

Dental Assistant (DANB) Exam

QUICK REFERENCE CHEAT SHEET | DANB CDA / RHS / ICE

TOOTH NUMBERING SYSTEMS

System	Method	Key Notes
Universal (US)	#1 = upper right 3rd molar; #32 = lower right 3rd molar	Most common in US practices
ISO / FDI	2-digit: quadrant (1-4) + position (1-8)	International standard; e.g. #11 = UR central
Palmer Notation	Quadrant brackets + number 1-8 from midline	Older system; still used by some dentists
Primary (A-T)	A = upper right 2nd molar; T = lower right 2nd molar	20 primary (deciduous) teeth

DENTAL INSTRUMENTATION

Instrument	Function
Explorer (#23)	Detect caries, calculus, margins -- sharp tip
Periodontal Probe	Measure pocket depth (normal < 3 mm)
Scaler	Remove supragingival calculus (above gum line)
Curette	Remove subgingival calculus and infected cementum
Elevator	Loosen teeth before extraction
Forceps	Extract teeth -- different shapes per tooth location
High-Volume Evacuator (HVE)	Remove water and debris during procedures -- held by assistant

INFECTION CONTROL -- DENTAL

Category	Standard
Hand hygiene	Before and after patient contact; gloves do not replace handwashing
PPE	Gloves, mask, eye protection, gown for every patient
Critical instruments (touch bone/tissue)	Sterilization (autoclave) required
Semi-critical instruments (touch mucosa)	High-Level Disinfection minimum; sterilize if possible
Non-critical surfaces	Intermediate or low-level disinfectant; cover with barriers
Sharps	Immediately into sharps container; never recap with two hands
Surface barriers	Replace between patients -- covers for switches, chair controls, handles

EXAM-DAY TIPS

- + Spore testing (biological indicator): weekly for autoclaves -- most reliable sterilization monitor.
- + Radiation: follow ALARA (As Low As Reasonably Achievable); use lead apron + thyroid collar.
- + Amalgam: mercury + silver + tin + zinc + copper; requires safe handling and disposal per EPA.
- + Composite (resin): light-cured; placed in increments; moisture sensitive; bonds to enamel/dentin.
- + Tray setup: instruments in order of use, left to right, for assistant and operator efficiency.
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