

How are veneers fitted?

Deep Dive Information Sheet v3

Do you have an upcoming appointment or are interested in getting veneers? We caught up with Dr. Dan to discuss the process of fitting porcelain veneers at Bamboo Cosmetic Dentistry from start to finish.

To begin, at the beginning: Treatment planning

The first step in fitting veneers happens way before these thin pieces of porcelain are placed on your teeth. Preparation at Bamboo is key.

Your teeth need to be straight or only have minimal amount of crowding (when teeth overlap slightly). Otherwise, the dentists would need to take corners off and get close to the sensitive part of the tooth tissue. This used to be common back in the day but these days it's unnecessary...

The dentists will also examine your bite. If there is too much stress on your teeth and they are grinding together, it may result in veneers wearing down, fracturing, or popping off. That wouldn't be good! It doesn't happen often, but you may need some simple adjustments to your 'bite' first.

Next, our dentists will discuss **your expectations** and ensure that you are happy, both physically and mentally, to commit to the treatment. The treatment plan is only finalised when **you and the dentist** agree that it is the best thing for you.

Dr. Dan's Tip #1: These cosmetic veneers usually last at least 15 years if taken care of; you need to be happy and prepared for that commitment. And confident it is right for you. Yes, that includes brushing and flossing every day.

Digital technology: Designing the smile

The next step in the fitting veneers process is designing the smile. This is when the dentist will take either **moulds or a digital scan of your teeth** which are sent to the laboratory along with photos of your actual smile.

The technicians will **design the smile digitally** and transpose it on to your photos to ensure they are suitable. They will then print the model and send it back to Bamboo to fabricate the temporary veneers.

The image on the right shows the moulds of the original teeth on the top and the temporary veneers on the bottom.



Temporary Veneer Fitting

When you come in for your 'veneer prep' appointment, you will need a local anaesthetic, just in case there are some sensitive areas. This will allow you to sit back and relax.

The dentist will then expertly contour the teeth to ensure they are nice and smooth and remove any lumps and bumps. Once the temporary veneers are placed, the dentist will do their normal checks (i.e. the bite is comfortable, the teeth aren't clashing with the veneers).

FAQ: Does it hurt? No. Local anaesthetic is used just as if you were having any other dental procedure. The adjustment to the tooth shape is very minimal but they can otherwise still be a little sensitive without the anaesthetic.

You can then walk away and keep them on for two weeks. Refrain from biting into hard things as they may pop off or consuming turmeric. Sorry, that includes curries!

Dr. Dan adds that "when patients get home and their lip is back in action after the anaesthetic, they are encouraged to take selfies, have a look in the mirror and get in touch with us. We never commit to making the veneers until the patient is 100% happy with the temporary ones."

At this stage, you need to be happy with the shape, height, width, and the contours of them rather than the actual colour.

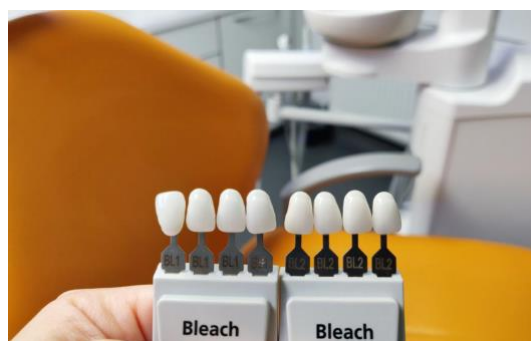
Deciding Veneer Shade

It's now time to decide the all-important shade. Dr. Dan explains, "if the patient says I want bright white, the "Turkey" look, "Only Way Is Essex" look or "Love Island" look - that would be a whiter than white colour, and quite an opaque porcelain.

"Most patients will say they want a nice-looking white smile without looking too fake. If that's the case, then we'll give them a shade of white but mix in some translucency, so it looks more natural. This way the shade can remain lovely and white but still look natural. Then we'll often blend a slightly darker colour towards the gum level. As colours are subjective, this may still be too bright for some people so we can take it down a shade."

The lab will then fabricate the veneers once the patient and dentist have both signed off the temporary ones.

They are made from a block of porcelain, **individually hand painted**, and polished. Who would've thought?



Final Veneers Fitting

This appointment is easier than the initial preparations as most of the work is done away from the mouth.

Dr. Dan's Tip #2: It's always a nice idea to make sure you have some food prior to attending to keep your blood sugars up! Light Breakfast or lunch will do the trick.

You will have a local anaesthetic again and the dentist will take the temporary veneers off very easily. The actual veneers will be briefly fitted with non-adhesive glue, and you will be allowed to walk to the window, have a look in the mirror, take some pictures. We make sure that the shade and shape are exactly like the temporary veneers. Once you are happy, the dentist will proceed.

The veneers are put on **one by one** by the dentist with some dental adhesive, but they aren't set until they are all on.

Dr. Dan's Tip #3: Patients usually have eight or 10 veneers, sometimes four. We very rarely recommend six because it doesn't look great to stop at the canines.

Then, when all the veneers are seated but not set, some very thin strips will be placed between each veneer to ensure they end up individualised and not all stuck together. And finally, the blue light will be shined on to them to set the adhesive.

The appointments usually amount to five visits including your consultation. The veneer 'prep' takes around an hour and a half while the veneer placement takes around 2 hours.

After the Appointment

After the appointment you are fine to drive, head back to work or just go home to get used to your new smile. The anaesthetic will take around 3-4 hours to wear off.

Dr. Dan's Tip #4: Take the day or afternoon off. You'll want to enjoy your new smile!

The most important thing now is to take care of them.

1. Brush your teeth twice a day (with correct brushing technique of angling the brush into the gum tissue).
2. Flossing – ideally with tape in between the teeth.
3. Get the Air Flossing machine from Philips to use a hydrogen Peroxide-base mouth wash. The peroxide prevents stain build up to keep your veneers looking nice and white.
4. You can drink and eat whatever you want, bite into an apple or crusty baguette, and drink wine, you name it.
5. For smokers and heavy black coffee drinkers (5-6 cups a day), you will need to floss more in between the teeth where potential stain can build up.
6. Following good oral hygiene, you can keep your porcelain veneers for **15-20 years**. Patients usually ask to change them after this time for cosmetic reasons.