

1. Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio of Syracuse were wondering about their ages tonight. Is there any way to get information on what their ages possibly are?

EGEON

My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
At **eighteen years** became inquisitive
After his brother: and importuned me
That his attendant--so his case was like,
Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name--
Might bear him company in the quest of him:
Whom whilst I labour'd of a love to see,
I hazarded the loss of whom I loved.
Five summers have I spent in furthest Greece,
Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia,
And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus;
Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought
Or that or any place that harbours men.
But here must end the story of my life;
And happy were I in my timely death,
Could all my travels warrant me they live

Interpreting the highlighted lines, we can assume that both sets of twins are at least 18; I would also assume that after Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse left Egeon (“and importuned me” implies that Egeon was present in Syracuse for Antipholus to ask permission to go hunting the other twins), Egeon decided to go out looking himself, ergo the “Five summers I have spent . . .” So if we base things off of these numbers in Egeon’s exposition, then the twins (all four of them) are at least 23 years old.

However, in Act V sc. i (our Act II sc. 51), Egeon says:

EGEON

Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
Hast thou so crack'd and splitted my poor tongue
In seven short years, that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untuned cares?

This would seem to indicate that Egeon began his own search 2 years after Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse departed, meaning that the twins are **25** at the time of the play.