

# Braces

## Instruction Guide

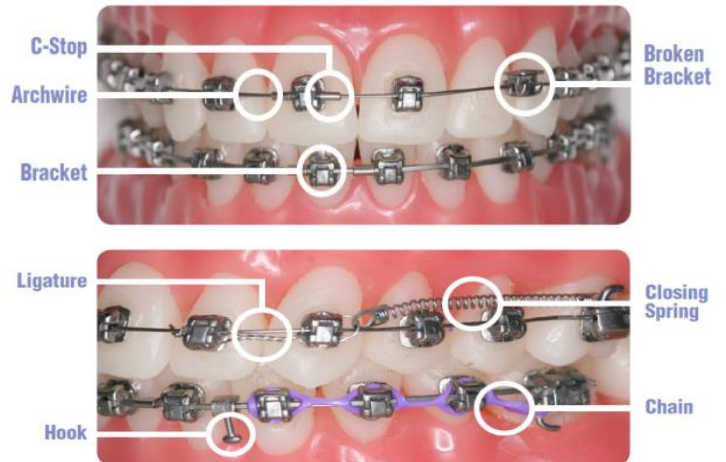
*Congratulations on starting your orthodontic treatment. You're on your way to achieving a beautiful smile!*

### WHAT IS IN MY MOUTH?

It's good to know exactly what you have in your mouth. If you ever have a breakage, use these pictures to help identify the problem.

Bumper sleeve

Open-coil spring



### DO I NEED TO SEE MY NORMAL DENTIST?

**Yes!** It is very important to have check-ups **every 6 months** to check for tooth decay and to maintain the overall health of your teeth and gums.

### DO I NEED A MOUTHGUARD?

It is very important to wear a mouthguard if you play contact sport. We usually recommend a pharmacy bought mouthguard (Elastoplast brand) as they can be reshaped as your teeth straighten. When your orthodontic treatment is complete, it is best to get a professionally made mouthguard.

### WILL MY TEETH BE SORE?

Your teeth are likely to be tender for the first few days and whenever you have your braces adjusted. This is best managed with mild pain relieving medication. Eating soft foods around this time will also be helpful.



## WHAT IF MY BRACES FEEL SHARP?

Break off a piece of the wax we've provided, roll it into a ball and place it on the sharp spot. Make sure the sharp spot is dry, otherwise the wax won't stick properly.

## WHAT IF SOMETHING BREAKS?

If something breaks, please contact our office so that we can make an appointment to fix the problem. Common problems and how to deal with them are outlined below-

***A loose bracket:*** Brackets become loose if excessively hard food is eaten. In most cases, the bracket will remain attached to the wire. If brackets are not attached to your teeth, they won't move into the correct position and your treatment time will be extended. Therefore, call us as soon as you identify this problem.

***An open latch:*** The bracket will feel sharp or more uncomfortable than normal. Place wax over it until you are able to come in to have it closed.

***Wire that pokes into the cheek:*** As your teeth straighten, you may find excess wire will poke out at the back and irritate your cheek. Place wax over it until you can come in to have it trimmed.

***Wire coming out of the braces at the back:*** The first wires may pop out of the back braces as they are very flexible. If this occurs, you can reinsert them yourself with a pair of tweezers or tuck the wire under the bracket so it feels comfortable. It is only necessary to come in if the wire is causing discomfort.

***A loose hook:*** Small hooks are sometimes placed onto the wires for elastic wear. Occasionally they can become loose and move along the wire. Make an appointment with us to tighten them.

## EMERGENCY APPOINTMENTS

If you have a broken bracket or a braces '**emergency**', please be aware that these will usually need to be attended to during quieter times of the day. Before and after school times are our busiest, and appointment availability for emergencies is limited at these times of day.



## BRUSHING WITH BRACES

Braces trap a lot of food and plaque, putting you at risk of decay and permanent marks (decalcification) on your teeth. It is important to brush your teeth every morning and night with a soft toothbrush and toothpaste that contains fluoride to prevent this.

Here are 5 easy steps to keep your teeth and gums healthy.

### 1. Brushing the gums

Sit the toothbrush so that it is touching the gum, tooth and edge of the bracket at the same time. Brush in a circular motion for 3 seconds on each tooth.



### 2. Brushing the brackets

Sit the toothbrush on top of the brackets brushing backwards and forwards for about 30 seconds.



### 3. Brushing the biting surfaces

Sit the toothbrush on the biting surfaces of your teeth and brush backwards and forwards. Make sure you reach all the way to the back!



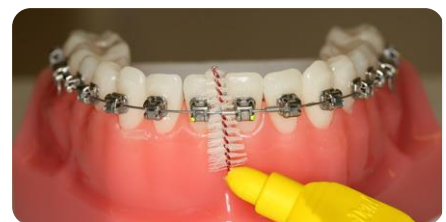
### 4. Brushing the insides

Sit the toothbrush behind your teeth and clean using a circular or flicking motion.



### 5. Brushing under the arch wire

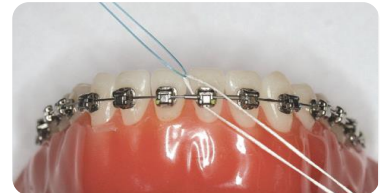
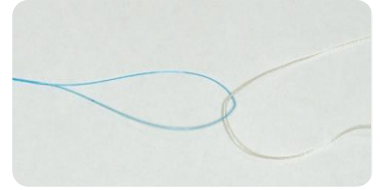
Wiggle an interdental brush under the wire in between every bracket to dislodge food and plaque.



## FLOSSING WITH BRACES – REGULAR FLOSS

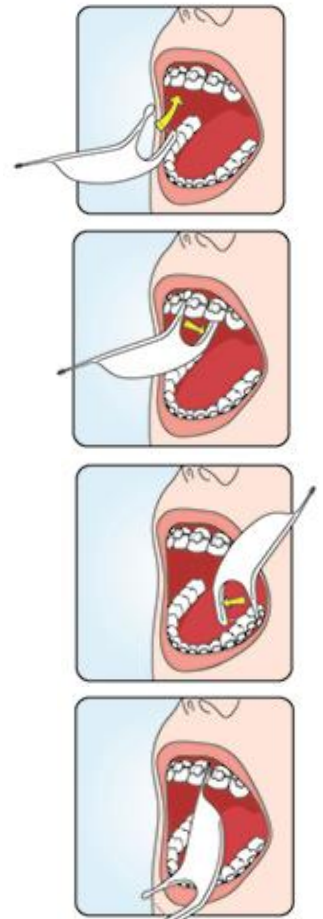
Daily flossing is recommended as there are some spots where your toothbrush just can't reach! It can be a little tricky to master, but once you get the hang of it, it's easy!

1. Thread floss through the loop in the floss threader.
2. Thread the floss underneath the arch wire.
3. With one hand holding one side of the floss and the other hand holding the floss threader, pull the threader up and out of the mouth.
4. You are now able to floss your teeth, using an up and down motion. You will need to do this between every tooth.



## FLOSSING WITH BRACES – PLATYPUS FLOSS

1. Insert the spatula end of the flosser under your wire and press it against your teeth.
2. With the spatula against your teeth, slide the floss between your teeth. Repeat this for every tooth.
3. In difficult to reach areas, it's key to maintain pressure against your tooth while flossing.
4. The bracket brush on the end of the flosser can be used to clean in and around your brackets.



## DISCLOSING TABLETS

Disclosing tablets are a great way to let you know how well you are brushing with braces on. We recommend that you disclose your teeth once a week at the start of your treatment. If you are brushing well, there should be very little stained plaque on your teeth.



1. Brush your teeth and rinse your mouth with water.
2. Apply Vaseline or lip balm to your lips to avoid the tablets staining them.
3. Chew 1 tablet and swish it around your mouth for about 30 seconds. Spit out the liquid in your mouth.
4. Rinse your mouth with water.
5. Look at your teeth in the mirror. The dark pink spots on your teeth highlight the food and plaque which you have missed with your toothbrush.
6. Remove all of the dark pink spots from your teeth by brushing and flossing. These are the areas you need to focus on next time you brush, as you may miss them regularly.

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