

# Back : Introduction and surface Landmarks

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## Back

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### Introduction

- **Constitutes posterior aspect of trunk** extending from neck to gluteal region.
  - Functions:
    - Supports body weight.
    - Protects spinal cord and roots.
    - Provides attachment for muscles controlling movements of head, neck, and limbs.
  - Main components:
    - **Vertebral column.**
    - **Spinal cord and meninges.**
    - **Muscles of back** (superficial, intermediate, deep).
    - **Associated vessels, nerves, and joints.**
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### 1. Vertebral Column

- **C7 (vertebra prominens)** ? prominent spinous process felt at base of neck.
- **Scapula**
  - Root of spine ? opposite **T3** vertebra.
  - Inferior angle ? opposite **T7** vertebra.
- **Iliac crest** ? highest point corresponds to **L4** vertebra (line joining both crests = intercrystal line).
- **Posterior superior iliac spine (PSIS)** ? marked by a dimple in skin at level of **S2** vertebra.

### 2. Other Bony Landmarks

- **Occipital protuberance** at back of skull ? attachment for ligamentum nuchae.
- **Sacral hiatus** ? palpable at lower end of sacrum, landmark for caudal epidural anesthesia.

### 3. Muscular Landmarks

- **Trapezius** ? upper back, forms posterior boundary of posterior triangle of neck.
- **Latissimus dorsi** ? lower back, forms posterior axillary fold.
- **Erector spinae** ? prominent vertical muscle mass felt beside lumbar spine in muscular individuals.