

INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD

ISO  
3950

Fourth edition  
2016-03-15

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**Dentistry — Designation system for  
teeth and areas of the oral cavity**

*Médecine bucco-dentaire — Code de désignation des dents et des  
régions de la cavité buccale*

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Reference number  
ISO 3950:2016(E)

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 106, *Dentistry*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Terminology*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO 3950:2009), which has been technically revised.

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## Introduction

The increasing use of computers to store information, together with the increasing necessity for the communication of dental information by wire, printed documents and orally, has required that new basic elements be taken into consideration for drawing up a designation system for teeth. The system described in this International Standard was originally drawn up by the FDI World Dental Federation and approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) and Technical committee ISO/TC 106, Dentistry, to satisfy the following requirements:

- a) simple to understand and teach;
- b) easy to pronounce in conversation and dictation;
- c) readily communicable in print and by wire;
- d) easy to translate into computer “input”;
- e) easily adaptable to standard charts used in general dental practice.

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# Dentistry — Designation system for teeth and areas of the oral cavity

## 1 Scope

This International Standard provides a system for designating teeth or areas of the oral cavity using two digits.

## 2 Principles

The anatomical arrangement of normal dental arches with respect to sagittal medial and occlusal planes allows for logical division of the oral cavity in quadrants and sextants.

A quadrant, in this context, means one of the fourths of the dental arches.

A sextant in this context means one of the sixths of the dental arches.

The areas of the oral cavity and teeth shall be designated by a two digit code.

Codes containing at least one zero (0) designate areas of the oral cavity.

Replacement of a zero (0) by a nine (9) identifies the presence of an anomaly in that specific area of the oral cavity.

Codes without a zero (0) identify individual teeth. The first digit of the code designates the quadrant and differentiates between deciduous and permanent teeth, and the second identifies the tooth itself.

Numerals used for designation of areas of the oral cavity, teeth, sextants or quadrants shall be expressed in letters and the corresponding number given in parenthesis. For example:

- Zero (0) one (1) designates the maxillary area;
- Three (3) zero (0) designates the lower left quadrant;
- One (1) one (1) designates the central incisor of the maxillary right;
- Nine (9) four (4) designates any anomaly in the upper anterior sextant.

## 3 Designation of areas of the oral cavity

- 00 designates the entire oral cavity
- 01 designates the maxillary area
- 02 designates the mandibular area
- 10 designates the upper right quadrant
- 20 designates the upper left quadrant
- 30 designates the lower left quadrant
- 40 designates the lower right quadrant
- 03 designates the upper right sextant
- 04 designates the upper anterior sextant
- 05 designates the upper left sextant

- 06 designates the lower left sextant
- 07 designates the lower anterior sextant
- 08 designates the lower right sextant

## 4 Designation of teeth

### a) First digit

Digits 1 to 4 are used for the permanent dentition and digits 5 to 8 for the deciduous dentition. This designation starts clockwise from the upper right side.

- 1 designates permanent teeth in upper right quadrant
- 2 designates permanent teeth in upper left quadrant
- 3 designates permanent teeth in lower left quadrant
- 4 designates permanent teeth in lower right quadrant
- 5 designates deciduous teeth in upper right quadrant
- 6 designates deciduous teeth in upper left quadrant
- 7 designates deciduous teeth in lower left quadrant
- 8 designates deciduous teeth in lower right quadrant

### b) Second digit (tooth)

Teeth in the same quadrant are designated by the second digit 1 to 8 (1 to 5 in the deciduous dentition). This designation starts from the sagittal medial plane in distal direction. The tooth designation is based on the anatomy of the tooth regardless of its position in the mouth.

#### — Permanent dentition

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- 1 designates the central incisor
- 2 designates the lateral incisor
- 3 designates the canine
- 4 designates the first premolar
- 5 designates the second premolar
- 6 designates the first molar
- 7 designates the second molar
- 8 designates the third molar

— Deciduous dentition

- 1 designates the central incisor
- 2 designates the lateral incisor
- 3 designates the canine
- 4 designates the first molar
- 5 designates the second molar

Right										Left																
										00																
										01																
10								20																		
03					04					05																
18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Permanent teeth										
			55	54	53	52	51	61	62	63	64	65				Deciduous teeth										
			85	84	83	82	81	71	72	73	74	75				Deciduous teeth										
48	47	46	45	44	43	42	41	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	Permanent teeth										
				08			07			30	06															
					40																					
02																										
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Figure 1 — Digital designation of teeth and areas of the oral cavity