Specialist Orthodontists in Melbourne | Core Dental

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/specialist-care/orthodontist/

Details:

Orthodontics is a specialised field of dentistry concerned with treating malocclusion, meaning a bad bite. At Core Dental we have a team of registered specialist orthodontists who provide care for orthodontic needs, working alongside our dentists, hygienists and other specialists. Specialist orthodontists see patients at selected practices, so ask when you book. Whether orthodontic treatment suits you depends on an examination, and results vary for each person.

What is orthodontics?

Orthodontics focuses on how your teeth and jaws fit together. Crowded or spaced teeth, an overbite, an underbite or a crossbite are examples of bite problems that an orthodontist may assess. Treatment may involve braces, clear aligners such as Invisalign, or other appliances, and your orthodontist explains which options apply to you. Read more on our orthodontics page.

Does Core Dental have specialist orthodontists?

Yes. Our orthodontic care is provided by registered specialist orthodontists, as listed on our team page:

Dr David Austin , Specialist Orthodontist, BDSc (Melb), MDS Orth (HK), MOrth, RCS (Edin)

Dr Steven Smith , Specialist Orthodontist, BDSc (Hons), MDSc (Ortho) (Qld)

Our team page and your practice can confirm the days a specialist is available. Specialist availability is limited and can change, so confirm the next available session when you book.

What qualifies someone as a Specialist Orthodontist in Australia?

In Australia, Specialist Orthodontist is a regulated title, and the practitioner must be registered in the specialty of orthodontics with AHPRA, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. Specialist registration generally follows an initial dental degree and then a postgraduate orthodontic qualification. Orthodontics Australia , the public information service of the Australian Society of Orthodontists, describes the pathway as orthodontists who “begin as dentists before completing an additional three years of full-time study to become registered specialists” (accessed 4 November 2026). The Board’s own requirements for specialist registration are a qualification in the specialty, all the requirements for general registration as a dentist, and "a minimum of two years general dental practice". Training covers tooth movement, jaw development, skeletal growth, occlusion, and orthodontic appliances and techniques. You can check any practitioner's registration and any specialist title on the AHPRA register at ahpra.gov.au.

How are a specialist orthodontist and a general dentist who offers Invisalign different?

Some general dentists provide aligner treatment after completing additional courses, and our dentists offer Invisalign at our practices. A specialist orthodontist has completed postgraduate orthodontic training and is registered in that specialty, and may be suited to cases involving complex bite or jaw problems or fixed appliances such as braces. We recommend you ask any practitioner who is proposing orthodontic treatment about their training, their experience with cases like yours and the alternatives, so you can make an informed decision. A general dentist and an orthodontist at Core Dental can plan your care together.

What orthodontic treatments can you have at Core Dental?

Invisalign clear aligners, for adults and teens, and types of Invisalign

Traditional and clear braces

Internal lingual braces

Children's braces and Invisalign , where an assessment is usually considered from around age 9 to 10

Your orthodontist explains the benefits, limits and risks of each option, including how long treatment may take and what retainers you will need afterwards.

Where can you see an orthodontist at Core Dental?

Specialist orthodontist sessions are listed at Caroline Springs , Epping and South Melbourne . Our other practices, including Southbank , Wyndham , Berwick , Glenferrie , Carrum Downs and Bayside , can tell you about orthodontic services and whether an orthodontist attends. Call 13 13 16 for help finding the right practice and session.

What should you ask before orthodontic treatment?

A useful first step is to tell us your concern, goals and timing when you book. Bring your medical history and a list of your medicines. Then ask what the recommended approach is intended to achieve, whether there are alternatives, how many appointments to expect, what the risks and limits are, what retainers involve and how much the treatment will cost. We provide a written quote and treatment plan before treatment starts, so you can compare stages, appointments and payment arrangements.

How much does orthodontic treatment cost, and how can you pay?

Fees depend on your diagnosis, the appliance and the length of treatment, so we do not publish a single price. We offer interest-free payment plans through Payright for amounts up to $20,000, with fortnightly instalments over 3 to 30 months, subject to eligibility and approval (18 or over, Australian permanent resident, ID, a verifiable email and a mobile number). Terms were published as at September 2026, so please confirm them. HICAPS claiming is available on-site, and rebates depend on your health fund cover. Read more on our dental payment plans page and Invisalign fees page.

Further detail from Core Dental

The following points are drawn from Core Dental's own published material on this topic. They are included here for completeness, and anything that applies to your own treatment should be confirmed with your clinician.

Malocclusion can be classified as overbite, underbite or crossbite and can be exacerbated by overcrowding (where there is insufficient space for teeth to assume their normal positions).

Orthodontists are experts in facial growth and dental development and can diagnose and treat crooked teeth, bad bites and poorly aligned jaws. Clear braces work the same way, however the braces are made of a ceramic material that matches your tooth colour and the wire is clear, making them less visible. Invisalign involves a series of clear aligners worn over your teeth, which move your teeth into the desired position.

Invisalign aligners are removable, so they can be taken out when you're eating, drinking and cleaning your teeth. Treatment for young children is usually aimed at dealing with functional problems that immediately threaten the health of teeth. A proactive approach may eliminate or simplify any later need for orthodontic treatment.

What "specialist orthodontist" means as a matter of registration

The word "specialist" is doing precise legal work here, and it is worth setting out exactly what it requires — partly so you know what you are being offered, and partly because you can verify it yourself in about a minute.

It is one of thirteen. The Dental Board of Australia: "There are 13 dental specialties in Australia which are approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council)." Orthodontics is on that list, alongside endodontics, oral medicine, paediatric dentistry, periodontics, prosthodontics, public health dentistry, special needs dentistry and the rest.

What the Board requires to hold it. "All applicants for specialist registration must be qualified and meet the requirements set out in the Board's Specialist registration standard. These requirements include that applicants have: completed a minimum of two years general dental practice (this requirement may be achieved by experience outside Australia, subject to assessment and approval by the Board), and met all other requirements for general registration as a dentist."

And what the training looks like. Orthodontics Australia, the information service of the Australian Society of Orthodontists, states: orthodontists "are the experts at straightening teeth and correcting bad bites. They begin as dentists before completing an additional three years of full-time study to become registered specialists."

An additional three years of full-time study, on top of qualifying as a dentist. We are not going to publish a total number of years, because no source read states one.

There is a recognised route from New Zealand. The Board notes that "a practitioner who is registered with the Dental Council (New Zealand) as a dental specialist and holds a current annual practising certificate for this specialty is entitled to registration with the Board if that specialty exists in Australia."

How to check any of this. "Ahpra publishes an online register of all dental practitioners that provides the profession and the public with up-to-date information about a dental practitioner's registration status. This register also includes details of the specialty or specialties for dentists who hold specialist registration."

That register is the answer to the question "is this person actually a specialist orthodontist". It is public, it is current, and it is the only authoritative source on the point.

Sources: Dental Board of Australia, Specialist Registration, dentalboard.gov.au (the page states it was reviewed 18/03/2025); Orthodontics Australia (Australian Society of Orthodontists), When to see an Orthodontist, orthodonticsaustralia.org.au . Both accessed 6 November 2026.

A general dentist may also provide orthodontic treatment — and that is allowed

This is the part that causes most confusion, so here is what the published advice actually says rather than what either side of the argument tends to claim.

Both can provide it. The Victorian Department of Health: "Orthodontic treatment is provided by an orthodontist, and some dentists. An orthodontist is a specialist dentist who has done extra study in this area. They can detect, prevent and manage the problems caused when teeth are not straight or when jaws don't bite together properly."

So a general dentist offering aligners or braces is not doing something improper. What differs is the specialist registration, the additional three years of full-time study behind it, and the scope that goes with it.

On scope, the Board's framework is about the individual, not the title. Its position is that a practitioner's scope of practice is determined by their own education, training and competence — which means the right question is never whether dentists in general are allowed to do this, but whether this particular practitioner is trained for your case. The Board's divisions framework works the same way: the protected titles exist so the public can tell who holds which registration.

The examination is the same either way, and so is the plan. "The orthodontist or dentist will do a thorough examination of your teeth and jaws. They will use x-rays to help look for problems too. After this, they will create a treatment care plan and explain everything to you. Once you are happy with the care plan, treatment can begin. If you are not happy with the care plan or do not understand it, it is important to let your dental practitioner know."

And some cases are referred onward regardless of who starts. The Department's gapped-teeth page describes the chain: "You may be referred to an orthodontist", and for more complicated cases "to a prosthodontist - a dentist with additional training in restoring teeth, or even an oral maxillofacial surgeon who is trained in surgery of the teeth, bone, jaw and face." Surgery sits outside orthodontics entirely: oral and maxillofacial surgery is "a specialty recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia", and "you must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry".

What an orthodontist does that is distinctive , in Orthodontics Australia's description, is the predictive part: an assessment "will cover existing teeth as well as those that are yet to break the surface to help predict their future growth", and for children it recommends "an assessment between the ages of 7-10 years old", when early measures such as "space maintainers or palatal expanders" may be possible. Appliances that change a growing jaw have a window — jawbones "do not harden until children reach their late teens" — and that window is the clearest case for a specialist opinion early.

Three questions worth asking, all answerable from published sources. Does this practitioner hold specialist registration in orthodontics, which the Ahpra register will tell you? Is my case one they treat routinely, which is a scope question for them? And what does the care plan say, which the Department says you are entitled to have explained before anything begins?

On cost, expect a case-specific answer rather than a price list: "Costs vary depending on the type of problem and the amount of treatment needed. Ask your dental practitioner for advice."

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Teeth - gapped teeth, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 1 July 2025); Dental Board of Australia, Specialist Registration, dentalboard.gov.au (the page states it was reviewed 18/03/2025); Orthodontics Australia (Australian Society of Orthodontists), When to see an Orthodontist, orthodonticsaustralia.org.au . All accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need a referral to see an orthodontist at Core Dental?

Ask our team about booking an orthodontic assessment, and we will explain whether a referral from your dentist is needed for your situation. Call 13 13 16 and tell us about your concern so we can arrange the right appointment.

At what age should a child see an orthodontist?

Children can be assessed from around age 9 to 10, which allows an orthodontist to monitor jaw growth and decide whether and when treatment is needed. Many children do not need treatment at that age. See our children's braces and Invisalign page.

Can an orthodontist help adults?

Yes. Orthodontic treatment is available to adults as well as children and teenagers, and options include Invisalign and braces. Your orthodontist assesses your teeth, gums and bite before recommending treatment.

What is the difference between a general dentist and a specialist orthodontist?

A specialist orthodontist is registered with AHPRA in the specialty of orthodontics after postgraduate study. A general dentist treats a wider range of everyday dental needs. At Core Dental they plan your care together where it helps.

How do I check that someone is a registered specialist?

Search the practitioner name on the public AHPRA register on the AHPRA website. The register shows their registration status and whether they hold specialist registration, so you can check before treatment.

Is orthodontics a formally recognised specialty?

Yes. The Dental Board of Australia states that "there are 13 dental specialties in Australia which are approved by the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council (the Ministerial Council)", and orthodontics is one of them.

What training does a specialist orthodontist have?

Orthodontics Australia, the information service of the Australian Society of Orthodontists, states that orthodontists "begin as dentists before completing an additional three years of full-time study to become registered specialists". No source we have read gives a total number of years, so we do not publish one.

What does the Board require for specialist registration?

Applicants must "meet the requirements set out in the Board's Specialist registration standard", including having "completed a minimum of two years general dental practice ... and met all other requirements for general registration as a dentist". That practice requirement "may be achieved by experience outside Australia, subject to assessment and approval by the Board".

Can I verify that someone is a specialist?

Yes, on the public register. "Ahpra publishes an online register of all dental practitioners that provides the profession and the public with up-to-date information about a dental practitioner's registration status. This register also includes details of the specialty or specialties for dentists who hold specialist registration."

Is a general dentist allowed to provide braces or aligners?

Yes. The Victorian Department of Health: "Orthodontic treatment is provided by an orthodontist, and some dentists. An orthodontist is a specialist dentist who has done extra study in this area."

Then what is the difference?

The specialist registration and the additional three years of full-time study behind it, plus the scope that follows from an individual's own education, training and competence. The examination and the care plan process are described the same way for both.

What about a specialist registered in New Zealand?

There is a recognised route. "A practitioner who is registered with the Dental Council (New Zealand) as a dental specialist and holds a current annual practising certificate for this specialty is entitled to registration with the Board if that specialty exists in Australia."

When is a case referred beyond orthodontics?

The Department describes referral "to a prosthodontist - a dentist with additional training in restoring teeth, or even an oral maxillofacial surgeon who is trained in surgery of the teeth, bone, jaw and face". Oral and maxillofacial surgery is "a specialty recognised by both the Dental Board of Australia and the Medical Board of Australia", where "you must hold qualifications in both medicine and dentistry".

Is there an advantage to seeing a specialist early for a child?

For jaw-based problems, yes, because the window closes. Orthodontics Australia recommends an assessment "between the ages of 7-10 years old", when early measures such as "space maintainers or palatal expanders" may be possible, and notes that jawbones "do not harden until children reach their late teens".

What should I ask before treatment?

Whether the practitioner holds specialist registration in orthodontics, which the Ahpra register answers; whether your case is one they treat routinely; and what the care plan says — the Department is clear that "once you are happy with the care plan, treatment can begin", and that "if you are not happy with the care plan or do not understand it, it is important to let your dental practitioner know".

Why will nobody quote a flat price?

"Costs vary depending on the type of problem and the amount of treatment needed. Ask your dental practitioner for advice."

Related services and further reading

Specialist care

Orthodontics

Invisalign treatment

Orthodontic braces

Endodontist

Oral and maxillofacial surgeons

Paediatric dentist

Periodontist

Orthodontics at Core Dental, your local access to specialist orthodontists

Why seeing a registered specialist matters

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.

Interest-free payment plans, HICAPS on-site claiming, bulk billing for eligible children under the Child Dental Benefits Schedule.

Invisalign Blue Diamond provider (as stated on coredental.com.au).

Call 13 13 16 or book online.

Contact Core Dental

Phone	13 13 16
Booking	Online through your practice page at coredental.com.au, or call 13 13 16
Hours	Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm, Saturday 8.00am to 1.30pm, Sunday closed
Clinics	Find your nearest practice

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.

Does Core Dental have registered specialist orthodontists?

Yes. Core Dental has registered specialist orthodontists, Dr David Austin and Dr Steven Smith, listed on our team page. Specialist availability is limited and can change, so confirm the next available session when you book on 13 13 16.

What does orthodontics treat at Core Dental?

Orthodontics is a specialised field of dentistry concerned with treating malocclusion, meaning a bad bite. At Core Dental it covers braces, Invisalign clear aligners and other appliances, chosen after an examination.

How do I know a Core Dental orthodontist is a registered specialist?

Specialist Orthodontist is a regulated title in Australia and requires registration with AHPRA. You can search any Core Dental practitioner's name on the public AHPRA register to check their registration.

Which Core Dental clinics have specialist orthodontist sessions?

Specialist orthodontist sessions are listed at Core Dental Caroline Springs, Epping and South Melbourne. Call 13 13 16 to confirm which practice and day suit you, as sessions can change.

What orthodontic treatments does Core Dental provide?

Core Dental provides Invisalign clear aligners, traditional and clear braces, internal lingual braces and children's braces and Invisalign. Your clinician explains which option suits your teeth and bite.

When can a child have an orthodontic assessment at Core Dental?

Core Dental considers an orthodontic assessment for children from around age 9 to 10, so growth can be monitored. Many children do not need treatment at that age, and a clinician advises what is appropriate.

Can I pay for orthodontics in instalments at Core Dental?

Core Dental offers Payright interest-free plans up to $20,000 over 3 to 30 months with fortnightly instalments, subject to eligibility and approval. Terms were published as at September 2026, so please confirm them when you book.

How do I book an orthodontic consultation at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online through your practice page at coredental.com.au. Ask for an orthodontic assessment so our team can arrange the right clinician and session.