

Mirror and Finger Rests in Maxillary Posterior Sextants

MODULE OVERVIEW

This module describes techniques for using a dental mirror and finger rests in the maxillary posterior treatment areas. A step-by-step technique practice is found in Sections 1 and 2.

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KEY TERMS

Review these terms from Module 4:

Neutral wrist position

Fulcrum

Support beam

Finger rest

Extraoral fulcrum

Intraoral fulcrum

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Maintain neutral positioning when practicing finger rests in the maxillary posterior sextants.
2. Position equipment so that it enhances neutral positioning.
3. Access the maxillary posterior teeth with optimum vision while maintaining neutral positioning.
4. Demonstrate correct mirror use, grasp, and finger rest in each of the maxillary posterior sextants while maintaining neutral positioning of your wrist.
5. Recognize incorrect mirror use, grasp, or finger rest and describe how to correct the problem(s).
6. Understand the relationship between proper stabilization of the dominant hand during instrumentation and the prevention of (1) musculoskeletal problems in the clinician's hands and (2) injury to the patient.
7. Understand the relationship between the large motor skills, such as positioning, and small motor skills, such as finger rests. Recognize the importance of initiating these skills in a step-by-step manner.

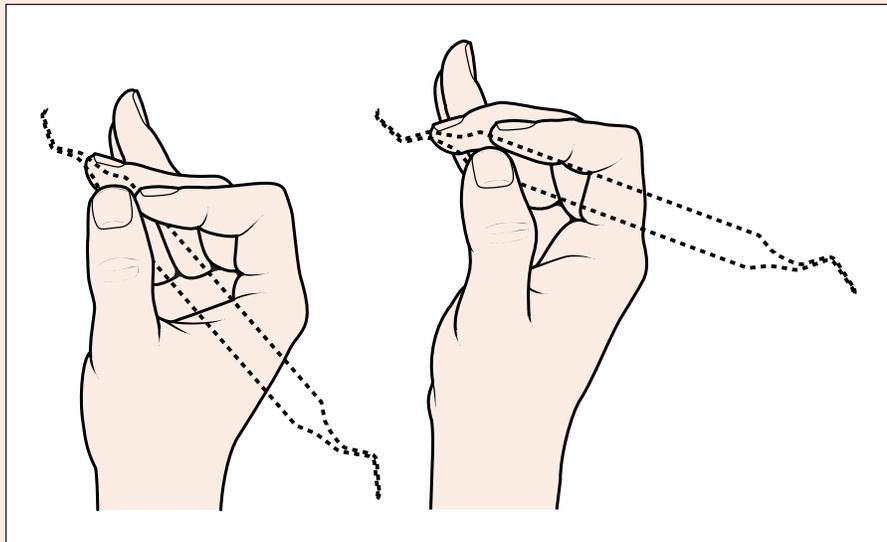
SECTION I

Skills for the RIGHT-Handed Clinician**DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL PRACTICE:**

1. The photographs depict the use of a mirror and finger rests in the maxillary posterior sextants. Some photographs were taken using a patient. Others were taken using a manikin and without gloves so that you can easily see the finger placement in the grasp.
2. The photographs provide a *general guideline* for finger rests; however, the location of your own finger rest depends on the size and length of your fingers. You may need to fulcrum closer to or farther from the tooth being treated than that which is shown in the photograph.
3. Focus your attention on mastering mirror use, wrist position, and the finger rests. Use the following instruments in this module: **For your nondominant (mirror) hand**—Use a dental mirror. **For your dominant (instrument) hand**—(a) Remove the mirror head from one of your dental mirrors and use the mirror handle as if it were a periodontal instrument or (b) use a periodontal probe to represent the periodontal instrument in this module.

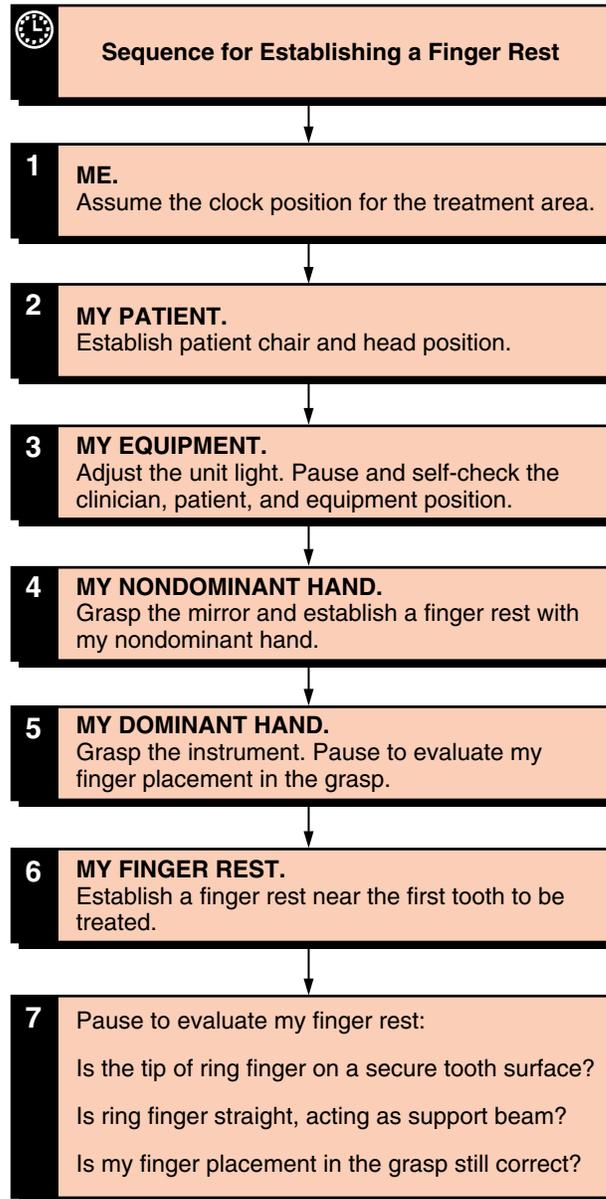
HANDLE POSITION FOR MAXILLARY POSTERIOR TEETH**BOX 6-1****Handle Position for Maxillary Posterior Teeth**

1. Hold the hand in a palm-up position.
2. Rest the handle against the index finger somewhere behind the second knuckle to the “V” of the hand.



FLOW CHART: SEQUENCE FOR ESTABLISHING A FINGER REST

Remember to perform each skill in a step-by-step manner. Your *small motor skills*, such as the grasp and finger rest, cannot be correct if your *large motor skills* are incorrect. As you begin your practice for each treatment area think: “Me, My Patient, My Light, My Nondominant Hand, My Dominant Hand.”



TECHNIQUE PRACTICE: MAXILLARY POSTERIOR SEXTANTS**Maxillary Right Posterior Sextant, Facial Aspect**

POSITION OVERVIEW



RETRACTION

Retract the buccal mucosa with the mirror. Use the mirror for indirect vision, particularly to view the distal surfaces of the teeth.



TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.





TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an incisal surface of one of the maxillary anteriors.

Maxillary Left Posterior Sextant, Lingual Aspect



POSITION OVERVIEW



MIRROR

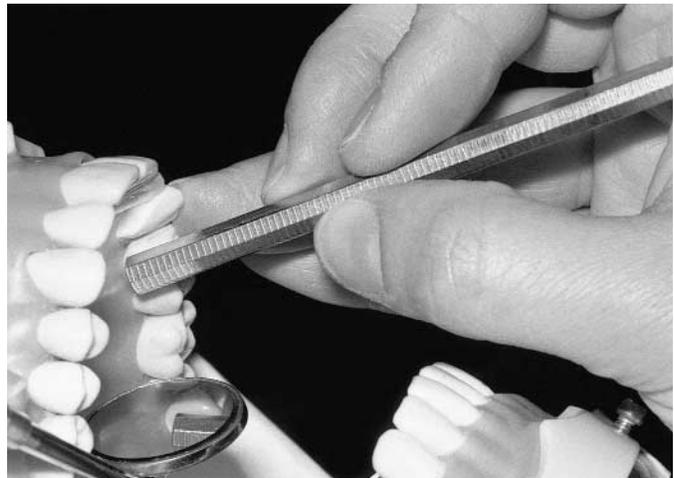
Use the mirror to view the distal surfaces of the teeth.

TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusofacial line angle.

**TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT**

Finger rest on the occlusofacial line angle or an incisal edge.

**Maxillary Left Posterior Sextant, Facial Aspect****POSITION OVERVIEW**



RETRACTION

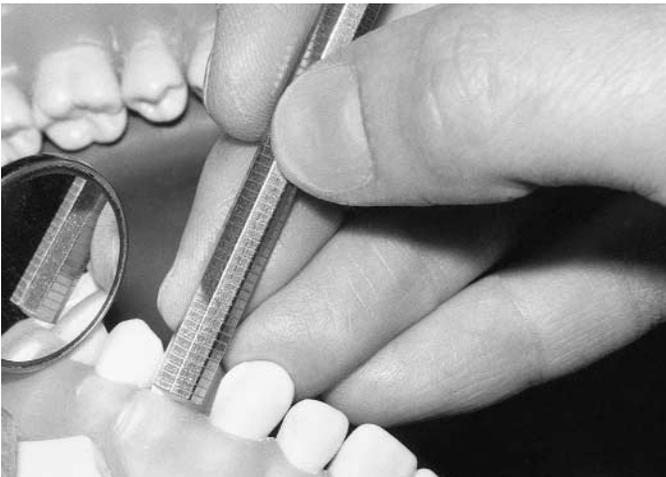
Use the mirror to retract the buccal mucosa down and away from the teeth.



TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.

Technique hint: Your dominant hand is positioned correctly if you can see the underside of your middle and ring fingers.



TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an incisal edge of an anterior tooth.

Maxillary Right Posterior Sextant, Lingual Aspect

POSITION OVERVIEW



MIRROR

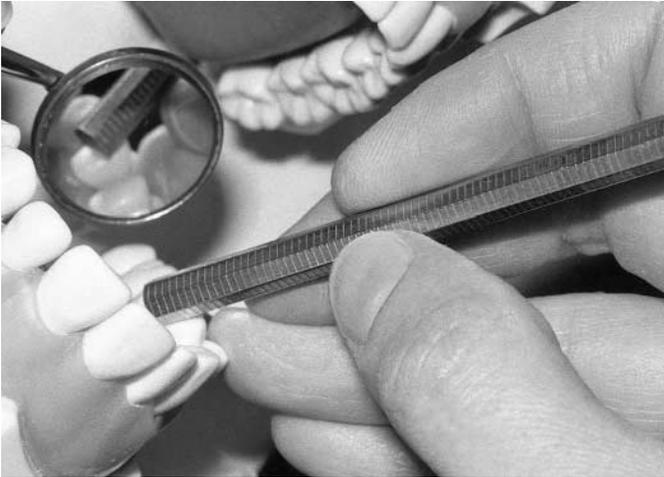
Use the mirror for indirect vision.



TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.





TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on the occlusal surface or an incisal edge.

REFERENCE SHEET FOR MAXILLARY POSTERIOR SEXTANTS (RIGHT-HANDED CLINICIAN)

Photocopy this reference sheet and use it for quick reference as you practice your skills. Place the photocopied reference sheet in a plastic page protector for longer use.

TABLE 6-1. Reference Sheet: Maxillary Posterior Sextants

Treatment Area	Clock Position	Patient's Head
Posterior Aspects Facing Toward Me (Right Posterior, Facial Aspect) (Left Posterior, Lingual Aspect)	9:00	Straight or slightly away Chin UP
Posterior Aspects Facing Away From Me (Right Posterior, Lingual Aspect) (Left Posterior, Facial Aspect)	10–11:00	Toward Chin UP

NOTE: This ends the section for RIGHT-Handed Clinicians. Turn to page 145 for the Skill Application section of this module.

SECTION 2

Skills for the LEFT-Handed Clinician

DIRECTIONS FOR SKILL PRACTICE

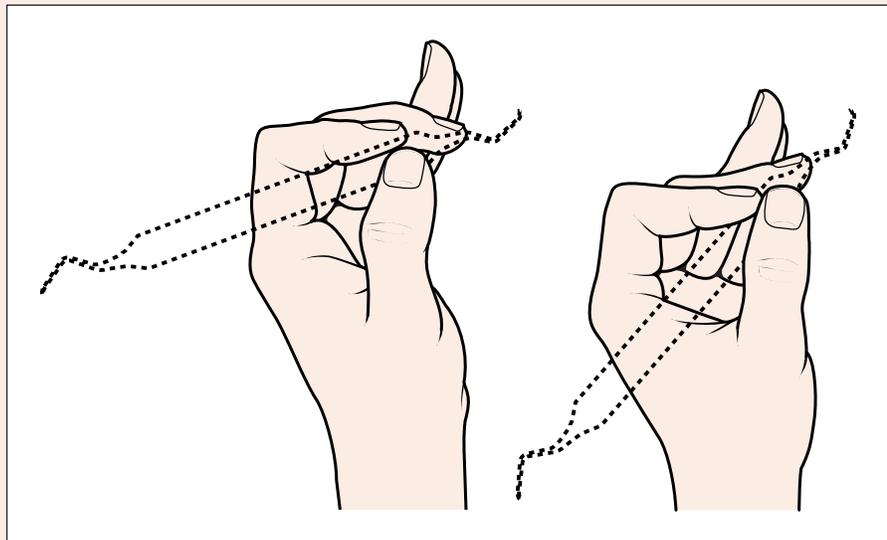
1. The photographs depict the use of a mirror and finger rests in the maxillary posterior sextants. Some photographs were taken using a patient. Others were taken using a manikin and without gloves so that you can easily see the finger placement in the grasp.
2. The photographs provide a *general guideline* for finger rests; however, the location of your own finger rest depends on the size and length of your fingers. You may need to fulcrum closer to or farther from the tooth being treated than that which is shown in the photograph.
3. Focus your attention on mastering mirror use, wrist position, and the finger rests. Use the following instruments in this module: **For your nondominant (mirror) hand**—Use a dental mirror. **For your dominant (instrument) hand**—(a) Remove the mirror head from one of your dental mirrors and use the mirror handle as if it were a periodontal instrument or (b) use a periodontal probe to represent the periodontal instrument in this module.

HANDLE POSITION FOR MAXILLARY POSTERIOR TEETH

BOX 6-2

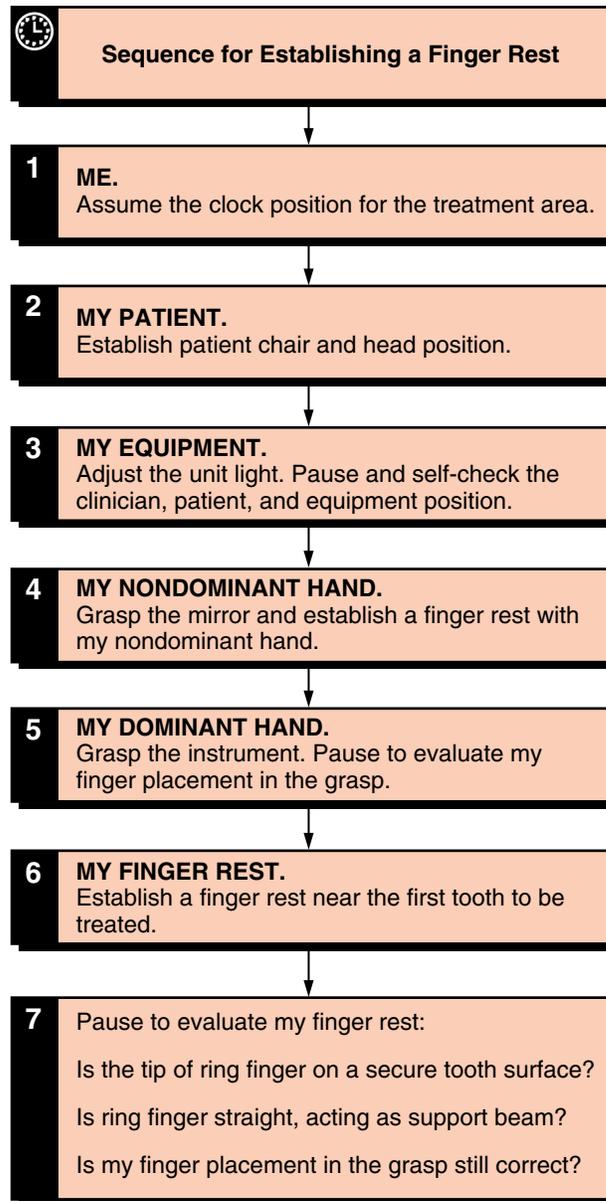
Handle Position for Maxillary Posterior Teeth

1. Hold the hand in a palm-up position.
2. Rest the handle against the index finger somewhere behind the second knuckle to the “V” of the hand.



FLOW CHART: SEQUENCE FOR ESTABLISHING A FINGER REST

Remember to perform each skill in a step-by-step manner. Your *small motor skills*, such as the grasp and finger rest, cannot be correct if your *large motor skills* are incorrect. As you begin your practice for each treatment area think: “Me, My Patient, My Light, My Nondominant Hand, My Dominant Hand.”



TECHNIQUE PRACTICE: MAXILLARY POSTERIOR SEXTANTS**Maxillary Left Posterior Sextant, Facial Aspect****POSITION OVERVIEW****RETRACTION**

Retract the buccal mucosa with the mirror. Use the mirror for indirect vision, particularly to view the distal surfaces of the teeth.

**TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT**

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.





TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an incisal surface of one of the maxillary anteriors.

Maxillary Right Posterior Sextant, Lingual Aspect



POSITION OVERVIEW



MIRROR

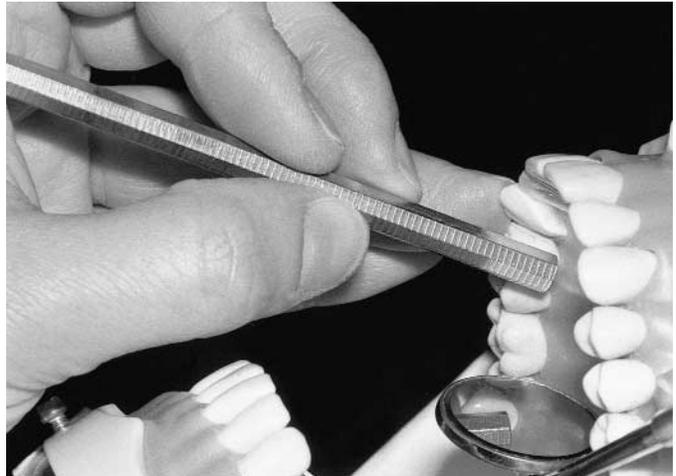
Use the mirror to view the distal surfaces of the teeth.

TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusofacial line angle.

**TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT**

Finger rest on the occlusofacial line angle or an incisal edge.

**Maxillary Right Posterior Sextant, Facial Aspect****POSITION OVERVIEW**



RETRACTION

Use the mirror to retract the buccal mucosa down and away from the teeth.



TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.

Technique hint: Your dominant hand is positioned correctly if you can see the underside of your middle and ring fingers.



TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, FACIAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an incisal edge of an anterior tooth.

Maxillary Left Posterior Sextant, Lingual Aspect

POSITION OVERVIEW



MIRROR

Use the mirror for indirect vision.



TASK 1—SECOND MOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on an occlusal surface.





TASK 2—FIRST PREMOLAR, LINGUAL ASPECT

Finger rest on the occlusal surface or an incisal edge.

REFERENCE SHEET FOR MAXILLARY POSTERIOR SEXTANTS (LEFT-HANDED CLINICIAN)

Photocopy this reference sheet and use it for quick reference as you practice your skills. Place the photocopied reference sheet in a plastic page protector for longer use.

TABLE 6-2. Reference Sheet: Maxillary Posterior Sextants

Treatment Area	Clock Position	Patient's Head
Posterior Aspects Facing Toward Me (Left Posterior, Facial Aspect) (Right Posterior, Lingual Aspect)	3:00	Straight or slightly away Chin UP
Posterior Aspects Facing Away From Me (Left Posterior, Lingual Aspect) (Right Posterior, Facial Aspect)	2–1:00	Toward Chin UP

SECTION 3

Skill Application**PRACTICAL FOCUS**

Do you sometimes forget about neutral body position as you concentrate on the finger rests? Use this checklist to assess your habits. A “YES” answer means that changes are indicated.

Body Breakers Risk Assessment Checklist			
Structure	Incorrect Body Mechanics	YES	NO
Head	Tilted to one side?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tipped too far forward?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shoulders	Lifted up toward ears?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tense?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hunched forward?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upper Arms	Held more than 20 degrees away from body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elbows	Raised above waist level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wrists	Hand bent up? Down?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Hand angled toward thumb? Toward little finger?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Thumb-side of palm tipped down?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hands	Gloves too tight?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Fingers blanched in grasp?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Fingers tense?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Back	Rounded back?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hips	Perched forward on seat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All weight on one hip?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legs	Under back of patient's chair?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Thighs “cut” by edge of chair seat?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Legs crossed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feet	Dangling?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ankles crossed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Your course assignment is to visit a local dental office and photograph a clinician at work on the maxillary teeth. Your photographs are shown below. (1) Evaluate each photograph for position, grasp, and finger rest. (2) For each incorrect element describe (a) how the problem could be corrected and (b) the musculoskeletal problems that could result from each positioning problem.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

2. **Precise Instrument Control.** This activity simulates the skills you will need to use when placing the instrument's working-end on the various tooth surfaces while using indirect vision. It was designed by Margaret Starr, R.D.H., when she was a student learning instrumentation. Can you name several tooth surfaces that can best be seen with indirect vision?

Materials and Equipment: Printed page from a textbook or magazine, a dental mirror, and a sharpened pencil.

- a. Lay the printed page flat on a desk or tabletop. Hold a dental mirror in your nondominant hand, and position it on the page. Angle the mirror head so that you are able to see several letters reflected in the mirror. How do the letters appear?
- b. Still looking in the mirror, locate a letter "e" in one of the words. Grasp the pencil in a modified pen grasp and touch the pencil point to the "e" *on the paper*.
- c. Move the mirror to a different location on the paper. Looking in the mirror, select a letter and touch it with the pencil point.

SKILL EVALUATION MODULE 6

Mirror and Rests in Maxillary Posterior Sextants

Student: _____

Area 1 = right posterior sextant, facial aspect

Evaluator: _____

Area 2 = right posterior sextant, lingual aspect

Area 3 = left posterior sextant, facial aspect

Date: _____

Area 4 = left posterior sextant, lingual aspect

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDENT: Use **Column S**, evaluate your skill level as: **S** (satisfactory) or **U** (unsatisfactory).DIRECTIONS FOR EVALUATOR: Use **Column I**. Indicate: **S** (satisfactory) or **U** (unsatisfactory). Each **S** equals 1 point, each **U** equals 0 points.

CRITERIA:	Area 1		Area 2		Area 3		Area 4	
	S	I	S	I	S	I	S	I
Position:								
Positioned correctly on clinician stool								
Positioned correctly in relation to patient, equipment, and treatment area								
Establishes correct patient head position								
Dental Mirror:								
Uses correct grasp with mirror								
Establishes secure rest with mirror								
Ensures patient comfort by not hitting teeth or using the mirror shank for retraction								
Uses the mirror correctly for retraction and/or indirect vision								
Modified Pen Grasp with Dominant Hand:								
Holds handle with pads of index finger and thumb								
Thumb and index finger positioned opposite one another on handle; fingers not touching or overlapped								
Pad of middle finger rests lightly on shank; touches the ring finger								
Thumb, index, and middle fingers held in a rounded shape (not flattened against the instrument handle)								
Instrument handle rests against index finger between the 2nd knuckle and the "V" of the hand								
Grasp is relaxed (no blanching of fingers)								
Basic Intraoral Fulcrum:								
Ring finger is straight and supports weight of hand								
Fulcrums on same arch, near tooth being instrumented								
OPTIONAL GRADE PERCENTAGE CALCULATION								
Total S 's in each I column.								
Sum of S 's _____ divided by Total Points Possible (60) equals the Percentage Grade _____%								

