

DEVELOPMENT OF DENTITION



9 week old puppy with a normal occlusion (note the position of the lower canines)

This puppy is a first cross between an Irish Wolfhound and a Newfoundland.

These photos demonstrate how important breed differences are in evaluating the dentition of growing puppies.

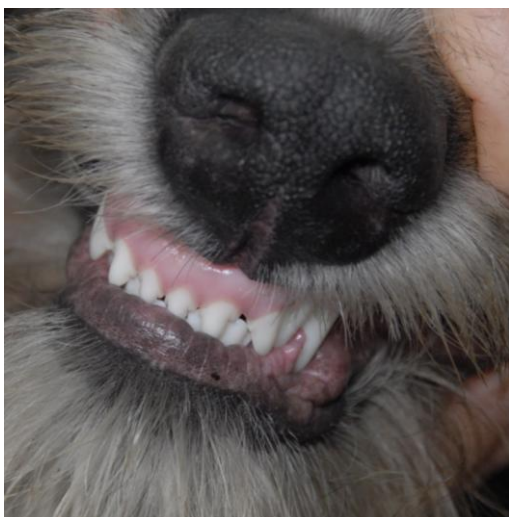


9 week old puppy with lower jaw temporarily narrower than upper (lower canines impinging on palate & gum)

This occlusion is often seen in young IW pups - Jaws of equal length, incisors meeting in a “scissor” bite, but the lower jaw is narrower than the upper at this point. Note the more rounded jaw shape at the front, when compared to the squarer jaws of the crossbred pup, whose canines occupy the “corners” at the front of his mouth. The IW pup’s canines are set further back and towards the sides.



The crossbred pup's skull & muzzle are already considerably broader than the Wolfhound puppy's at this age.



At 6 months, left lower canine correctly placed, right lower canine not visible



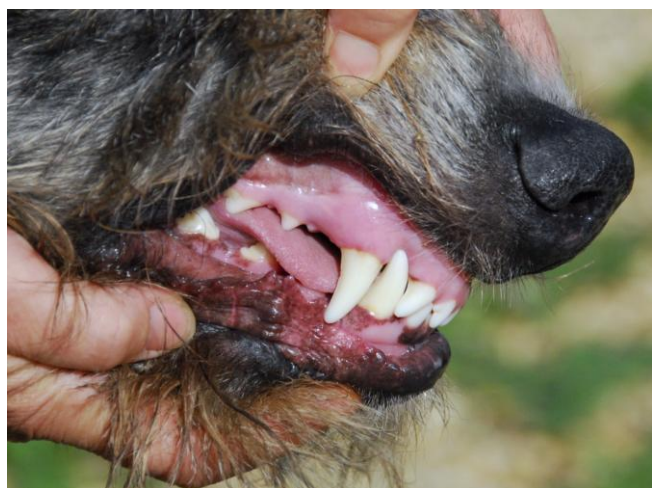
Permanent upper and lower canines still growing and yet to form their finished curved shape. Lower canine is in line with gum at this stage



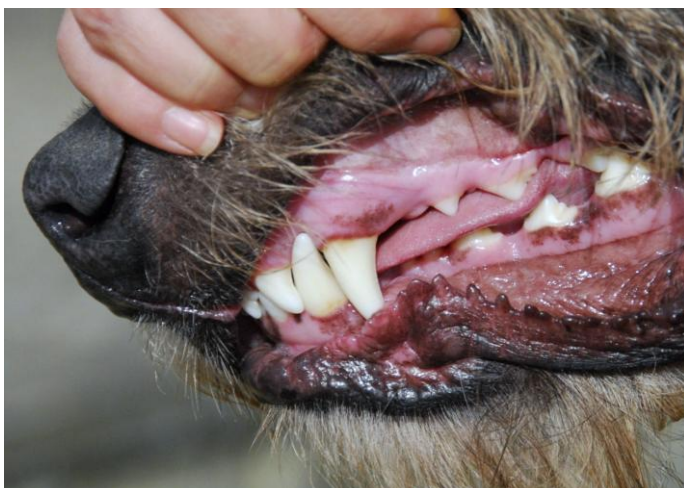
At 8 months, right lower canine has flared outwards and is now visible



With the teeth erupting further from the roots, the upper canines curve backwards, the lower canines flare outwards and the lower jaw advances



The same youngster at 17 months, showing normal occlusion of upper and lower canines and correct 'scissor' bite



In Irish Wolfhounds, it is not unusual for the mouth to continue altering until 15 months of age or even longer. It is vitally important that veterinary dental specialists are aware of what is considered "normal" for each breed. The rapid growth of our giant sighthound puppies makes every aspect of their development exceptional. The scope for change and self-correction regarding their dental occlusions, should be acknowledged.