Smile Design in Melbourne: How We Can Help | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/can-help-smile-design/

Details:

Yes, we can help with smile design. Smile design looks beyond changing tooth colour and shape. It also considers your gum lines, lips, eyes and surrounding soft tissue, so that the planned result suits your face. At Core Dental the process starts with a consultation, where we take facial photographs or video and dental impressions as reference material. We can then show you a digital preview of a proposed result before any treatment begins. Suitability depends on your own examination, and results vary for each person.

What is smile design?

Smile design is a planning approach for cosmetic dental treatment. Rather than looking at teeth alone, it takes into account the whole face, including your lips, your gum lines and the soft tissue around your mouth. The aim is a plan that looks natural for you and that you have helped shape. Treatments that may be part of a smile design plan include teeth whitening , veneers , crowns and orthodontic treatment, depending on your examination.

What does the first consultation involve?

The process begins with an initial consultation. A practitioner takes several facial photographs or video recordings, and dental impressions or moulds are made as reference material. We also talk with you about what you would like to change, what you like about your smile, and any health or timing considerations. This is also the time to ask about treatment options and costs.

Who designs the smile after the consultation?

After your consultation, your records are used to prepare a design that suits your mouth, tooth shape and size. We use digital planning tools to do this, and our dentists review the design with you. Digital smile design is available at our Caroline Springs practice, and other treatment planning options are available across our practices. Please ask our team which of our practices can plan your treatment when you book.

How will you see the proposed smile?

The proposed design can be shown as a digital image that illustrates what the result may look like, and you may also be able to see a physical version of the proposed outcome. Your input at this stage is important. Involving you in the design helps make sure the plan reflects your preferences. A preview is a guide only, and the final result depends on your teeth, your treatment and how you respond.

Does previewing a smile design change your teeth?

No. A design preview does not make any change to your existing teeth. This allows you to see a proposed result and give feedback before any dental work begins. If you decide to go ahead, your dentist will explain the treatment steps, the number of visits, the risks and limitations, and the costs.

What does smile design cost, and can you pay over time?

Costs depend on the treatments in your plan, so we quote before treatment starts and give you a written plan to review. We offer interest-free payment plans so you can spread the cost of treatment. Payright plans offer 0% interest with fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months, for plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility (aged 18 or over, an Australian permanent resident, with identification and a verifiable email and mobile). Terms were published as at September 2026 and should be confirmed with our team.

How can we help?

If you are thinking about changing your smile, our team can help you at any of our nine practices. Call 13 13 16 or book online, and tell us you would like a cosmetic consultation. Read more about cosmetic dentistry and our dentists and registered specialists .

The published order of operations: health, cause, options, plan

Any process for redesigning a smile is only as good as what happens before the design. The state health advice sets out four steps in order, and the first two are the ones most often skipped.

The Victorian Department of Health: "Cosmetic dentistry procedures can improve the appearance of your teeth and your smile. But the first step is to make sure your teeth and mouth are in good health."

Its own list of what to do before starting, verbatim:

"Treat any disease first. Your health is the priority."

"Find out what is causing the unsatisfactory appearance of your teeth."

"Talk about the range of treatment options."

"Work out a realistic plan that suits you."

Step one is a sequencing rule, not a disclaimer. Treat disease first, because health is the priority. An appliance, veneer or whitening gel applied over active decay or gum disease is building on something that is still moving.

Step two is diagnostic and it changes what you would choose. Finding the cause matters because treatments address different causes. If discolouration is the issue, "tooth decay, fillings, crowns, bridges, veneers, false teeth and some types of discolouration do not whiten" — so the right treatment depends entirely on which of those applies. If the cause is wear, the Department notes elsewhere that worn areas "can be difficult to repair, as fillings are more likely to break or wear down as well".

Step three is about breadth. The Department is explicit that options vary in suitability: "There are many ways to change the appearance of your teeth or to replace missing teeth, although not all treatment options may be right for you."

Step four is the word "realistic". A plan that suits you, which is also where the published advice asks you to be honest about something other than money.

The commitment nobody mentions. Among the things to think about beforehand, the Department includes: "How much effort you would be prepared to put into looking after your teeth at home in the future. Most cosmetic dental treatment requires extra care at home to prevent tooth decay, gum disease or other problems. Cleaning the area well and having a healthy diet is essential."

Most cosmetic dental treatment requires extra care at home. That is a cost in daily effort rather than dollars, and it continues for as long as the work is in your mouth.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Cosmetic dentistry and teeth whitening, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 December 2025); Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025). Both accessed 6 November 2026.

The four questions, and the one word that matters most

The Department publishes a list of questions to ask before cosmetic treatment. One of them is the single most useful question anyone can ask in a design consultation, and it is not about price.

The questions, verbatim:

"What options are available and the pros and the cons of each option."

"What results can be reasonably expected."

"What costs, time and money, are involved and if payment options are available."

"Any possible side effects or complications."

"Reasonably expected" is the phrase to use. A digital preview or mock-up shows an intended outcome. Asking what can be reasonably expected invites the difference between the two — and that is a question a practitioner can answer honestly, where "will it look like the picture" is not.

Note also that the cost question has two units. "Costs, time and money" — time is in the Department's own wording, because some options take multiple appointments and some do not.

Which brings in the pace you are entitled to. "If it is a simple procedure, it may be done on the day. If it is a complex procedure, you may need time to think about your options, or see specialists over multiple visits."

See specialists, plural, over multiple visits. For a complex plan, that is the published expectation rather than a delay.

And the irreversibility question belongs in the "side effects or complications" answer. Two of the Department's own statements are worth asking about by name, because they are permanent in a way most cosmetic language does not convey:

On veneers: "It can be irreversible; once the tooth is cut for a veneer, it may always need a veneer."

On crowns: "It is irreversible; once a tooth is cut for a crown, it will always need a crown."

The Department also explains why tooth is removed at all. For a veneer, "a thin layer of tooth may be removed from the surface of the tooth to make space for the material". For a crown, "a thin layer of tooth may be removed from the top and all around the tooth to make space for the material". And it names a specific consequence for crowns: "A layer of tooth needs to be removed to fit the crown. In some cases this can get close to the nerve and blood vessels inside the tooth (pulp) and the tooth may need further treatment, like a root canal treatment."

The least invasive option gets a mention too. Resin composite "is a tooth-coloured material that is glued (bonded) onto the tooth", is "placed directly on the tooth and set immediately with a light", and is "one of the fastest treatment options and is usually completed in one appointment". Its own limits are stated plainly: "It can chip or fall out and need replacing again", and "colour options are more limited so it may be hard to get a good match."

So there is a real ladder here, from a material bonded onto the tooth, through a veneer that requires a thin layer to be cut, to a crown that requires cutting all around. Asking where on that ladder a proposed plan sits — and what each step cannot be undone — is the most useful thing a design consultation can establish.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Cosmetic dentistry and teeth whitening, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 12 December 2025). Accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Is smile design only about tooth colour?

No. Smile design considers tooth colour and shape, and also your gum lines, lips and the soft tissue around your mouth, so that the plan suits your face.

Do I need to commit to treatment after a design consultation?

No. A consultation and design preview are for planning. You can take time to consider the plan, ask questions and review the costs before deciding.

Will the digital preview match my final result?

A preview is a guide to what the result may look like. Your final result depends on your teeth, the treatment you have and your own response, and results vary for each person.

Which treatments might be part of a smile design plan?

Depending on your examination, a plan could include whitening, composite or porcelain veneers, crowns or orthodontic treatment. Your dentist explains which options suit you and the risks of each.

Can I get a quote before I start?

Yes. We quote before treatment starts so that you know what to expect, and we can explain our interest-free payment plans.

What should happen before any cosmetic work starts?

Four steps, in the Victorian Department of Health's order: "Treat any disease first. Your health is the priority."; "Find out what is causing the unsatisfactory appearance of your teeth."; "Talk about the range of treatment options."; "Work out a realistic plan that suits you."

Why does the cause of the appearance matter?

Because it determines which treatments can work at all. For example, "tooth decay, fillings, crowns, bridges, veneers, false teeth and some types of discolouration do not whiten", so whitening is the wrong answer for several common causes.

Will every option be available to me?

No. "There are many ways to change the appearance of your teeth or to replace missing teeth, although not all treatment options may be right for you."

What is the single most useful question to ask?

"What results can be reasonably expected." It is on the Department's own list, and it invites the gap between a mock-up and a likely outcome — which a practitioner can answer honestly.

What else does the Department suggest asking?

"What options are available and the pros and the cons of each option."; "What costs, time and money, are involved and if payment options are available."; "Any possible side effects or complications."

Do I have to decide at the consultation?

No. "If it is a simple procedure, it may be done on the day. If it is a complex procedure, you may need time to think about your options, or see specialists over multiple visits."

Which options cannot be undone?

Two in particular. On veneers: "It can be irreversible; once the tooth is cut for a veneer, it may always need a veneer." On crowns: "It is irreversible; once a tooth is cut for a crown, it will always need a crown."

Why does tooth need to be removed?

To make room for the material. For a veneer, "a thin layer of tooth may be removed from the surface of the tooth"; for a crown, "a thin layer of tooth may be removed from the top and all around the tooth". For crowns the Department adds a specific risk: "In some cases this can get close to the nerve and blood vessels inside the tooth (pulp) and the tooth may need further treatment, like a root canal treatment."

Is there a less invasive option?

Resin composite, which "is a tooth-coloured material that is glued (bonded) onto the tooth", "placed directly on the tooth and set immediately with a light", and "usually completed in one appointment". Its limits: "It can chip or fall out and need replacing again", and "colour options are more limited so it may be hard to get a good match."

Is there an ongoing commitment after the work is done?

Yes, and the Department asks you to weigh it beforehand: "How much effort you would be prepared to put into looking after your teeth at home in the future. Most cosmetic dental treatment requires extra care at home to prevent tooth decay, gum disease or other problems. Cleaning the area well and having a healthy diet is essential."

Related services and further reading

Cosmetic dentistry

Teeth whitening

Composite and porcelain veneers

Dental crowns

Invisalign treatment

Caroline Springs dentist

5 tips for a healthier smile

Dental payment plans

Core Dental at a glance

Nine Core Dental clinics across Melbourne: Southbank, South Melbourne, Caroline Springs, Carrum Downs, Epping, Wyndham, Berwick, Bayside and Glenferrie.

Open six days a week: Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans, with HICAPS on-site claiming.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through your practice page, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday mornings, Sunday closed

This article is general in nature and does not replace advice from a registered dental practitioner who has examined you. Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

Does Core Dental offer smile design?

Yes. Core Dental can help with smile design, which considers tooth colour and shape along with your gum lines, lips and surrounding soft tissue. Suitability depends on your examination.

What happens at a smile design consultation at Core Dental?

A practitioner takes facial photographs or video and dental impressions as reference material, and we talk about what you would like to change. We then plan options and explain costs before treatment starts.

Where is digital smile design available at Core Dental?

Digital smile design is available at Core Dental Caroline Springs. Please ask our team about planning options at your nearest Core Dental practice when you book your consultation.

Can I preview my new smile before treatment?

Yes. We can show a digital image of what a proposed result may look like before any dental work begins. A preview is a guide only, and individual results vary.

Does a smile design preview change my teeth?

No. Viewing a smile design preview makes no change to your existing teeth. It lets you give feedback at Core Dental before any treatment starts.

What treatments can form part of a smile design plan?

Depending on your examination, a plan may include teeth whitening, composite or porcelain veneers, crowns or orthodontic treatment. Our Core Dental dentists explain the options and risks.

How do I book a smile design consultation at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through your nearest practice page, and ask for a cosmetic consultation. We are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings.

Can I pay for cosmetic treatment over time at Core Dental?

Yes. Core Dental offers interest-free payment plans, including Payright at 0% interest over 3 to 30 months for plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility. Terms published as at September 2026 should be confirmed.