

METAL VS CERAMIC?



How do Metal Braces Work?

Made from high-grade stainless steel, modern metal braces are very small and thin and made up of brackets and an arch wire. The metal brackets are fitted to the front surface of each tooth using a special glue. Once the stainless-steel brackets have been fitted, an arch wire is threaded through each of them and secured with a coloured band. The brackets and arch wire work together to gently and consistently push the teeth into the new desired position.

How do Ceramic Braces Work?

A ceramic brace is very similar to a modern metal brace however a ceramic brace has a subtler aesthetic. The main difference is the brackets are clear (also known as tooth-coloured) instead of stainless steel and this allows for them to be less noticeable. The ceramic brackets are fitted to the front surface of each tooth using a special glue. Once the ceramic brackets have been fitted a thin coated arch wire is threaded through each of the brackets and secured in place with a clear band. The brackets and arch wire work together to gently and consistently push the teeth into the new desired position.

Metal Vs Ceramic Braces?

Whilst the way in which these braces are fitted and function are very similar, they do have their differences. When it comes to metal vs ceramic braces, there are advantages and disadvantages for both:

Staining: Due to their lighter colour, ceramic brackets are more likely to stain compared to modern metal braces. But that's only if the braces aren't cared for properly. As long as you have good oral hygiene, there is no need to worry about staining. Nevertheless, to prevent any risk of discolouration, we recommend patients avoid dark-coloured food such as curry and drinks such as tea, coffee, red wine. This is because prolonged contact with the particles within these foods and drinks *can* give the impression of discolouration.

Enamel Wear: Tooth enamel is the hardest substance in your body (it's even stronger than your bones). But even though enamel is tough, bacteria, plaque and acids in your mouth can still damage it. Teeth bonded with ceramic brackets show significantly higher enamel demineralisation compared to teeth bonded with metal brackets. It's worth remembering that braces themselves aren't going to damage your teeth, but poor oral hygiene while wearing braces will damage the enamel. That's why we insist on maintaining a high standard of oral hygiene during your Orthodontic treatment.

Duration of treatment: The duration of treatment is the exact same for both metal and ceramic braces and will depend on the severity of the misalignment. Throughout treatment, patients will need to visit the practice every 6-8 weeks to review the progress of the teeth and have any necessary adjustments to the brace.

FIXED VS ALIGNERS?



How do Aligners Work?

There are two main types of orthodontic braces: fixed braces and clear aligners. Many people are faced with the dilemma of choosing which system will work best for them and interfere the least with daily life. Deciding on the right option for you can greatly depend on your individual circumstances and your treatment goals.

Aligners are virtually invisible and can offer a great solution for tooth movement. They are removable and more comfortable than fixed braces meaning they take less time to adapt to. The duration of treatment can tend to be slightly quicker than fixed braces but this will depend on the severity of the misalignment. Aligners rely greatly on compliance and will power. If they are not being worn full time, they will not produce the desired tooth movement. This however can also be the same for fixed braces as if you face breakages, you will also prolong the treatment length.

Cleaning: Due to the aligners being removable, you can take them out to brush your teeth as you usually do. This means that it is easy to reach all areas of your teeth when brushing and you can still maintain great hygiene.

Food and drink: As well as the benefits of removing the aligners to clean your teeth, you can also continue to eat all foods with zero restrictions. With a fixed brace you are unable to eat hard sticky foods to prevent breakages which lead to prolonged treatment.

Duration of treatment: The duration of treatment can tend to be slightly quicker than fixed braces if you follow a routine strictly however, this will depend on the severity of the misalignment.

Attachments: You will usually have temporary bits of composite added to your teeth, also known as attachments. These are small tooth-coloured bumps used to ensure your aligners are creating pressure on the right area of your tooth for it to move into the desired position.

Chewies: Aligner chewies are small soft plastic cylinders that you bite down on and shift around your mouth from one side to the other. By doing so this helps to remove any air bubbles between your teeth ensure the aligners have a snug fit. This is usually advised to do twice a day for around 10 minutes.



PROS AND CONS OF ALIGNERS?

Pros:

- Fewer dental visits as aligners are changed every 7-14 days and can be done from the comfort of your own home so its is a lot more convenient if you have a busy lifestyle.
- Can maintain better oral hygiene as you can remove the aligner and brush/floss as normal so you can upkeep good oral hygiene during your treatment.
- Can eat all foods and drink as normal as you can remove the aligner to do so and there is no limited diet like there is with a fixed brace.
- More comfortable as they are made of plastic so they will not cut or graze you like a fixed brace.
- More convenient for patients who play sports such as rugby and musical instruments such as the flute as they can be taken out. You are advised to wear them from 20-22 hours per day.
- Aligners are clear and attachments are tooth coloured so they are much less noticeable.

Cons:

- Can be lost or broken as they are removable resulting in additional costs and affecting the treatment duration.
- Patients must remember to wear them as instructed by their Orthodontist or else they will not move into the desired position effecting the treatment duration.
- As you are able to visit less frequently progress may not be monitored as closely.
- Not suitable for all treatment plans.

PROS AND CONS OF FIXED BRACES?

Pros:

- Less discipline and commitment required from braces as these are fixed to the teeth.
- No chance of the brace becoming lost as these are fixed to the tooth.
- Suitable for almost all case types.
- Monitored closely as you will be seen every 6-8 weeks to review progress and have any necessary adjustments to the brace.
- Suitable for all cases.

Cons:

- Must be worn permanently as they are glued to your teeth so they are not removable.
- Can be uncomfortable rub cheeks and gums causing grazes and ulcers.
- Hard chewy and crunchy foods such as sweets and crusty breads like paninis must not be consumed to avoid damaging the brace.
- Regular trips to your Orthodontist every 6-8 weeks to review progress and have any necessary adjustments to the brace.
- Oral hygiene must be kept at a high standard and require special care. Can cause damage to your teeth and gums if a strict routine is not followed.

WHY IS ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT BENEFICIAL?



It's more than straight teeth. It gives you a healthy smile that lasts a lifetime!



Orthodontic treatment is about making the very best of your teeth; it's about improving the harmony of your mouth and jaws. Once you can bite together correctly, you can eat more comfortably and care for your teeth and gums more easily. Age is no barrier to treatment. Patients frequently talk of the life-changing impact of treatment including increased self-esteem and enhanced oral health.

The benefits of orthodontic treatment include:

- Removal of dental crowding or closing spaces.
- Alignment of the upper and lower dental arches.
- Correction of the bite so that the front teeth meet on closing and the back teeth fit together.
- Reducing the likelihood of damage to prominent teeth.
- Enhancing facial aesthetics.
- Accommodating impacted, unerupted or displaced teeth.
- Preparation for advanced dental treatment, such as crowns, bridges or dental implants.
- Reversing the drifting of the teeth in older patients.
- Decreased risk of tooth decay, periodontal disease, and your gums may support your teeth better when they are well aligned. You also have a reduced risk of chipping, breaking, or wearing away your teeth when they fit together correctly. Braces could even relieve abnormal stress put on your jaw from misaligned teeth.

These are some of the most common reasons patients seek treatment:

- **Protruding upper front teeth** – one of the most common dental problems.
- **Crowding** – a narrow jaw may mean there is not enough room for your teeth, resulting in crowding. Conversely, some patients have significant gaps between their teeth.
- **Asymmetry** – particularly when the centre lines of the upper and lower front teeth do not match, perhaps because the teeth have drifted or the position of the jaw has shifted.
- **A deep bite** – when your upper teeth cover the lower teeth too much.
- **A reverse bite** – when your upper teeth bite inside the lower teeth.
- **An open bite** – when your front teeth remain apart when your back teeth meet; the tongue is often still visible between the upper and lower front teeth.
- **Impacted teeth** – in some patients, secondary teeth come through in the wrong position or do not erupt at all. Orthodontic treatment can help bring these teeth into the correct position.

EXAMPLES OF SMILES AFTER ORTHODONTIC TREATMENT

Gap Teeth vs Normal Smile



Overbite vs Healthy Bite



Crossbite vs Healthy Bite



Crowded Teeth vs Healthy Smile

