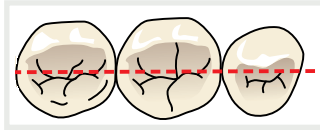


- **second premolar, first molar, and second molar**
*** See picture below



When teeth are in ideal alignment within the arch, the location of the mesial and distal heights of contour (when viewed directly from the facial or lingual sides) is essentially the same location as contact areas. **Contact areas** are the **greatest heights of contour** or location of the greatest bulges on the proximal surfaces of tooth crowns, where one tooth touches an adjacent tooth. When viewing teeth from the **facial view**, contact areas are characteristically located in the incisal or occlusal third, in the middle third, or at the junction of the incisal and middle thirds, but they are never in the cervical third. When viewing posterior teeth from the **occlusal view**, contact points are often **slightly to the facial** of the tooth midline buccolingually.

The contact of each tooth with the adjacent teeth has important functions:

- The combined anchorage of all teeth within each arch making positive contact with each other stabilizes the position of teeth within the dental arches
- Contact helps prevent food impaction, which can contribute to decay, along with gingival and periodontal disease
- Contact protects the interdental papillae of the gingiva by shunting food toward the buccal and lingual areas