

THE ADULT'S GUIDE



TO CHOOSING THE

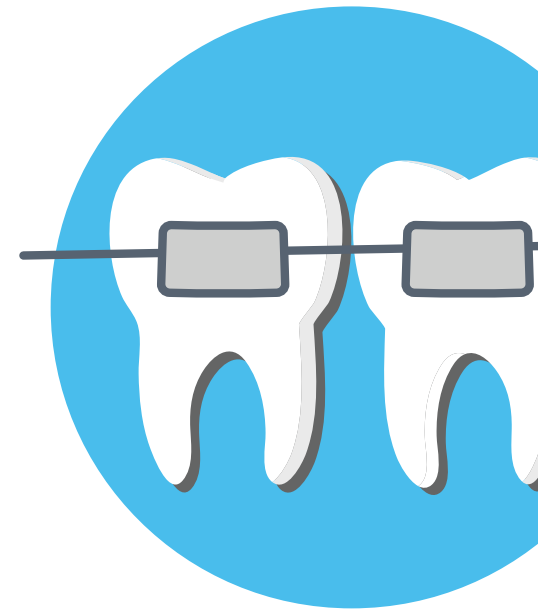
★ **BEST** ★

**ORTHODONTIST**

As an adult, your orthodontic experience is going to be different than that of a young child. Here are some important things to keep in mind when you're selecting the best orthodontist for your treatment:

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# I Dentist vs. Orthodontist

General dentists may occasionally provide certain types of orthodontic treatment in their practice. They are usually trained through **continuing education, one-off seminars,** or **extended lecture series** on a specific type of braces or therapy option. **While these dentists do provide braces, they are not legally allowed to call themselves “orthodontists.”**

**After four years of dental school, our orthodontist completed an additional two years of formal education in the field of orthodontic therapy.** This period also included undergoing extensive residency training on issues related to craniofacial development, biomechanics, and interceptive therapies. Our experience involves a variety of treatment options (from conventional braces to Invisalign,) appliances, and even related types of corrective surgery.

# I Providers for Adults

Our orthodontist treats older patients in addition to young children. In fact, **adults make up a large percent of our patients. Your mature smile is different than the growing, developing one of a young child.** Finding an orthodontist like ours who is comfortable with a vast array of cases can help you get the results that you're looking for.

**From the equipment used to the types of braces or aligners that we make available, your treatment difference can be significant.** Adults also prefer a semi-private treatment environment, as opposed to the open-bay layout that most children's providers are designed around. We offer separate clinical areas for adult patients than where children are being seen.



# I Length of Experience

**Not every orthodontist is created equal.** Some specialize in more unique treatments and have years of experience, while others offer more generalized therapies and are “fresh” out of school. **If you need complex therapy, you may want someone like our orthodontist who has been practicing longer and has performed hundreds or thousands of those types of cases. Ask to see before-and-after shots** of people with situations like yours, to see examples of what you might be able to expect.



# I Types of Braces Being Offered

Are you looking for a specific type of braces or aligners? **Some orthodontists may offer one, but not the other.** Others make alternative brands available. **In many situations, it can be up to their personal preference, training, and experience.** For example, you wouldn't want to see someone for Invisalign clear braces if they've only completed a handful of cases, but their competitor down the road has done hundreds. In a situation like this, you would want to choose an Invisalign provider with more experience, in order to assure the best results possible.

# Cost of Treatment (Are There Hidden Fees?)

The biggest question you're probably asking, is "How much is it going to cost to wear braces?" The fact of the matter is that it will depend on several different factors, such as:

- The type of braces that you choose to wear
- How long treatment is expected to take
- If you're using dental insurance vs. paying out of pocket
- Cost of living and where the office is located
- Extra appliances or surgeries that may be involved

**As your orthodontist, your total costs include everything like emergency visits, the consultation (and x-rays) and your retainer.**

Another thing to keep in mind is whether there will be more costs involved if you need to wear your braces longer than what we had originally planned. **Whichever provider you choose, be sure to find out if there is one flat rate, regardless of if you wind up in treatment for a few additional months.** If something takes longer to fix, the last thing you want is additional payments to come along with it. That's why all of our fees are listed up front, before treatment starts.



# I Length of Treatment

Everyone's orthodontic experience is unique. **Timeframes on treatment are simply averages for the population as a whole.** Your exact length of time in braces can only be determined by consulting with our orthodontist about what your goals are and the types of appliances available to choose from. **Be wary of offices that quote you an exact time frame over the phone. Rushing your treatment can harm your smile.**

Each case is unique. For instance, "fast" or "accelerated" braces usually last half the time of conventional orthodontics. As such, they often cost half of the price. However, they are only "cosmetic" in nature, straightening the teeth at the front of the mouth, as opposed to creating a healthy tooth alignment throughout the entire mouth. **People with more complex bite issues may find that it takes two to three years to achieve a healthy tooth and jaw alignment.** Our orthodontist will need to assess your jaws and each tooth to accurately quote a timeframe during your initial consultation.

**Your compliancy has a huge impact on the total length of treatment.** For instance, if our orthodontist tells you to wear your Invisalign trays for a minimum of 20 hours per day, but you're only wearing them 15-16 hours a day, it may take longer to correct your bite.





# What Technology Is Being Used?

Newer developments in orthodontic technology can make your treatment more efficient and comfortable. For instance, computerized (digital) scanning eliminates the need for gooey impressions and can transfer the information straight to the lab. You might even be able to see your proposed treatment results on a monitor before you ever start wearing braces. Other techniques can facilitate faster tooth movement and bone remodeling. Be sure to ask about the technology used, and what it's for.

# The Consultation and Environment Experience

If you've narrowed your selection down to a few of different choices, consider scheduling a consultation with your top pick. During your visit, ask yourself:

- Does the office run on time?
- Is the staff friendly? Are they happy to answer your questions?
- Are the treatment rooms, reception area, and bathrooms clean?
- How quickly are you greeted?
- Do you get to meet the orthodontist doing your treatment?
- Are they accommodating to your busy work schedule?

# “Do You Take My Insurance?”

If you’re using dental insurance to cover a portion of your treatment, get a treatment estimate from our orthodontist. **In most situations, your policy will cover a fixed percentage based on a pre-determined dollar amount.** Depending on the type of braces you’re choosing from, it can impact your total out-of-pocket expense. **Even if our office is out-of-network, your treatment can often be very affordable.**



# | Financing Options

Our orthodontist understand that not everyone is ready to pay for their treatment in full, before they even get their braces on. **Ask about what month-to-month financing plans are available. In many cases we offer 0% interest loans to avoid extra fees, which are available through a 3rd party provider that you apply to (like a credit card.)** Or, enroll in an auto-debit system that's linked to your bank account.





# Complimentary Full Exam

Call (253) 445-0744 to setup a **FREE "Get Your Smile Options" consultation valued at \$249**. This deal will cover a full exam and X-Rays at no cost to you.

  
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**Dr. Hopke**