



How To Get a Beautiful Smile Without Being a “Metal Mouth”

**GET
IT
Straight!**
Orthodontics for
Children and Adults

by Dr. Terry Giangreco

How To Get a Beautiful Smile Without Being a“Metal Mouth”



In today's ever-changing world, the emphasis on esthetics and beauty is greater than ever. Many factors have made having a beautiful smile more important today than ever before: reality TV, makeover shows, tooth whitening products, social media, the list goes on and on. A great smile is probably the most important non-verbal aspect of a first impression. Oprah stated on her show that she assumes people with crooked teeth are poor or not intelligent. More and more adults are seeking orthodontic treatment to help create the smile they have always dreamed of. Fortunately, we are keeping our teeth for life and that wasn't always the case. Remember, until relatively recently, most people would

have lost their teeth to decay by their 30's or 40's—remember grandma's dentures? However, if your bite is off, you may eventually have trouble with cracked teeth, tooth wear, gum recession, and notching of the teeth by the gum line (a term dentists call abfraction). Not only is it important that your smile looks great, but the way your bite comes together needs to be healthy as well. So, with so many adults now seeking orthodontic treatment, the question is often asked, do I have to be a "metal mouth"? The answer is no—you also have cosmetic, or clear options and each has its own set of pros and cons.

Invisalign

Of all the clear options to move teeth, Invisalign is the most aesthetic. Over the past decade, through great marketing and word of mouth, Invisalign has become a household name and why wouldn't it be? Orthodontic treatment without braces? Yes please! Invisalign is a series of clear retainer-like trays called aligners.

Aligners are typically worn one or two weeks at a time before switching to a new aligner which is slightly different than the ones before. Over a series of these aligners, the teeth gradually become straight. One caution before choosing Invisalign: have a serious conversation with yourself and make sure you possess the self-discipline necessary to wear the aligners throughout the treatment. Many treatments are completed under a year, but for more difficult cases, treatments can take 18 months or more requiring discipline to continue wearing the aligners.





If you don't think you can do this, you should strongly consider clear braces.

Invisalign can be done by any licensed dentist. However, many dentists learn to do Invisalign over a weekend course and may not be best equipped to treat or even identify more complicated treatment. The great advantage of having Invisalign treatment performed by an orthodontist rather than a primary care dentist is that orthodontists can combine treatment methods with the aligners in tricky cases and get some really great results. The other advantage of being treated by an orthodontist is that if things just aren't progressing as planned, they can always fall back on braces if necessary. It's comforting to be in the experienced hands of a specialist to be sure.

Pros

- The most esthetic option for moving teeth
- Can be removed to eat
- Easy to keep teeth clean

Cons

- Not capable of treating more difficult cases
- Requires discipline to wear the trays all day and night for many months

Clear Braces

Although Invisalign is the most esthetic option, it has its limitations. On a scale from 1-10, Invisalign tops out with cases that are 5 or 6 in difficulty, even when you see the most skilled orthodontist. In more challenging cases, the best option may be clear braces. The author's personal favorite is currently the Damon Clear system. All other clear braces require the use of a clear elastic band to hold the wire and brace together. This band can collect bacteria and discolor when consuming food and beverages rich in color (spaghetti, coffee, wine). The Damon Clear system does not require these bands (little doors built into the brace keeps the wire secure) so they stay very clear (nearly transparent) throughout treatment. These braces are not noticeable when you are more than only a few feet away.



Pros

- Can treat more difficult problems
- Are much more clear than they use to be

Cons

- Slightly less esthetic than Invisalign
- Prone to the same problems that conventional braces have such as pokey wires and broken brackets

Accelerated Orthodontics

For many people, the time spent in orthodontic treatment is actually more important than how noticeable the braces are. Maybe you or your child is getting married in the future and you want your new smile in a year or less. By combining state-of-the-art advancements in orthodontic technology and advanced bone modulation, we can now complete almost all treatment safely and effectively in under a year and many in as little as four to six months. Plus, you can use clear braces with these techniques! For more information on accelerated orthodontics, visit www.acceledent.com.

Beware of catchy brand names and ‘too good to be true’ promises of braces claiming faster treatment. Many braces companies imply in their name that their braces work better and faster than traditional orthodontics. Most of the differences in these techniques simply boil down to marketing. The names sound interesting, but commonly these procedures are offered by general dentists, not orthodontists. Be very careful and do your homework before choosing treatments promising fast tooth movements or the ability to finish braces in five or six months.

Pros

- Can be a great way to achieve high quality treatment in a fraction of the time.

Cons

- Brand names and marketing can be misleading and you may not be getting what you think you are.
- Be sure to do your homework.

Today's orthodontic treatments offer more options than ever before for those looking to avoid metal braces. I have provided a brief summary of the different choices for you here, but keep in mind every individual is unique and requires a customized treatment plan by a well trained orthodontist for the best results. Our office would be happy to schedule a free consultation for anyone looking for details specific to their own needs. You can learn more information about our office at www.get-it-straight.com.



get-it-straight.com

GET
IT

Straight!

*Orthodontics for
Children and Adults*

