

Treatment Comparison

	Invisalign Treatment	Traditional Braces	Ceramic Braces	Lingual Braces
Description	Invisalign treatment uses a series of clear, removable aligners that fit over teeth. Aligners are custom-made and changed approximately every 1-2 weeks in order to gradually move teeth into the desired position.	Traditional braces are stainless steel brackets and wires that are attached to the outside of the teeth. Wires are adjusted throughout treatment in order to gradually move teeth into the desired position.	Traditional ceramic braces are clear brackets that are attached to the outside of the teeth. Wires can be either clear or metal. Wires are adjusted throughout treatment in order to gradually move teeth into the desired position.	Lingual braces are metal brackets and wires that are bonded to the back of the teeth. Wires are adjusted throughout treatment in order to gradually move teeth into the desired position.
Aesthetics	Virtually invisible.	High visibility.	Less visible than traditional braces but more visible than lingual braces and Invisalign.	Virtually invisible.
Cost	The cost of Invisalign treatment is similar to that of traditional braces. As with other medical treatments, only your doctor can determine the cost of orthodontic treatment, based on your specific needs. Other factors may include your treatment goals, the difficulty of your case, where you live, and additional factors determined by your doctor.			
Efficacy	Invisalign treatment can be as effective as traditional braces for all or the most common teeth-straightening issues, when worn according to the recommendation of an experienced Invisalign-trained doctor.	Used in a variety of cases		Used in cases from mild to moderate complexity. Lingual treatment may be more difficult to manage than conventional braces.
Oral Hygiene	Invisalign treatment aligners can be removed for normal brushing and flossing. Therefore, it's easier to maintain a good level of oral hygiene throughout the course of treatment.	Oral hygiene is harder to maintain with fixed braces when brushing and flossing. For these reasons, there is a general tendency toward increased plaque accumulation and gingival inflammation.		With lingual appliances, because of their position on the back of the teeth, it is more difficult to brush and floss normally during treatment. This increases the chance of plaque retention and possible tooth decay.
Comfort	Most people experience temporary, minor discomfort at the beginning of each new stage of treatment. This short-term effect is typically described as a feeling of pressure. Speech may be temporarily affected at the beginning of treatment.	Mouth sores/ulcers may be triggered by irritation from components of the braces. Broken brackets and wires can cause discomfort and may require urgent attention from your treating practitioner.		Lingual appliances can have an effect on the tongue position and may affect speech throughout treatment. Mouth sores/ulcers may be triggered by irritation from components of the braces.
Compliance	Research shows that because aligners are virtually invisible, there is a high level of patient acceptance with Invisalign treatment. ^{1,2} Clinical study data show average teen compliance is just under 21 hours per day, exactly as recommended. ⁴	High level of compliance - braces are fixed to the teeth for the duration of treatment. However, levels of compliance with elastic wear can vary from patient to patient. Also, 5% of patients in fixed treatment experience bracket breakage. ³		
Removable	Removable, but aligners should be worn a minimum of 20-22 hours a day to be most effective.	Not removable. Braces are fixed to the teeth for the duration of orthodontic treatment.		

1 Improving Periodontal Health Through Invisalign by Robert L. Boyd, DDS, Med.

2 Invisalign Australia survey amongst 6 Invisalign Treatment Providers. Data on file.

3 Bonding in Orthodontics by Björn U. Zachrisson, Tamer Büyükyılmaz.

4 Effectiveness of a Compliance Indicator for Clear Aligners by Orhan C. Tuncay DMD, S. Jay Bowman DMD, Jonathan L. Nicozisis DMD, Brian D. Amy DDS.