The Invisalign Process Step by Step | Core Dental Melbourne

Canonical: https://www.coredental.com.au/what-is-the-invisalign-process/

Details:

The Invisalign process is a five-step orthodontic journey that gradually moves your teeth, and in some cases the bite, using a series of clear, removable aligners. At Core Dental it starts with a consultation, where a dentist or specialist orthodontist assesses whether Invisalign is suitable for you. A digital scan of your teeth is used to plan your treatment, aligners are made to fit you and changed about every two weeks, and a retainer is fitted at the end to help hold your new smile. Results vary for each person.

Step 1: What happens at your Invisalign consultation?

Your journey starts with a consultation at one of our clinics. A dentist or specialist orthodontist looks at your teeth, gums and bite, talks with you about what you would like to change and works out whether Invisalign is suitable. If it is, they explain which type of Invisalign treatment may suit your situation and develop a treatment plan from which your custom aligners will be made. Ask us when you book what the consultation includes and whether there is a fee, because arrangements can differ between our clinics and over time.

Step 2: How are digital impressions taken for Invisalign?

Instead of impression trays filled with putty, your teeth are scanned with a hand-held digital scanner. Many of our patients find this more comfortable and quicker than a traditional mould. The scan produces a digital 3D image of your teeth that can be used to show a preview of how your teeth may move, and it is sent to Invisalign's laboratories for processing. We use iTero scanners at a number of our clinics. Please confirm with your clinic that a scanner is available at your appointment.

Step 3: What is ClinCheck and how is it used?

Once your scan has been sent, Invisalign's three-dimensional computer imaging creates an interactive treatment plan using ClinCheck software. This lets you see a virtual preview of how your teeth are planned to move and what your smile is planned to look like at the end of treatment. You and your clinician review the plan together, and changes can be requested before aligners are made. A preview is a planning tool, not a guarantee of the final result.

Step 4: What is Invisalign treatment like?

Once you and your clinician are happy with the plan, the Invisalign laboratories make your custom-fitted aligners and your treatment starts. You wear each set of aligners for approximately two weeks before changing to the next set in the series. The aligners are removable, so you take them out to eat and to clean your teeth, and you wear them for the number of hours each day your clinician recommends. Regular review visits let your clinician check that your teeth are moving as planned.

Step 5: What happens after Invisalign treatment?

When your active treatment is finished, your orthodontist or dentist will fit you with a retainer to help keep your new smile in place. Teeth can shift over time, so wearing a retainer as directed is an important part of looking after the result.

Who is Invisalign suitable for?

Invisalign is used for adults and teenagers. It is not suitable for every bite or every tooth movement, and some people may be advised to consider other options such as orthodontic braces . Your clinician can explain what is realistic for you. For children, we offer children's braces and Invisalign after an assessment.

How can we help?

If you would like to find out whether Invisalign suits you, call us on 13 13 16 or book online at any of our nine Core Dental practices. Read more about Invisalign treatment , types of Invisalign and Invisalign fees . We quote before treatment starts and offer interest-free payment plans, with terms set by the provider.

What the assessment is looking at, including teeth that have not arrived

Any aligner process starts with an assessment, and it is worth knowing what is being examined, because a good deal of it is not visible in the mirror.

The published diagnostic steps. The Victorian Department of Health lists three: "a visual examination and photographs"; "x-rays of the teeth and jaws"; "impressions or scans of the teeth".

Why x-rays are on that list. Orthodontics Australia, the information service of the Australian Society of Orthodontists, explains what the assessment covers: "Your orthodontist's assessment will cover existing teeth as well as those that are yet to break the surface to help predict their future growth."

Teeth that are yet to break the surface. A plan built only on what is visible is a plan built on part of the information.

What the examiner is looking for has a name. "Your orthodontist will typically examine your child's first permanent molars, which are the big teeth at the back of the mouth. This will give your orthodontist an opportunity to check for a developing malocclusion, also known as 'bad bite'."

And the problem being assessed may not be in the teeth at all. The Department's categories include excessive overbite — "upper front teeth normally cover less than half of the lower front teeth when the teeth are biting" — underbite, crowded teeth, "spacing and gaps", and protruding front teeth. Crowding, it notes, "can be caused by large teeth, a small jaw, or both", which is exactly the kind of distinction an impression or scan is for.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Orthodontics Australia (Australian Society of Orthodontists), When to see an Orthodontist, orthodonticsaustralia.org.au . Both accessed 6 November 2026.

Timing, the plan, and the stage after the last aligner

Two parts of the process are routinely under-described: how long before treatment actually begins, and what happens when it ends.

An assessment does not mean starting now. Orthodontics Australia: "The orthodontist may recommend a course of treatment to begin one to five years after the initial evaluation, but in other cases there may be early measures the orthodontist can take to intercept developing problems, such as space maintainers or palatal expanders."

One to five years. So being told to come back is a normal outcome rather than a deferral, and it is an argument for having the assessment early even if nothing is going to be done yet.

And there is no correct moment to aim for. "There's no one 'best' age to start orthodontic treatment - it varies from child to child and depends on the issue that's being treated." The Department agrees: "The timing for orthodontic care can vary depending on the individual. Some orthodontic treatment must wait until the permanent teeth have finished erupting. Some treatments can start earlier, to avoid major treatment later."

For adults the position is simple: "Adults of any age can have orthodontic treatment, if required."

The plan stage, and what it commits you to. The Department: "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."

And the instruction that belongs on every treatment page: "If you are not happy with the care plan or do not understand it, it is important to let your dental practitioner know."

On cost, the published position is that the figure follows the case: "Costs vary depending on the type of problem and the amount of treatment needed. Ask your dental practitioner for advice."

Then the stage after the last aligner, which is where results are kept or lost. The Department lists relapse as a risk of orthodontic treatment: "Teeth can move once braces are taken off. Retainers should be worn to prevent this from happening."

"Retainers are used to retain (hold) the teeth in their new place after treatment is completed. They stop teeth from shifting. They can be attached to the teeth (for example, a wire is glued to the inside surface of the teeth), or removable. Removable retainers are made of either plastic which sits over the teeth like a clear aligner or can be made of acrylic and wire."

A removable retainer that looks like an aligner is easy to treat as optional once nothing is visibly changing. The Department's hygiene warning also continues to apply to it: "Braces, aligners and retainers make cleaning the teeth more difficult. This increases the chance of gum disease, tooth decay, and stains."

Through all of it, the wear figure is the mechanism. Clear aligners work because "the aligners are designed to put pressure on certain teeth, which causes the teeth to move", and the Department's wear guidance is "20-22 hours a day, but you can take them out to eat, drink and clean them". The sequence only progresses if each step gets its hours.

Sources: Better Health Channel (Victorian Department of Health), Orthodontic treatment, betterhealth.vic.gov.au (reviewed 15 December 2025); Orthodontics Australia (Australian Society of Orthodontists), When to see an Orthodontist, orthodonticsaustralia.org.au . Both accessed 6 November 2026.

Frequently asked questions

How long do you wear each set of Invisalign aligners?

You wear each set of custom-made clear aligners for approximately two weeks, then change to the next set in your series. Your clinician will tell you how many hours to wear them each day and how often to attend reviews.

Can I take my aligners out?

Yes. Invisalign aligners are removable, so you can take them out to eat and drink and to brush and floss. They only work when worn for the hours your clinician recommends, so it helps to build a routine.

Do I need a retainer after Invisalign?

Yes. After your active treatment your clinician will fit you with a retainer to help hold your teeth in their new positions. Teeth can move over time, so wear the retainer as directed.

Is an iTero scan the same as a normal impression?

It has the same purpose, but it uses a digital scanner rather than a tray of impression material. The scan builds a 3D image of your teeth, which is used to plan your treatment.

How long does Invisalign take?

The length of treatment depends on how far your teeth need to move and how closely you follow the plan. Your clinician can give you an estimate after examining you and planning your case.

What does the assessment actually involve?

Three things, on the Victorian Department of Health's list: "a visual examination and photographs"; "x-rays of the teeth and jaws"; "impressions or scans of the teeth".

Why are x-rays needed if my teeth are visible?

Because part of the answer is not. Orthodontics Australia describes an assessment as covering "existing teeth as well as those that are yet to break the surface to help predict their future growth".

What is a "bad bite"?

The everyday name for malocclusion. Orthodontics Australia: an orthodontist "will typically examine your child's first permanent molars, which are the big teeth at the back of the mouth. This will give your orthodontist an opportunity to check for a developing malocclusion, also known as 'bad bite'."

Does an assessment mean treatment starts straight away?

Often not. "The orthodontist may recommend a course of treatment to begin one to five years after the initial evaluation, but in other cases there may be early measures the orthodontist can take to intercept developing problems, such as space maintainers or palatal expanders."

Is there a best age to start?

No. "There's no one 'best' age to start orthodontic treatment - it varies from child to child and depends on the issue that's being treated." The Department adds that "some orthodontic treatment must wait

until the permanent teeth have finished erupting. Some treatments can start earlier, to avoid major treatment later."

Am I too old?

"Adults of any age can have orthodontic treatment, if required."

What happens before treatment begins?

"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." And if it is unclear: "If you are not happy with the care plan or do not understand it, it is important to let your dental practitioner know."

Why can nobody tell me the cost at the start?

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

What happens after the final aligner?

Retainers. "Retainers are used to retain (hold) the teeth in their new place after treatment is completed. They stop teeth from shifting." Without them, "teeth can move once braces are taken off".

Do retainers need the same cleaning care as aligners?

Yes. The Department's hygiene warning names them: "Braces, aligners and retainers make cleaning the teeth more difficult. This increases the chance of gum disease, tooth decay, and stains."

What makes the aligners work?

Pressure over time. "The aligners are designed to put pressure on certain teeth, which causes the teeth to move", with a wear target of "20-22 hours a day, but you can take them out to eat, drink and clean them".

Related services and further reading

Invisalign treatment

Types of Invisalign

Invisalign fees

Invisalign frequently asked questions

The benefits of Invisalign

Can you eat and drink normally with Invisalign?

Invisalign at Wyndham

Invisalign open days

Orthodontics

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.

Invisalign Blue Diamond provider, as stated on coredental.com.au.

We quote before treatment starts, offer interest-free payment plans and claim from your health fund on the spot 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.

What are the steps of the Invisalign process at Core Dental?

The Invisalign process at Core Dental has five steps: a consultation, a digital scan, a treatment plan viewed in ClinCheck software, treatment with aligners changed about every two weeks, and retention with a retainer once your teeth have moved.

Who assesses me for Invisalign at Core Dental?

A Core Dental dentist or specialist orthodontist assesses your teeth, gums and bite at your consultation, discusses your goals and explains whether Invisalign suits you and which type of Invisalign treatment may apply.

What is ClinCheck?

ClinCheck is Invisalign's three-dimensional treatment planning software. It creates an interactive plan from your digital scan so that you can preview how your teeth are planned to move. It is a planning tool and results vary.

How often are Invisalign aligners changed?

Aligners are changed approximately every two weeks, moving to the next set in your series. Your Core Dental clinician will confirm the schedule for your case and how many hours a day to wear them.

Does Core Dental scan teeth digitally for Invisalign?

Our clinics use digital scanning for Invisalign, including iTero scanners at a number of practices, instead of putty impressions. Ask Core Dental on 13 13 16 to confirm availability at the clinic where you plan to be seen.

Why is a retainer needed after Invisalign?

Teeth can move back over time after treatment. A Core Dental clinician fits a retainer at the end of Invisalign treatment to help hold your teeth in their new positions, and you wear it as directed.

Is Core Dental an Invisalign provider?

Core Dental states on coredental.com.au that it has been recognised with Invisalign Blue Diamond status. Awards are not a measure of your individual outcome, so your consultation will focus on whether Invisalign suits you.

How do I book an Invisalign consultation at Core Dental?

Call Core Dental on 13 13 16 or book online at coredental.com.au. We are open Monday to Friday 8.00am to 6.00pm and Saturday mornings across our nine clinics. Ask what the consultation includes when you book.