Dental Check-Up Cost in Melbourne: 2026 Guide | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/how-much-does-a-dental-check-up-cost-in-melbourne-2026-guide/

Details:

A standard dental check-up and clean in Melbourne typically costs somewhere between $200 and $450, depending on what is included and which practice you visit. Our guide figure for an examination, bitewing X-rays and a scale and clean is about $250 to $400. These figures were published as at September 2026 and can change, so confirm the current fee when you book. At Core Dental we explain what your check-up includes and quote before treatment starts.

Why is the cost of a dental check-up so hard to pin down?

It is one of the questions people ask most often, and one of the hardest to answer in a single number. The short answer is a range of roughly $200 to $450 for an examination and clean. The longer answer, which is the one that helps you decide, depends on what a check-up includes, why prices vary between practices, what your health fund covers and what you are actually receiving for the fee.

If you have been putting off a dental visit because you are unsure about cost, you are not alone. Many people delay care because of cost concerns, yet skipping preventive check-ups can allow small problems to grow. A small cavity can become a larger filling or root canal treatment, a minor crack can become a broken tooth, and gum disease can progress quietly until teeth start to loosen. Regular check-ups give your dentist a chance to find problems early, when treatment is usually simpler.

This guide explains what a dental check-up involves, the figures we publish for 2026, how to use your health fund benefits and what to look for in a practice. Fees, rebates and finance terms can change. Please confirm the current written terms, what a quoted figure includes and any health fund rebate before booking or paying.

What does a typical check-up cost at each stage?

The figures below are guide ranges published as at September 2026, not a quote. Your own fee depends on your clinic, your dentist and what your mouth needs.

Standard check-up total (examination, bitewing X-rays, and scale and clean): typically about $250 to $400.

Enhanced check-up (the standard check-up plus an OPG panoramic X-ray and fluoride treatment): typically about $350 to $500.

Bitewing X-rays (two films, item 022 twice): typically about $70 to $110.

Scale and clean (item codes 114 or 121): typically about $120 to $250.

Some clinics offer a new patient pack or a no-gap check-up and clean for new patients with eligible private health cover that includes dental, depending on the level of cover. Ask your clinic what is currently offered, and see our page on the no-gap dental check-up .

What does a standard dental check-up include?

Not all check-ups are the same, which is where cost comparisons can mislead. The phrase can mean anything from a quick visual inspection to a thorough examination with imaging, risk assessment and a written treatment plan. A thorough check-up generally includes:

a review of your medical history, medications and any concerns

an examination of your teeth, existing fillings and crowns

an examination of your gums, bite and jaw joints

a check for signs of decay, wear, cracks and gum disease

X-rays where they are clinically needed, such as bitewings to look between the teeth

a scale and clean to remove plaque and tartar, and a polish

advice on brushing, cleaning between the teeth and diet

a discussion of any treatment you may need, and its cost, before it begins

A full examination at our clinics generally takes between 30 minutes and an hour, depending on what is needed. See our dental check-up page for more detail.

Is oral cancer screening part of a check-up?

Yes. Your dentist looks at your lips, tongue, cheeks, floor of the mouth, palate and throat area as part of an examination. Dentists are often the first health professionals to notice a suspicious ulcer, patch or lump. Early detection of mouth cancer matters, so please tell your dentist about any sore that has not healed in about two weeks, or any lump or patch that is changing. Our article on mouth cancer has more information.

What do the ADA item numbers on your invoice mean?

Every dental service in Australia is assigned an item number under the Australian Dental Association's schedule. These standardised numbers help you see exactly what you are being charged for, help health funds work out rebates and let you compare like with like across practices. Common numbers for a routine check-up include:

011 : comprehensive oral examination (new patient or comprehensive review)

012 : periodic oral examination (returning patient)

013 : limited oral examination (focused on a specific concern)

022 : intraoral radiograph, such as a bitewing (per film)

114 : scaling and removal of calculus, first visit

115 : scaling and removal of calculus, subsequent visit

121 : removal of plaque or calculus, simplified scale

141 : fluoride treatment

When you receive a quote or an invoice, the item numbers let you see what is included. If you are unsure about any of them, ask our team to explain.

Why do dental check-up prices vary between practices?

The difference between a $200 check-up and a $400 check-up is not random. It can reflect real differences in what you receive:

Appointment time. A short appointment fitted between other patients leaves less time for examination, imaging and discussion than a longer appointment set aside for that purpose.

Diagnostic technology. Digital X-rays, OPG panoramic X-rays and intraoral cameras help your dentist see and explain what is happening. This equipment is costly to buy and maintain, and fees reflect that.

Clinician experience and training. Dentists vary in experience and in further study. These differences are not visible on a price list.

Who performs the clean. Some practices use dental hygienists or oral health therapists for scaling and cleaning, while others have the dentist do everything. Either approach can be appropriate, but the staffing structure affects pricing.

Infection control and sterilisation. Instrument sterilisation, single-use items, surface barriers and cleaning protocols take time and money. They are not glamorous, but they are essential.

How can you get the most from your health fund?

If you have private health insurance with extras cover, preventive dental care is typically covered to some extent. Some ways to use your benefits well:

Use the check-ups your policy allows. If your policy covers two a year, it makes sense to use both.

Check the waiting gap. Some funds require a minimum time, often about six months, between claims for the same item.

Know your annual limits. Many extras policies have a combined annual limit for general dental. Preventive visits count towards that limit, which leaves less for fillings or other treatment.

Ask about preferred provider arrangements. Some funds negotiate reduced out-of-pocket fees with preferred provider practices. At some of our clinics we are preferred providers for funds such as HCF, CBHS and NIB, so ask your clinic whether your fund is included.

Do not let a limit decide your treatment. If your dentist recommends treatment that goes beyond your annual benefit, the need for it does not change. Delaying a filling because your limit has run out can turn a small problem into a larger one.

We claim from private health funds on-site with HICAPS, so you can see your rebate and any out-of-pocket amount before you leave. Rebates depend on your fund and level of cover.

What is the hidden cost of skipping check-ups?

Prevention is not only a talking point. Treatment generally becomes more involved the longer a problem is left. An untreated cavity can progress from a small filling to a larger restoration, then possibly to root canal treatment and a crown, and in some cases to extraction and replacement of the tooth. Each step usually costs more and takes more appointments than the one before it. Costs vary widely with the tooth and the treatment, so we do not publish a single figure here.

The same applies to gum disease. Early gum inflammation (gingivitis) can often be reversed with a professional clean and good home care. Advanced gum disease may need several specialist appointments and ongoing maintenance. Regular check-ups let your dentist spot changes early, so you can decide on treatment while options are broad.

What should you look for in a practice?

Price matters, but so does what you receive for it. We suggest looking for:

A comprehensive first visit. Your first appointment should include a thorough examination, imaging where needed, a clear explanation of what was found and a written treatment plan.

Up-front pricing. You should know what a check-up costs before you book. Our reception team can give you a fee estimate when you book, and we quote before treatment starts.

Continuity of care. Seeing the same dentist at regular visits helps them notice small changes over time.

A network for when you need more. Routine check-ups are general dentistry, but sometimes a more complex problem is found. We have nine clinics across Melbourne and a team that includes dentists, hygienists and registered specialists, so you can be referred within our group where needed. See our page on registered specialists .

What is the Child Dental Benefits Schedule?

If you have children aged 0 to 17, check whether they qualify for the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS). This Medicare program provides a capped amount of dental benefits over a two-year period for eligible children, whose families receive certain government payments such as Family Tax Benefit Part A. Services Australia covers "up to $1,158 for each eligible child over 2 calendar years for basic dental services under CDBS" and indexes that cap each 1 January, so please check the current amount before relying on it (figure as published at 4 November 2026), per servicesaustralia.gov.au . Covered services include examinations, X-rays, cleaning, fissure sealing, fillings, root canal treatment and extractions. The CDBS does not cover orthodontics, cosmetic procedures or hospital services. Eligibility is assessed by Services Australia, so please confirm your child's eligibility with them. At Core Dental we bulk bill eligible children under the CDBS, and our team can help with questions when you book. Read our article on the CDBS and bulk bill dentistry .

What should you know about discounted check-up offers?

You may have seen advertisements for very low-priced check-ups, such as a flat $99 offer or a free first visit. These offers are not automatically a problem, but they are worth reading carefully:

What is included? A check-up priced for an examination only, with no X-rays and no clean, is not the same service as a check-up that includes imaging and a scale and clean.

What happens next? Ask how any treatment will be explained, quoted and consented to, and make sure you receive a written plan before you commit.

What is not included? Time, thoroughness and clinical expertise all have a cost. Compare the full scope of what you receive, not just the headline price.

Whichever practice you choose, ask for a written treatment plan and a quote, and feel free to take time to think before you decide.

How can we help?

Whether it has been six months or six years since your last visit, the next check-up is a good place to start. We have nine clinics across Melbourne, open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings. Call 13 13 16 or book online, and our reception team can give you a fee estimate. See our dental check-ups page for what to expect, and our dental payment plans page if you would like to spread the cost of treatment. We offer interest-free payment plans, including Payright (0% interest, fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months, plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility) and TLC loans ($2,001 to $50,000 over up to 84 months, rate set by credit assessment). Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book.

How many Australians delay dental care because of cost?

More than one in four adults. A 2023 report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare found that more than a quarter of Australian adults avoided or delayed dental care due to cost concerns.

That is the context for every figure on this page. Cost is not a peripheral consideration in Australian dental care, it is the single most common reason people do not attend, and the consequence is that problems are found later and treated more extensively than they needed to be.

It is also why the preventive benefits sitting unused in private health policies matter. Many Australians leave hundreds of dollars of preventive dental benefits unclaimed each year, typically because the policy year resets before the second check-up is booked.

What exactly is examined during a check-up?

Not all check-ups cover the same ground, which is what makes price comparisons between practices misleading. A comprehensive examination generally includes each of the following.

Gum health evaluation , including probing depths, bleeding on probing and gum recession.

Bite assessment , checking for signs of grinding, clenching or malocclusion, meaning a bite that does not meet evenly.

Existing restoration review , checking the integrity of fillings, crowns, bridges and implants.

Soft tissue examination of the gums, lips, tongue, cheeks, palate and floor of the mouth.

The appointment should end with a written summary of findings, prioritised treatment recommendations, and a clear explanation of what needs attention now as against what can reasonably be monitored. If you leave without knowing which category each finding falls into, ask before you go.

Which X-rays are taken, and why?

Three kinds of imaging are used in general dentistry, and they answer different questions.

Bitewing X-rays , typically two to four films, detect decay between the teeth and bone loss around the roots. These are areas that are invisible to the naked eye, which is why a visual examination alone cannot rule decay out.

A panoramic X-ray , known as an OPG, may be recommended periodically to assess the wisdom teeth, the jaw joints, the sinuses and overall bone levels.

3D cone beam CT , known as CBCT, is used for specific clinical needs such as implant planning or complex root canal assessment. It is not part of a routine check-up.

Digital X-rays involve lower radiation than film and give immediate results, and intraoral cameras let you see what the dentist is seeing on a screen rather than taking it on trust. Your dentist should tell you why any particular image is being taken and what they are looking for.

What does the clean itself involve?

A professional clean is a clinical procedure rather than a cosmetic one, and it has three parts.

Removal of calculus , meaning hardened plaque, from above and below the gum line, using ultrasonic instruments and hand scalers. Calculus cannot be removed by brushing once it has hardened.

Polishing , which removes surface stains from coffee, tea and red wine.

Fluoride application , particularly recommended for patients with a high decay risk.

The part that happens below the gum line is the part that matters most for gum health, and it is also the part that takes the time.

Why does oral cancer screening deserve special mention?

Because the difference that early detection makes is larger than for almost anything else found at a check-up, and it is one of the least discussed components of the appointment.

Oral cancers detected early have a five-year survival rate above 80 per cent. Detected late, that figure drops below 30 per cent. The screening itself takes a minute or two and involves examining the soft tissues of the mouth, the tongue and the floor of the mouth, and feeling the neck and jaw for anything unexpected.

This is a screening rather than a diagnosis. Where something warrants further investigation, we explain what we have found and arrange the appropriate referral.

How do records move between Core Dental practices?

Core Dental's nine Melbourne locations are connected through CareStack, which means your records, X-rays and treatment history follow you between practices rather than starting again at each one.

That has a practical consequence for complex cases. If a check-up at Core Dental Epping reveals a case requiring specialist input, the referral pathway to the Smile Solutions Specialist Centre in the CBD is already established, with the same records and imaging already in place. A practice connected to specialist services, including orthodontics, periodontics, endodontics and oral surgery, means you are not left looking for a referral without guidance.

Integrated records are also why you can attend a different practice when it suits your week without repeating the diagnostic work.

What should you weigh besides the price?

Cost matters and it is reasonable to compare it. It should not be the only factor, for a straightforward reason: a check-up is a diagnostic appointment, and what you are buying is the thoroughness of the assessment and the time to explain it.

Three things are worth asking about.

Time. How long is the appointment, and does it include the examination, the imaging and the clean, or are those billed and booked separately?

Diagnostic equipment. Digital radiography, intraoral cameras, caries detection systems and 3D imaging support more accurate diagnosis, and they represent substantial ongoing investment by a practice.

What the quote covers. Ask for the fee in writing with the ADA item numbers listed, so you can compare like with like between practices and check it against your health fund's schedule.

Discounted check-up offers are not inherently bad, but they are worth a question or two: what the advertised price actually includes, whether X-rays and a clean are part of it, and what the fee will be for the follow-up treatment the visit identifies.

Frequently asked questions

How often should I have a dental check-up?

Many people are advised to have a check-up about every six months, but the right interval depends on your oral health, your risk of decay and gum disease, and your dentist's advice. Our dental check-ups page explains what to expect, and your dentist can set a schedule for you.

What is the difference between a standard and an enhanced check-up?

A standard check-up usually covers an examination, bitewing X-rays and a scale and clean. An enhanced check-up adds an OPG panoramic X-ray and a fluoride treatment. Your dentist recommends what you need based on your mouth and history, and we explain the fee first.

Can I claim a check-up on my private health insurance?

Many extras policies cover preventive dental care, with the rebate depending on your fund, your level of cover and your annual limits. We claim on-site with HICAPS, so you can see your rebate at the time. Check your policy for waiting periods and limits.

Are check-ups free for children?

Eligible children aged 0 to 17 may receive dental care under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule, which we bulk bill. Eligibility is assessed by Services Australia. Confirm your child's eligibility and ask our team to help when you book.

How long does a check-up appointment take?

A full examination generally takes between 30 minutes and an hour, depending on whether X-rays and a clean are needed. If you are a new patient, allow a little extra time for your history and any imaging.

Why can't a visual check alone rule out decay?

Because decay between the teeth and bone loss around the roots are not visible to the naked eye. Bitewing X-rays, usually two to four films, are what show those areas, which is why imaging is part of a comprehensive examination rather than an optional extra.

How much difference does early detection make for oral cancer?

A large one. Oral cancers detected early have a five-year survival rate above 80 per cent; detected late, that figure drops below 30 per cent. The screening takes a minute or two as part of the soft tissue examination.

Do I need a CBCT scan at a check-up?

No. 3D cone beam CT is used for specific clinical needs such as implant planning or complex root canal assessment, not for routine check-ups. An OPG may be recommended periodically to assess wisdom teeth, jaw joints, sinuses and bone levels.

Will my records transfer if I visit a different Core Dental practice?

Yes. The nine Melbourne locations are connected through CareStack, so records, X-rays and treatment history follow you between practices, and a referral to specialist care goes through an established pathway with your imaging already attached.

Related services and further reading

Dental check-ups

General dentistry: dental check-up

No-gap dental check-up

Dental hygiene

Dental payment plans

How Core Dental makes dental care affordable

What does a hygiene appointment involve?

What to expect at your first Core Dental appointment

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, offer interest-free payment plans and claim from private health funds on-site with HICAPS.

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online via coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), Sunday closed
Clinics	Southbank , South Melbourne , Caroline Springs , Carrum Downs , Epping , Wyndham , Berwick , Bayside , Glenferrie

Results, recovery times and potential risks vary for each individual. This information is general in nature and is intended for people over 18. Seek advice from a qualified, AHPRA-registered practitioner before proceeding.

How much does a dental check-up and clean cost in Melbourne?

A check-up and clean in Melbourne typically costs about $200 to $450, and our guide figure for an examination, bitewings and scale and clean is about $250 to $400, published as at September 2026. Confirm the current Core Dental fee when you book.

What does an enhanced check-up at Core Dental include?

An enhanced check-up adds an OPG panoramic X-ray and fluoride treatment to the standard examination, bitewing X-rays and scale and clean. The guide range is about $350 to $500, published as at September 2026. Confirm when you book.

How much do bitewing X-rays cost?

Two bitewing X-rays (item 022 twice) typically cost about $70 to $110, and a scale and clean (items 114 or 121) about $120 to $250. These are guide ranges published as at September 2026, so confirm the figure with Core Dental when you book.

What do dental item numbers on an invoice mean?

Item numbers come from the Australian Dental Association schedule and identify each service on your invoice, for example 011 for a comprehensive examination and 114 for a first scale. Core Dental staff can explain each item on your quote or invoice.

Does Core Dental claim private health funds on the spot?

Yes. Core Dental claims from private health funds on-site with HICAPS, so you can see your rebate and any out-of-pocket amount before you leave. Rebates depend on your fund, level of cover and annual limits.

Does Core Dental bulk bill children's check-ups?

Core Dental bulk bills eligible children aged 0 to 17 under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule. Services Australia decides eligibility, so confirm your child's status and ask our team to help when you book.

What opening hours can I book a check-up in at Core Dental?

Core Dental clinics are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm (Bayside Saturday 8.30am to 1.30pm), closed Sunday. Call 13 13 16 or book online through coredental.com.au.

Can I spread the cost of dental treatment found at a check-up?

Yes. Core Dental quotes before treatment starts and offers interest-free payment plans such as Payright, over 3 to 30 months for plans up to $20,000, subject to eligibility. Figures published as at September 2026, confirm when you book.