

• both statements are true

When two teeth in the same arch are in contact, their curvatures adjacent to the contact areas form spillway spaces called **embrasures**. The spaces that widen out from the area of contact labially or buccally and lingually are called **labial** or **buccal** and **lingual interproximal embrasures**. These embrasures are continuous with the interproximal spaces between the teeth. Above the contact areas incisally and occlusally, the spaces, which are bounded by the marginal ridges as they join the cusps and incisal ridges, are called the **incisal** or **occlusal embrasures**. These embrasures, and the labial or buccal and lingual embrasures, are continuous. The curved proximal surfaces of the contacting teeth roll away from the contact area at all points, occlusally, labially, or buccally, and lingually and cervically, and the embrasures and interproximal spaces are continuous, as they surround the areas of contact. **Note:** For esthetics and function, embrasures must be symmetrical.

Three functions of embrasures:

1. Function as **spillways** to direct food away from the gingiva.
2. Make the teeth more **self-cleansing**.
3. **Protect** the gingival tissue from undue frictional trauma, but at the same time **provide** the proper degree of stimulation to the tissue.

The **lingual embrasures** are ordinarily larger than the facial embrasures because most teeth are narrower on the lingual side than on the facial side, and also because their contact points are located in the facial third of the crowns.

The **design** of contact areas, interproximal spaces, and embrasures varies with the form and alignment of the various teeth; each section of the two arches shows similarity of form. In other words, the contact form, interproximal spacing, and the embrasure form seem rather consistent in sectional areas of the dental arches.



1. Pronounced developmental grooves are usually associated with embrasures between permanent **maxillary canines** and **first premolars**, and between permanent **mandibular canines** and **first premolars**.
2. The **largest** incisal/occlusal embrasure is found between the **maxillary lateral incisor** and **canine**.