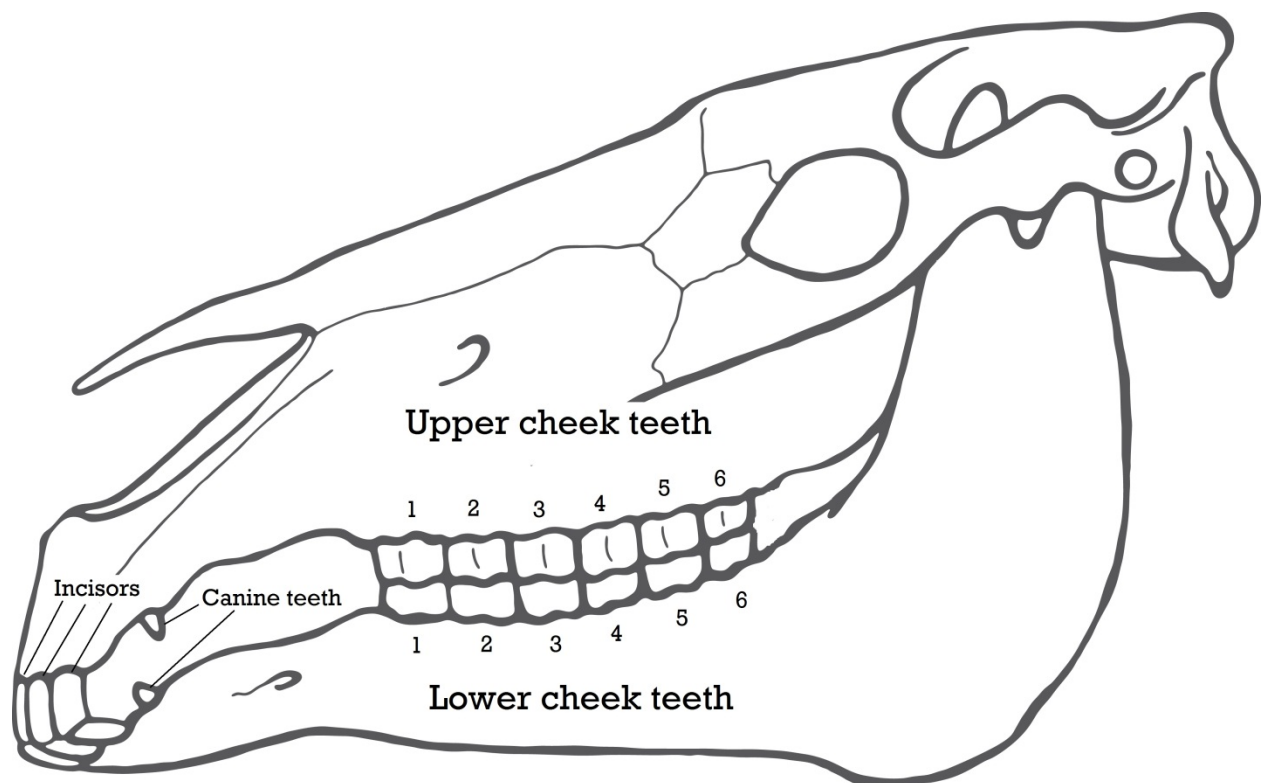


Chart showing approximate ages at which different teeth erupt:

Baby teeth:

1st incisor: birth to 1 week

2nd incisor: 4-6 weeks

3rd incisor: 6-9 months

1st, 2nd, and 3rd cheek teeth: birth to first 2 weeks

Adult Teeth:

1st incisor: 2.5 years

2nd incisor: 3.5 years

3rd incisor: 4.5 years

Canines: 4-5 years

Wolf teeth: 5-6 months

1st cheek teeth: 2.5 years

2nd cheek teeth: 3 years

3rd cheek teeth: 4 years

4th cheek teeth: 9-12 months

5th cheek teeth: 2 years

6th cheek teeth: 3.5-4 years.