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EQUINE DENTAL GLOSSARY

Incisors-Front teeth, just inside the lips, used to grasp, nip and pull grass (and to bite you!)

Premolars-First three sets of large cheek teeth, top and bottom jaws, used to grinding. There is a full deciduous set followed by a full permanent set.

Molars-Second three sets of large cheek teeth, top and bottom jaws, used for grinding. There are no deciduous molars, they erupt as permanent teeth.

Deciduous-“Baby” teeth. They are replaced by permanent teeth.

Permanent-“Adult” teeth. They are intended to remain for the horse's life.

Arcade-Refers to a row of teeth (i.e. there are four arcades of cheek teeth and two arcades of incisors).

Occlusion-The contact points of opposing teeth; occlusal surface refers to the chewing or biting surfaces.

Malocclusion-Abnormal contact between opposing teeth.

“In Wear”-The point in time when opposing teeth have reached sufficient height above the gumline to grind against one another.

Eruption-The movement of the tooth crown out from the bone of the jaw into the mouth.

Shedding caps-The loss of expired baby teeth as the new permanent teeth erupt to take their place.

Cheek teeth-The portion of the tooth that gradually erupts into the mouth and is used for grinding, not the root.

Mastication-The act of chewing or grinding food.

Cap-Horseman's term for a baby tooth as it sits in place on the permanent tooth ready to erupt.