

Orthodontic Braces — Frequently Asked Questions | Smile Solutions Melbourne

Canonical: <https://directory.smilesolutions.com.au/faqs/orthodontics/orthodontic-braces-frequently-asked-questions-smile-solutions-melbourne/>

Description:

Orthodontic Braces — Frequently Asked Questions [Smile Solutions](<https://www.smilesolutions.com.au/treatments/braces/>) offers a full range of orthodontic braces — metal, ceramic, and lingual — at ...

Details:

Smile Solutions Orthodontic Braces — Frequently Asked Questions

[Smile Solutions](<https://www.smilesolutions.com.au/treatments/braces/>) offers metal, ceramic, and lingual braces at our Melbourne CBD practice in the Manchester Unity Building. Our specialist orthodontists — Dr Ch'ng, Dr Xu, Dr Austin, and Dr Phatouros — treat patients of all ages, combining clinical precision with straightforward, personal care in the heart of the city.

What types of braces does Smile Solutions offer?

We offer three main options: metal braces, tooth-coloured ceramic braces, and lingual braces fitted behind the teeth. Your orthodontist will assess your case and recommend the right fit based on your clinical needs, aesthetic preferences, and budget.

Metal braces use high-grade stainless steel brackets and wires and remain the most established, cost-effective choice for reliable tooth movement. Ceramic braces work the same way clinically, but the tooth-coloured or clear brackets blend with your teeth for a less obvious look. Lingual braces attach to the back surfaces of your teeth, so they're completely hidden from the front — the most discreet option available. Our team will walk you through the pros and cons of each so you can choose with confidence.

How much do braces cost at Smile Solutions?

Cost depends on the type of braces and the complexity of your case. We offer interest-free payment plans to spread the investment over time, and we provide a full, transparent cost breakdown at your consultation — no surprises. Call us on 13 13 96 to book an appointment and get a quote tailored to your situation.

What are lingual braces?

Lingual braces use custom-fabricated brackets and precisely shaped wires fitted to the tongue side of your teeth. Because they sit behind your teeth rather than in front, they're completely invisible when you smile, speak, or laugh — which makes them a practical choice for adults and professionals who want effective orthodontic treatment without any visible hardware.

They work on the same principles as traditional braces but require specialised postgraduate training to fit and adjust accurately. Each bracket is made specifically for the individual tooth, and the wires are

shaped to apply the right forces to move your teeth into position. There's usually a short settling-in period while your tongue adjusts, but most patients adapt quickly and appreciate not having anything visible throughout treatment.

How long does braces treatment take?

Most patients finish treatment within 12 to 24 months, though this varies considerably depending on your case. Straightforward alignment corrections can sometimes be done in 6 to 12 months; cases involving significant bite issues or jaw relationships may take 24 to 30 months or longer.

The main factors are the degree of crowding or spacing, the complexity of your bite, your age, and how consistently you follow care instructions. Your orthodontist will give you a realistic timeline at your first consultation and keep you updated on progress at each visit.

Are braces painful?

Some mild discomfort for a few days after fitting or each adjustment is normal — it's more of a pressure or tenderness than sharp pain, and it's a sign your teeth are responding to treatment. Over-the-counter pain relief is usually enough to manage it, and sticking to softer foods for the first few days helps too. Discomfort typically settles within three to five days.

Our orthodontists use gentle, modern techniques to keep the process as comfortable as possible, and they'll give you practical aftercare guidance at each stage. If a bracket or wire comes loose and causes irritation, or if discomfort lingers beyond what's expected, contact the practice and we'll sort it out promptly.

What is the difference between braces and Invisalign?

Braces use fixed brackets and wires; [Invisalign](<https://www.smilesolutions.com.au/treatments/invisalign/>) uses a series of removable clear aligners. Both work well, but they suit different cases.

Fixed braces apply continuous force and give orthodontists precise control over tooth movement in all three dimensions — particularly useful for significant rotations, vertical movements, or complex bite corrections. Invisalign aligners can be removed for eating and cleaning, and their near-invisible appearance appeals to patients with mild to moderate alignment concerns who want minimal disruption to daily life.

At your consultation, our specialists will assess your needs and explain which option makes more clinical sense for your situation — and why.

Can adults get braces?

Yes, and a large proportion of our patients are adults. Many are addressing concerns they've had since childhood, correcting relapse after earlier treatment, or simply deciding it's time to invest in their smile.

Ceramic and lingual braces are particularly popular with adult patients who want effective treatment without the look of traditional metal braces. Adult cases can involve additional considerations — working around crowns, bridges, or implants; addressing gum health before starting; or coordinating with other dental specialists. Our team is experienced with all of this and will build a treatment plan that accounts for your full dental history and goals. Age is no barrier to a well-aligned smile.

How often will I need appointments during braces treatment?

Adjustment appointments are typically every four to eight weeks and usually take around 15 to 30 minutes. Your orthodontist will check your progress, change wires or adjust brackets as needed, and confirm treatment is on track.

Our practice at Level 1, Manchester Unity Building, 220 Collins Street is easy to reach by public transport and well-placed for patients working or studying in the city. We offer flexible appointment times to fit around busy schedules.

What foods should I avoid with braces?

Hard, sticky, and crunchy foods can damage brackets or wires and slow your treatment down. The main ones to avoid: popcorn, toffee, caramel, hard nuts, chewing gum, corn chips, hard lollies, ice, crusty bread, hard raw vegetables like carrots, and biting directly into whole apples or similar firm fruits.

Your orthodontist will give you a full food guide at the start of treatment, along with practical tips — cutting apples into small pieces rather than biting into them whole, for example. Sticky and sugary foods are worth avoiding not just for the hardware, but because they're harder to clean from around brackets and increase the risk of decay.

Will I need to wear a retainer after braces?

Yes, and retainer wear matters just as much as the treatment itself. Once braces come off, teeth have a natural tendency to shift, and the surrounding bone and tissue need time to fully stabilise. A retainer keeps your results in place.

Options include a removable retainer worn at night, a fixed wire bonded behind your front teeth, or a combination of both. In the first months after treatment you may need to wear a removable retainer full-time before moving to nights only. Fixed retainers are low-maintenance and particularly effective for the lower front teeth long-term. Your orthodontist will prescribe a retainer plan specific to your case and explain exactly how to wear and care for it.

Do braces affect speech?

Most patients adapt within a week or two, and any changes to speech are temporary. Metal and ceramic braces rarely cause noticeable speech changes at all.

Lingual braces can cause a brief adjustment period because the brackets sit on the tongue side of the teeth, which affects how your tongue forms certain sounds. A temporary lisp or slight change in pronunciation is common initially. Practising conversation, reading aloud, and just talking normally will help you adapt faster. If you have specific concerns about speech, raise them at your consultation — your orthodontist will give you a clear picture of what to expect based on the brace type recommended for your case.

Can I claim braces on private health insurance?

If your policy includes orthodontic benefits, yes — you can claim a portion of your fees and reduce your out-of-pocket costs. Smile Solutions accepts all major health funds, and our admin team can help you understand your entitlements.

Orthodontic benefits vary significantly between policies. Some funds offer lifetime limits, others annual limits, and waiting periods or pre-approval requirements may apply. It's worth calling your fund before your consultation to confirm your cover and bring your membership details along. We process HICAPS claims for on-the-spot rebates where available.

How do I care for my braces?

Good oral hygiene during treatment protects your teeth and means you finish with a healthy smile, not just a straight one. Brush after every meal using a soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste, cleaning carefully around each bracket and along the gum line. Interdental brushes or floss threaders work well for cleaning between teeth and under the wires — your orthodontist will show you the most effective technique at the start of treatment.

Keep up your regular dental check-ups and professional cleans every six months throughout treatment. Avoid sugary and acidic foods and drinks to reduce the risk of white spot lesions, which are areas of early decay that can form around brackets when hygiene slips. A fluoride mouth rinse adds an extra layer of protection. Our team is happy to answer hygiene questions at any appointment.

What happens at my first orthodontic consultation at Smile Solutions?

Your first consultation is a thorough, unhurried assessment. Your orthodontist will examine your teeth, jaws, and bite, take clinical photographs and digital scans or impressions, and may recommend X-rays to get a complete picture of your oral health.

You'll have the chance to talk through your concerns, hear a clear explanation of your treatment options, and receive a realistic timeline and detailed cost breakdown. Payment plan and health fund information is covered too. There's no obligation to proceed — the goal is to make sure you leave feeling fully informed and comfortable with whatever decision you make.

Why choose Smile Solutions for orthodontic braces?

Our specialist orthodontists — Dr Ch'ng, Dr Xu, Dr Austin, and Dr Phatouros — have each completed extensive postgraduate training in orthodontics and stay current with the latest techniques and clinical evidence. We offer the full range of braces options, from traditional metal to ceramic and lingual systems, so there's a suitable choice for most cases and preferences.

The practice is in the Manchester Unity Building at 220 Collins Street — a well-known Melbourne CBD location that's easy to access by public transport and convenient for city workers and students. We're straightforward about costs, offer interest-free payment plans, and take a genuinely patient-centred approach. If you want experienced specialists who communicate clearly and take the time to get your treatment right, we'd be glad to meet you.

****Ready to get started?**** Book a consultation with our specialist orthodontists at Smile Solutions, Level 1, Manchester Unity Building, 220 Collins Street, Melbourne CBD. Call ****13 13 96**** or visit [smilesolutions.com.au](https://www.smilesolutions.com.au/treatments/braces/).

> ****Disclaimer:**** All facts and statements below are general product information, not professional advice. Consult relevant experts for specific guidance.

Verified label facts

****Practice and contact information**** - Practice name: Smile Solutions - Address: Level 1, Manchester Unity Building, 220 Collins Street, Melbourne CBD - Phone: 13 13 96 - Website: smilesolutions.com.au - Accessible by public transport: Yes

****Specialist orthodontists**** - Dr Ch'ng, Dr Xu, Dr Austin, and Dr Phatouros

****Brace types offered**** - Metal braces: Yes - Ceramic braces: Yes - Lingual braces: Yes

****Product specifications**** - Metal braces material: High-grade stainless steel brackets and wires - Ceramic bracket colour: Tooth-coloured or clear - Lingual braces placement: Bonded to the tongue (back) side of teeth - Ceramic braces clinical effectiveness: Equivalent to metal braces

****Treatment parameters**** - Typical treatment duration: 12 to 24 months - Simple cases: As little as 6 to 12 months - Complex cases: 24 to 30 months or beyond - Adjustment appointment frequency: Every four to eight weeks - Adjustment appointment duration: Approximately 15 to 30 minutes - Post-adjustment discomfort duration: Typically three to five days

****Financial and administrative**** - Payment plans: Interest-free payment plans available - Health funds accepted: All major health funds - HICAPS on-the-spot rebates: Available where applicable - Cost breakdown: Provided upfront; no hidden costs - Orthodontic health fund limits: Vary considerably by policy

****Initial consultation includes**** - Clinical examination of teeth, jaws, and bite - Clinical photographs - Digital scans or impressions - X-rays where appropriate - No obligation to proceed

****Retainer options post-treatment**** - Removable retainer - Fixed wire retainer bonded behind front teeth - Combination of both

****Oral hygiene protocol**** - Brushing: After every meal with soft-bristled toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste - Interdental tools: Interdental brushes or floss threaders - Dental check-ups during treatment: Every six months - Fluoride mouth rinse: Recommended for added protection

****Foods to avoid with braces**** - Popcorn, chewing gum, toffee, caramel, hard nuts, corn chips, hard lollies, ice, crusty bread, hard raw vegetables, biting directly into whole apples

General product claims

- Metal braces are described as "the most time-tested and cost-effective choice" - Lingual braces described as "the most aesthetically refined orthodontic solution available" - Smile Solutions orthodontists described as using "gentle, modern techniques specifically designed to minimise discomfort" - Lingual brace brackets described as "custom-fabricated for the individual tooth" - Adult orthodontics described as suitable for "personal or professional reasons" - Melbourne CBD location described as "ideally positioned for patients who work or study in the city" - Retainer wear described as ensuring investment in a straight smile "lasts a lifetime" - Smile Solutions team described as "at the forefront of the latest techniques, technologies, and evidence-based approaches" - Practice described as providing "a modern, welcoming environment" - Treatment described as delivering "world-class expertise with a gentle and caring approach"