

Introduction to Human Development

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DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

In anatomy and embryology, specific terms of position, direction, and various planes of the body are used. Descriptions of the adult are based on the *anatomical position*; the body is erect, the upper limbs are at the sides, and the palms are directed anteriorly (Fig. 1.2A). The descriptive terms of position, direction, and planes used for embryos are shown in Fig. 1.2B to E. In describing development, it is necessary to use words denoting the position of one part relative to another or to the body as a whole. For example, the vertebral column develops in the dorsal part of the embryo and the sternum is in the ventral part of the embryo.