

Invisalign® System Frequently Asked Questions.



What is Invisalign®?

Invisalign is the virtually invisible way to straighten your teeth and achieve the smile you've always dreamed of. Using advanced 3D computer-imaging technology, Invisalign depicts your complete treatment plan based on your Invisalign Provider's prescription, from the initial position of your teeth to the final desired position. Then a series of clear aligners are custom-made for your teeth – and your teeth only – to move them little by little. Each aligner is worn for about two weeks before being replaced by the next in the series, gradually moving towards the projected final position. Your Invisalign treatment time will be determined by your Invisalign Provider, based on your specific needs.

What are the benefits of Invisalign?

Invisalign aligners are nearly invisible. No one may even notice that you're wearing these virtually invisible aligners, making Invisalign a seamless fit with your lifestyle and day-to-day interactions with others.

Invisalign aligners are removable giving you the flexibility to eat and drink what you want during treatment by simply removing the aligners. And you can also remove the aligners to brush and floss as you normally would for fresh breath and to maintain good oral hygiene.

Unlike traditional fixed braces, there are no metal brackets or wires. This means that in most cases less time is spent in your Invisalign Provider's practice for adjustments.

And finally, Invisalign allows you to view your virtual results and treatment plan before you even begin treatment so you can see how your teeth are expected to look when your treatment is complete.

Is this a new way to straighten teeth?

Dentists or orthodontists have, in the past, successfully used removable appliances for years. But with the application of Align Technology's 3D computer technology and mass-customisation, the Invisalign System can be used to treat a wide range of patients who want straighter teeth. The unique ClinCheck® software allows patients to see their treatment plan from beginning to end even before the start of treatment.

How old is the company?

Align Technology, Inc., the company that manufactures Invisalign, was founded in 1997.

How old is the technology?

In 1945, Dr. H.D. Kiesling envisioned that one day modern technology would enable the use of a series of tooth positioners to produce the kinds of movements required for comprehensive orthodontic treatment. Align Technology has made this vision a reality. Using advanced computer technology, Align Technology produces Invisalign, a series of customised clear aligners. Each aligner is worn sequentially by the patient to produce gradual tooth movements in both upper and lower arches.

How many patients are being treated with Invisalign?

More than 3.5 million patients worldwide have been treated with Invisalign. The number of Invisalign smiles grows daily.

Where is Invisalign available?

Invisalign is sold in over 45 countries using a direct sales model in the US, Canada, Europe, China, Japan and Asia Pacific, and distributors in smaller emerging growth countries in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and Latin America.

How much does Invisalign cost?

As with other types of orthodontic treatment, the cost of Invisalign is dependent on the complexity of your issue and your course of treatment. As a general rule the cost is comparable to traditional fixed braces. And, although only an Invisalign Provider is able to fully determine your cost, prices for Invisalign treatment are generally between £2,500 -£4,500. However, if only minor tooth movement is required, prices could start from £1,500.

How do I get started with Invisalign?

Make an appointment with an Invisalign Provider for an initial consultation. Find an Invisalign Provider in your area today.

How does Invisalign work?

Invisalign aligners move teeth with an appropriate placement of controlled movement on the teeth. Unlike traditional braces, Invisalign not only controls the amount of movement per aligner, but also the timing of the movement. So at each stage, only certain teeth are allowed to move, as per the Invisalign treatment plan for that particular stage. This results in an efficient force delivery system that moves teeth into the desired prescribed position.

What are aligners made of and what do they look like?

The virtually invisible aligners are made of strong medical grade thermoplastic material, uniquely developed for the Invisalign System. The aligners are custom-made for you and fit snugly over your teeth.

Can I go to any dental practitioner for treatment with Invisalign?

While Invisalign can be used with virtually any treatment philosophy, special training is needed. All orthodontists and dentists interested in treating patients with Invisalign must attend training to become qualified and proficient in the various requirements for treating patients before treatments will be accepted from their office. More than 82,000 dentists and orthodontists worldwide are already trained to treat patients using Invisalign. Find an Invisalign Provider near you.

What is the minimum age of a patient that a doctor can treat with Invisalign?

With experience, an Invisalign Provider can use Invisalign to treat malocclusion for a majority of adults and adolescents who want a better smile. For teenagers, talk to your Invisalign Provider to see if Invisalign Teen may be the right treatment option for your child.

How often must I see my Invisalign Provider once I have started treatment?

Appointment intervals are generally the same as with traditional braces but can be much quicker with less time spent in the dentists' or orthodontists' chair during appointments as no adjustments need to be made to wires/brackets. Patients typically visit their Invisalign Provider every 4 to 6 weeks to ensure the treatment is progressing as planned, and to receive their next few sets of Invisalign aligners, but your Invisalign Provider will decide based on your treatment.

How long does the Invisalign treatment take?

The total duration of treatment depends on the complexity of the treatment and is generally comparable to that of traditional braces. Typically treatment can last between 9 and 18 months. During your consultation, your Invisalign Provider can provide you with more detailed information.

Is the Invisalign treatment painful?

Some people may experience temporary, minor discomfort for a few days, at the beginning of each new stage of treatment when they insert a new aligner. This is normal and is typically described as a feeling of pressure. It is a sign that the aligners are working – moving your teeth gradually, helping you to achieve the final results. This discomfort typically goes away in a couple of days.

Does the procedure work on overbites?

An Invisalign Provider can use Invisalign to treat overbites in the vast majority of adults and adolescents. Consult an Invisalign Provider to determine whether Invisalign is suitable for you.

Are there certain dental conditions that automatically exclude someone from being an eligible patient?

Only your Invisalign Provider can determine if you are a good candidate for Invisalign treatment.

Are bridges a factor in Invisalign treatment?

Because bridges firmly link two or more teeth together, they offer significant resistance to tooth movement. Your Invisalign Provider will be able to determine whether bridges will be a factor in your treatment.

Are crowns a factor in Invisalign treatment?

Crowns (tooth caps) are usually not a factor in Invisalign treatment. However, sometimes small tooth-coloured composites called "attachments" are bonded onto teeth to help achieve certain movements and are more difficult to bond on crowns than teeth. In these cases, the location of crowns must be carefully evaluated. An Invisalign Provider can provide further advice.

Can Invisalign close gaps?

Yes. Spaces between teeth are generally easy to close with Invisalign. Consult an Invisalign Provider to determine whether Invisalign is suitable for you.

Will TMJ affect Invisalign treatment?

To find out if your TMJ problem will adversely impact treatment, consult an Invisalign Provider.

TMJ refers to the temporomandibular (jaw) joint. People with a TMJ condition can have a number of problems with the jaw joint, some of which can be aggravated by appliances and treatments like Invisalign, and some which can improve, remain the same or even cause the condition to deteriorate.

Once Invisalign treatment is complete is a retainer necessary?

Wearing a retainer after any orthodontic treatment is an important step, because it keeps teeth stable in their new positions. If you want your teeth to remain in their ideal position, it is best to wear a retainer as directed by an Invisalign Provider. In many cases your last aligner will be your temporary retainer, until your retention option is determined. Your Invisalign Provider can advise you on longer term retention options.

Since having my braces removed, my teeth have shifted.

Can Invisalign correct this?

A number of Invisalign patients have undergone a previous treatment involving braces at some point in their past, often during their youth. Invisalign can usually correct the shifting that occurs after braces commonly referred to as relapse.

I am currently wearing braces. Can I make the switch to Invisalign?

A significant number of patients are being treated with a combination of braces and Invisalign. Consult an Invisalign Provider to determine the best treatment for you.

Are there restrictions on what I can eat while in treatment?

No. Unlike traditional wires and brackets, you can eat whatever you like while in treatment because you remove your aligners to eat and drink. Thus, there is no need to restrict consuming any of your favourite foods and snacks. Also, it is important that you brush and floss your teeth after each meal and prior to re-inserting your aligners to maintain proper hygiene.

How often must the aligners be worn?

Aligners should be worn all the time during treatment, except when eating, brushing or flossing teeth.

Will the aligners affect speech?

The vast majority of patients report no effect on speech. However, as with traditional orthodontic appliances, there is an initial adjustment period associated with having something new in the mouth.

Can I smoke while wearing the aligners?

Smoking is discouraged while wearing aligners because it is possible for the aligners to become stained or discoloured.

Can I chew gum while wearing aligners?

Chewing gum while wearing aligners is not advised as gum can stick to aligners. It is recommended that aligners be removed for all meals and snacks.

What's the best way to clean my aligners?

The best way to clean your aligners is by brushing and rinsing them in lukewarm water and using the Invisalign Cleaning Crystals or special cleaning tablets. It's important that you brush your teeth after each meal and prior to re-inserting your aligners to maintain proper hygiene.