

# Smiling with CONFIDENCE

DENTAL AND IMPLANT SURGEON  
DR JEAN PAUL DEMAJO ON THE  
MANY FACETS OF ACHIEVING THE  
PERFECT SMILE

A confident smile is a necessity in today's life. How often have you thought of fixing your teeth? There are many aspects in a set of teeth which lead to a beautiful smile —

## TOOTH CHARACTER

1. Colour: Even colour or are they mismatched?
2. Contour: Do your teeth look similar or do some stand out?
3. Angulations: Are your teeth protruding or are they twisted out of the arch due to crowding?
4. Symmetry: Do your teeth look right or are some misaligned?
5. Occlusion: How do you bite together? Do your upper and lower teeth come together as they should?

## COLOUR

With today's technology, one finds several tooth replacement materials — out with the conventional use of gold and other heavy metals and in with the use of non-metallic ceramic material. It is incorrect to say that conventional materials aren't good — they have an excellent track record — but the general consensus is that all-ceramic (metal-free) or as we know it, porcelain teeth, offer superior aesthetics than any other tooth restorative material. Different porcelain colours may be mixed and adapted to replicate the exact colour of your natural teeth. A clever dental technician, in particular a ceramicist, is fundamental in achieving this. It is of utmost importance that you discuss this with your dentist and ceramicist.

## CONTOUR

This may be adjusted with the help of veneers, crowns or onlays. For example, a narrow looking tooth that jars with the rest of your teeth due to its size and shape may be wrapped with a veneer to help it look normal in size, shape and form. White resin restorations or fillings may be stuck on to a rotated tooth to make it look straight again. These are relatively simple methods offering significant results.



## TOOTH ANGULATIONS

Teeth may look protruded or pushed backwards, crooked or dead straight. The bite may not look normal; the lower jaw may be protruded or the top jaw retruded. Teeth may be crowded or spaced out. These are common complaints dentists hear from anxious parents or conscious children. This is where orthodontics comes in. "Ortho" meaning normal and "donic" meaning tooth is the art of tooth straightening to achieve the normal smile we all deserve to have. As advantageous as it is to align one's teeth, orthodontics may take a very long time with monthly appointments possibly spread over a period of as long as two years. Although it is a painstaking process, orthodontics remains the best way to align ones' teeth, especially if they are untouched, un-restored virgin teeth. For those who do not wish to go down the road of braces, then cosmetic dentistry comes in.

It is never too late to obtain the results you always desired. What's important is to weigh out your options, to take an informed decision, then, trust your dentist with this decision. Better late than never. Ask your dentist! 

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